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New cat laws could come at a cost

25/Jun/2011

By Joel Kelly, Avon Valley Gazette

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Feline fine... Sisi Fu from the Northam Veterinary Centre with one of her patients.

PROPOSED new cat legislation may reduce the amount of stray cats around York, Northam and Toodyay but could come at a cost to local governments.

Local Government Minister John Castrilli presented the Cat Bill 2011 to Parliament last week outlining provisions such as sterilisation, micro-chipping and registration.

Northam Veterinary Centre vet Sisi Fu said if the legislation was passed it would be easier for stray cats to be managed.

"It's a good idea really – it will make people take cat ownership more seriously," Dr Fu said.

"People still see cats as different from dogs because there are fewer rules, but having to register and microchip them will make for more responsible owners and be better for the ecosystem."

Cat Appeal Northam founder Pat Anderson said Mr Castrilli had assured her the legislation would pass before the end of the year.

"Northam has a huge cat problem – I can think of more than a dozen colonies of stray cats around Northam off the top of my head," she said.

"Of course guidelines would need to be put in place for the ranger to be able to take care of it; personally I would like to see curfews in place as well."

Shire of Northam executive manager of regulatory services Phil Steven said the Shire supported the proposed Bill but would likely require an additional staff member to cope with the extra workload.

"There will be additional costs for staff and systems for enforcement of registration, identification and sterilisation," he said.

"The Shire would need one additional casual or part-time staff member around November, 2012."

Mr Steven said the Shire rangers could also face about 20 hours added to their workload.



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WILDMAN

27/06/2011

TOTALLY agree "Kinchar". However, this law isn't retrospective so no real effect will come through for a few years. I believe it only applies to new kittens after the Law is passed. Still, anything is better than nothing



KINCHAR

27/06/2011

Too many strays and feral cats all over destroying wild life. About time more control and reduce problem all over.

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