

Animal Management Officer internet resource site

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Background

The Victorian Bureau of Animal Welfare (Department of Primary Industries) coordinates a Responsible Pet Ownership Community Education Program. This Program aims to provide councils with the resources and assistance they need to promote responsible pet ownership at a local level.

Several years ago, it was recognised that there was a demand for a communication tool that would provide Victorian AMO's with centralised access to the wide range of resources produced for them by the Bureau of Animal Welfare. In order to meet these objectives, a secure password accessed website was designed, specifically for the use of council AMOs. The site provides a range of education, legislation and other resources available for officers' reference, download and printing.

Site content

The content of the site is continually changing and is updated regularly. At present, the site contains the following resources:

Education resources:

- Background and news on the Schools and Community Responsible Pet Ownership Education Programs.
- A section to 'showcase' the education activities undertaken by particular councils.
- Responsible pet ownership brochures, fact sheets and posters for download (or hard copy order).
- Council Communication Resource Kit.
- Advice and case studies on running a council microchip day or pet event.

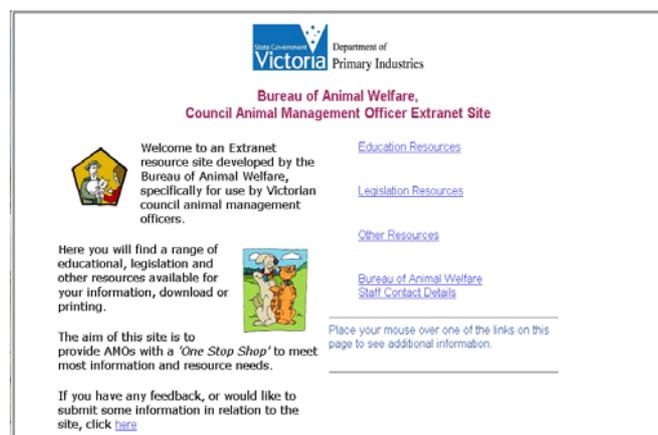
Legislation resources:

- Copies of the most up to date legislation, codes of practice, and latest legislation news.
- Legal case studies.
- Legal question and answer page (officers post questions through the website, and answers are put back online and into a searchable archive).
- Restricted Breed and Dangerous Dogs information / databases.
- Council bulletins.
- Committee minutes, members and activities.
- Privacy legislation information.
- Eligible concession cards for reduced registration fees poster.
- Registration levy information / public fact sheet.
- Applicable organisations and currently approved dog training organisations.
- Template letters explaining legislative provisions (designed to be printed on council letterhead and sent out in response to queries or with PINS).
- Domestic Animal Business information (including pounds). This page includes audit forms, information on zoonoses, architectural plans for a Code compliant cost efficient pound design, pound equipment list and various template forms.
- Information on the ban on tail docking of dogs (including a public fact sheet).

Other resources (eg both education and legislation oriented):

- Council dog attack prevention kit (containing statistics on dog attacks, information on designing a local dog attack prevention campaign, a dog attack recording database and sample education materials).
- Cat Management Manual (a ready reference for officers when dealing with common cat management issues and scenarios. Includes an explanation of cat related provisions in the Act, and template forms and community information sheets under each topic).
- Statistics and useful weblinks.
- Photos of council signage.
- Dog poo litter kit (containing information dog poo litter research, education, enforcement & regulation, infrastructure, incentives, ready to go artwork and press and radio ads to assist with local campaigns).
- Council contact details database.
- Council Benchmarking project information.
- Information on early age desexing of puppies and kittens (including a booklet for vets and a brochure for the general public).

A screen shot of the website



Evaluation

The AMO Internet site was launched during a round of training seminars held across the State in November 2003. A follow up council survey one year later revealed 70% of AMO's considered the Internet site to be "Very Useful", 17% rated it as "Useful", while the remaining 13% of officers weren't aware of the site (mainly due to staff turnover / new officers). None of the officers rated the site as "Not Useful". On average, the site attracts around 2,000 visits per year.

For more information on the AMO Internet Resource Site, contact

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Neva Van der Kuyt

Neva Van de Kuyt is employed with the Bureau of Animal Welfare, Victorian Department of Primary Industries. Neva's work involves coordinating the Responsible Pet Ownership Community Education Program. This Program aims to provide councils with resources and assistance to help them promote responsible pet ownership in their local communities.