

New laws for impounding livestock

Confining livestock, including horses, to your property is important for the safety of the community. Wandering livestock can create a serious public safety risk, particularly when they are on roads; human lives have been lost from vehicle collisions with livestock on roads. Wandering livestock may also injure themselves, other animals they encounter, and cause damage to property.

Recent changes to the Impounding of Livestock Act 1994 strengthen the powers of Authorised Council Officers to deal with wandering or inadequately confined livestock.

The Impounding of Livestock Act 1994 (the Act) makes it an offence for a person to allow livestock to wander at large, or to fail to adequately confine livestock to a property.

Municipal council officers previously had the power under the Act to impound wandering livestock at the owner's expense. However there were difficulties confining or impounding livestock when the animals were able to wander on and off a property, for example, when existing fencing was in disrepair.

The recent amendments to the Act were made under the Primary Industries and Food Legislation Amendment Act 2012. These enable an authorised officer of a Council, who finds inadequately confined livestock, to enter any land or building (other than a residence) and impound the livestock in certain circumstances, such as where there is a public safety risk.

If you would like to receive this information/publication in an accessible format (such as large print or audio) please call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186, TTY 1800 122 969, or email customer.service@dpi.vic.gov.au.

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The Impounding of Livestock Act now also enables a notice of objection to the trespassing of livestock and a notice to confine livestock to be served on either a landowner or livestock owner, in relation to trespassing or inadequately confined livestock. Livestock found inadequately confined after a notice to confine has been served can now be impounded by an authorised Council officer if the owner fails to comply with the notice.

These amendments enable effective measures to be taken to control inadequately confined livestock, and therefore help to protect the safety of the Victorian community.

For issues concerning wandering or inadequately confined livestock call your local council for assistance.

Further information about confinement and impounding of livestock can be found on the DPI website www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare, by phone: 136 186 or by emailing animal.welfare@dpi.vic.gov.au

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