



Animal Management Is Your Dog a Noisy Dog?

Dog owners are responsible for their dogs but can sometimes forget that they affect other people too. Barking dogs are among the most frequent complaints received by Council.

Dogs bark for many reasons. Some possible causes are:

- lack of exercise
- loneliness and boredom
- lack of a suitable sleeping area and shelter
- flies, fleas, worms or some other ailment
- hunger or thirst
- attention seeking
- protecting territory
- continual barking or crying may be a cry for help
- isolation
- chained or tied up for long periods of time

WHAT CAN BE DONE TO STOP EXCESSIVE BARKING?

- Exercise your dog regularly. Dogs are pack animals, preferring to go for a walk or have a game with you than be left alone. If you exercise your dog daily at the same time, it is more likely to wait quietly for this time to arrive.
- Socialise your dog. When walking your dog let it meet other people, especially neighbours, and other dogs.
- Take it to exercise areas and let it play with other dogs. By socialising your dog it will be less likely to bark at neighbours and people or other dogs passing by your property.
- If your dog comes inside at night and is then shut out during the day it may bark because it has been separated from an area it wants to protect. Try fitting a dog door so the dog can go inside as it pleases. By simply closing internal doors you can control which rooms the dog has access to while you are away.
- Provide your dog with a warm comfortable kennel in the winter and a cool shady place in the summer. Make sure the dog has fresh water available.
- Provide things for your dog to do in your absence. Food reward toys are a fantastic method for keeping dogs mentally stimulated and occupied while their owners are away.

- Give your dog something that has your scent on it. This will reassure the dog that you are coming back.
- Feed your dog before you leave in the morning. A lot of dogs will lie quietly while their meal digests.
- Check your dog for fleas regularly and ensure it is kept free of worms and maintain the animal's over physical and mental health. Regular vet checks are recommended.

WHAT ARE YOUR OPTIONS IF A PROBLEM EXISTS?

Do Nothing.

If you do nothing and Council is satisfied that the dog is causing a nuisance you may be issued with an infringement notice pursuant to section 46(2) of the Dog Control Act 2000. The value of this fine is \$200. Alternatively you may be served with an "Abatement Notice" (a legal document) requiring you to stop the nuisance within a specified time. If you do not comply with this notice Council may prosecute you.

If convicted the court may impose a penalty up to \$500.00 and also make specific orders relating to the dog. To do nothing is not advisable.

Try and solve the problem yourself.

You can try some of the suggestions already mentioned previously. Animal Management Staff can provide further information to assist you. Check with your Council for information about an anti-barking collar. These collars are designed to correct a dog's barking behaviour.

Get professional help.

You can seek assistance from your Vet or professional animal agencies that can give you advice about specific treatments or refer you to people that specialise in correcting behavioural problems.

WHAT CAN COUNCIL DO ABOUT EXCESSIVE BARKING?

Before Council can take any formal action it requires a reasonable level of proof that your dog is a problem. Council will require the person complaining about the dog to lodge a formal "Notice Of Complaint" in accordance with the *Dog Control Act 2000*.

We will have asked for a detailed list of dates, times and possible causes for the dog's barking. We need this information so that we may carry out a fair and impartial investigation. This information can also help you understand and fix any problems that may be contributing to excessive barking.

MYTHS ABOUT BARKING

It is natural for dogs to bark a lot. Dogs use barking as a form of communication. If the barking becomes excessive it is not normal.

If a dog barks a lot then it shows that it is a good watchdog. In fact the opposite situation is the case. People, especially the neighbors, get to know which dogs are barking and will not check up on it.

My dog never barks when I am at home, so I do not believe that it barks when I am out. Most complaints are associated with the times when an owner is not home. Dogs often become lonely, anxious, stressed or bored. It is their way of trying to communicate that they are unhappy.

I will get another dog and they will keep one another company. This will stop the barking. This does not usually solve the barking problem. If one dog is unhappy because of the way an owner looks after it, this may apply to a second dog also. Then the problem may be doubled and might result in two dogs barking instead of one.

Yell at or hit the dog when it barks. By yelling at the dog you are telling it that loud is OK. If you hit the animal it is still getting the attention that it wants even if this attention is unpleasant. You are also reducing your chances of being able to resolve the problem because the dog will not trust you or want to be around you.

Need More Information or Assistance?

Please contact us.

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