

Notification to Pet Owners

Effective January 1st, the City of Kennewick has discontinued the issuance of animal licenses. Owners are urged to have their own identification on their pets should Tri City Animal Control pick up their animal. The City is also promoting the use of microchip implants and will be sponsoring a clinic in the spring. The City will advertise the clinic once the date has been established.

Although the City of Kennewick has discontinued issuing animal license tags, there is still an active animal control program. All pets must be on a leash if off their owner's property and there are fines if an animal is impounded. It is important to have identification on your pet in case of such impounding to ensure a successful reunification. All impounded pets are also scanned for microchip identification.

Pet owners are still required to keep the rabies vaccination up to date for each pet. Pet owners must provide proof of a current rabies vaccination to Tri Cities Animal Control if an animal is being redeemed from impoundment.

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Why did the City eliminate the animal licensing program?

It is estimated that less than 20% of pet owners voluntarily licensed their pets. In addition to the increasing expense of issuing identification tags, the only effective way to enforce licensing for all citizens is through a costly door-to-door canvassing program. The City decided to reallocate the costs of the renewal program and licensing enforcement to other programs to include promoting the use of microchip identification.

What should I do about an identification tag for my pet?

Responsible pet owners are better served by placing and maintaining their own identification on their pets instead of having to replace a City issued tag each year.

The license tag the City issued just had an identification number and the telephone number for Tri City Animal Control. The identification number was tied to a database with the customer's contact information that was only updated once a year. A tag purchased by the owner can be replaced easily at any time with new contact telephone numbers, name of the pet, etc. This even allows a neighbor to have contact information if a pet strays as opposed to having the animal picked up by Tri City Animal Control in order to contact the owner.

While an owner tag is important for quick and current identification, having the pet microchipped is extra assurance that the pet can be reunited even if separated away from home. For example if a pet was lost on a family vacation.

What is a microchip implant?

- A Microchip is permanent identification – guaranteed for the life of animal.
- The chip is injected under the animal's skin and is just like receiving a vaccination. The chip has a registration number. The pet is then registered in a national 24/7 database. The pet is enrolled under the owner's name with complete detailed information about both the animal and owner.
- Shelters are equipped with scanners. The scanner sends a safe radio wave signal to the microchip and it then displays the microchip number.
- Millions of microchips have been implanted since the early 1990's and it is consider safe and effective.

Will microchips be required?

There will not be a requirement to have your pet microchipped. The City is only promoting this as an excellent method to have permanent identification on your pet should your dog or cat ever be picked up by animal control here or in another community.

Other Important Information for Pet Owners

In accordance with the City of Kennewick Municipal and Administrative Codes pets must be on a leash, when off the owners premises and owners must pick up and dispose of their pets waste. KAC 9-44-020; KMC 8.02.050; and KMC 9.48.010.

Tri City Animal Control 545-3740