



## Neighbourhood Issues Domestic Fowl

Many people keep chickens, ducks, geese and other birds (known as 'domestic fowl') in their backyards. However, in residential areas it is important to consider the potential impacts on your neighbours. This fact sheet looks at some of the issues to bear in mind when deciding whether to keep domestic fowl on your property.

### Things to consider when keeping domestic fowl in a residential area

Many Councils have by-laws which set rules for keeping domestic fowl, including:

- **The number of birds you are allowed to keep within the property**  
For example, in the Brighton and Kingborough areas, the limit is 6 birds (unless you have a permit from the Council).
- **Whether you can keep roosters (and under what conditions)**  
Some councils prohibit roosters, others require a permit. Most councils do not have specific rules regarding roosters, provided they do not create a nuisance.
- **Minimum distances**  
In Kingborough and Brighton, fowl must not be kept within 12 metres of a dwelling or within 2 metres of your boundary. In Hobart, you can keep chickens and pigeons within 6 metres of a dwelling, but all other domestic fowl must be kept at least 12 metres away from houses.

Check with the animal management officer of your local Council to see what the by-laws for your area say.

### Animal welfare

It is important to maintain all animal enclosures so that:

- They are clean and sanitary;
- Containers used for bedding, food or manure are regularly cleaned;
- The birds do not escape from your property and are protected from predators;
- The birds do not attract rodents or flies;
- Waste from the enclosure does not run into your neighbour's property or any watercourse.

The *Animal Welfare Act 1993* also sets minimum requirements for the design of enclosures for laying fowls. Cages must be at least 35 centimetres high and have a door at least 50 centimetres wide. Each laying fowl must have reasonable access to a food and a water trough.

### Nuisance

You must take all necessary steps to make sure that your domestic fowls do not create a nuisance, through noise, smell, drainage problems or attracting rodents.

If you are experiencing nuisance from domestic fowl on a neighbouring property, try to talk to your neighbour to resolve the problem. If this does not work, you should contact the Animal Control section of your local council and make a complaint. Council officers have powers under the *Local Government Act 1993* to issue an abatement notice requiring the owner to relocate the birds, improve the enclosure or, if no alternative exists, to remove the birds.