



Keep me home - animals wandering at large

Pets wandering at large can pose a serious public health and safety risk. They can create a traffic hazard, or may become aggressive and cause harm to other people, animals or wildlife. Wandering animals can also spread diseases and parasites to other animals in the area, so ensure your pet is vaccinated and treated.

Reasons to wander...

- Animals are social creatures dependent on their pack for company, leadership and guidance. A pet that is left alone for extended periods and not exercised or socialised with the family may seek out the company of other animals.
- Entire animals (not desexed) wander to seek out a partner.
- Other animals will have an urge to wander which is inherited from their ancestors.
- Some animals may wander in search of food.

What's the problem if my dog wanders?

Behaviour – Wandering promotes antisocial behaviour by encouraging and strengthening the animal's instinct to fight for dominance. An animal that is used to having freedom, and then expected to be confined is likely to protest. The animal will act independently and generally be disobedient and uncontrollable at home. This can be displayed with destructive behaviour, digging holes, agitation and excessive noise.

Hormones – Entire animals (not desexed) that wander will seek out a partner, increasing the number of unwanted pregnancies. The pregnant animal and their litters then cause additional costs and care for their owners, and

in some situations become unwanted and abandoned. This causes pressure on Council to control stray animals, increases the number of animals at pounds or shelters and consequently leads to increased euthanasia costs.

Aggression – Wandering animals can develop territories that are public places. This can cause the animal to be highly agitated and aggressive. The dog may dominate their territory, seek the attention of females and fight other animals in the area, which can result in injury or even death. The animal may also attack people, walking by or try to move them along.

Predators – Wandering promotes antisocial behaviour by encouraging and strengthening the animal's natural instinct to chase. The animal may pursue people, other animals or even vehicles and bicycles. If in search of food, the animal may scavenge through bins in public places or attack livestock and wildlife.

What Council will do

Wandering animals have a negative impact on the community, who have the right to walk in public places without fear of being attacked. If your animal is found wandering at large you may be issued a \$235 on the spot fine. When complaints are received about wandering animals, Council will increase patrols in the area and the animal if caught at large may be impounded. Irresponsible pet ownership unfortunately penalises all pet owners in the Livingstone Shire and has a direct effect on Council's operating costs and consequently registration fees.

**For more Information contact
Council's Customer Service Centre on the below details**