

PROPOSED ANIMAL CONTROL ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS
-BREEDING LICENSES & OTHER ISSUES-

On December 12th, 2006 the City Council will conduct a public hearing on recommended revisions to the Animal Control Ordinance, Title 17 of the Tacoma Municipal Code. These draft revisions are in response to Council request to strengthen the ordinance and regulate breeding of pets. In January of this year the City of Tacoma formed its own Animal Control and Compliance Unit to handle animal control responsibilities when the Humane Society curtailed such service. The City continues to work with the Humane Society as its shelter facility.

The following is a list of the proposed amendments:

17.01.110 - Mandatory spay/neuter for impounded dogs and cats – exception.

The current ordinance provides that any animal impounded more than once in a 12 month period cannot be released until it is spayed or neutered. *The proposal eliminates the more-than-once-in-12 months requirement. The exception noted in the title is when a veterinarian says (in writing) that spay/neuter would be harmful to the animal.*

17.02.040 - Confinement of unaltered dogs and cats

The current ordinance provides that female dogs and cats in heat must be confined and that if found unconfined will be subject to mandatory spaying. *The proposal applies to unaltered male and female dogs and cats and eliminates the requirement that the females be in heat.*

17.05.010(B)(2) - License required

The current ordinance limits pet owners to six dogs and/or cats. *The proposal retains that limitation and imposes a new limitation of two unaltered dogs and/or cats.*

17.05.025 - Purchase of Breeder's License

Proposal requires anyone owning an unaltered animal to obtain a "breeder's license," regardless of whether they plan to breed the animal. *A fee for this license has not yet been determined.*

17.01.075 - Possession of livestock and poultry unlawful

Proposal would ban livestock and poultry in the City with a few exceptions (animals owned and cared for by the Metropolitan Parks District, circuses, transport through the City, and any other exceptions deemed appropriate). *Repeal existing Title 5 regulations.*

17.04 - Dangerous dogs and potentially dangerous dogs

Proposal would expand the definitions for dangerous and potentially dangerous dogs and require that dogs found to be dangerous either be euthanized or sent directly to a location outside the city that complies with state law requirements for keeping dangerous dogs. The proposal states that unlicensed dogs do not get a hearing regarding their dangerous or potentially dangerous status.

17.06 - Problem Owners

This is a new chapter, intended to deal with repeat violators. A Problem Owner is one who:

- gets any combination of 3 or more civil infractions or violations in a (12 or 24) month period *PSHS Committee will decide time frame.*
- gets a criminal conviction and one other violation in the time period
- gets two violations and has a dangerous or potentially dangerous dog during the time period

Problem owners get all pet licenses revoked and animals impounded (*animals cannot be returned to any person at same address as Problem Owner*).

Creates crime for Problem Owners who own, possess, or harbor a pet for a period of time (*to be determined by the PSHS Committee*) after being found to be a Problem Owner.

17.05.012 - Responsibilities of Owner

This is also a new section. It codifies pet owner responsibilities.

For additional information or answers to questions check the City of Tacoma Website or call Captain Mike Miller at 591-5942.