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Geelong adopts strict cat curfew laws

Kerri-Ann Hobbs

December 24th, 2009

CAT owners will have to lock their pets up at night under tough new curfew laws adopted by City of Greater Geelong.

Owners will also have to ensure their moggies remain at home during the day rather than letting them annoy neighbours.

Have your say on the feedback form below

The cat curfew laws were instigated by a groundswell in complaints about stray animals, with rangers reporting at least three calls a day about problem pussies.

Council's Health and Local Laws manager Gen Hindman said the cat curfew was in response to public feedback received during the development of the city's Domestic Animal Management Plan.

"Keeping a cat indoors at night helps protect local wildlife," she said.

"It also protects cats from disease, being involved in fights with strays, and from car accidents.

"Contrary to popular belief, cats don't have to roam.

"In fact, cats kept indoors at night generally live at least three times longer than cats allowed to roam."

The council's rangers will work closely with cat owners to provide information and advice on cat enclosures.

Grovedale's Paula Harney had her husband build a cat enclosure at their home about three months ago after one of her pets disappeared for a month and returned skinny and scared.

"Now I know that they are not bothering everybody because they are not everybody likes cat," Mrs Harney said.

"I think they are healthier because they are not fighting and in the long run it must save you money."

Carol Webb, from the Cat Protection Society, supported the cat curfew.

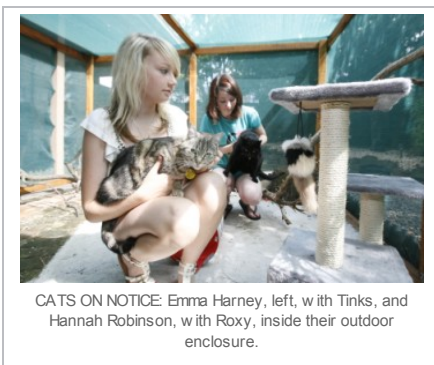
"The majority of cat fights and car accidents occur at night so puss is safest inside with its owner," she said.

"It's also good for bonding."

The Geelong Animal Welfare Society also endorsed the sunset-sunrise lock-ups, saying they would help reduce the number of unwanted litters and dumped pets.

"On bad days the society can receive 60 cats and kittens per day," president Ian Walter said.

"This is an impossible number to find new homes for."



CATS ON NOTICE: Emma Harney, left, with Tinks, and Hannah Robinson, with Roxy, inside their outdoor enclosure.

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