

Fact Sheet 2 – Containment Collars

Legal requirements for the use of electronic collars

Introduction

An electronic collar is an animal collar that is designed to be capable of imparting an electric shock to an animal.

People using electronic collars must comply with legal requirements under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Regulations 2008.

This fact sheet outlines the legal requirements relating to electronic 'containment collars', worn by cats or dogs as part of a containment system.

Legal requirements relating to the use of 'anti-bark collars', and 'remote training collars' for dogs are covered in a separate fact sheet.

General legal requirements relating to the use of electronic collars

You must not use an electronic collar on an animal that is not a dog or cat.

You must only use authorised electronic collars on cats and dogs. In relation to dogs, authorised electronic collars mean a 'remote training collar', an 'anti-bark collar', or a 'containment collar. In relation to cats, authorised electronic collars mean a 'containment collar'.

You must not use an authorised electronic collar unless:

- A veterinary practitioner has examined the physical health and temperament of the dog or cat and reasonably believes that the dog or cat is suitable to have an authorised electronic collar used on it; and
- The dog or cat is over 6 months of age; and
- A collar is not left on the dog or cat for more than 12 hours in any 24 hour period; and

- The use is in accordance with any instructions for use of the collar provided by the manufacturer; and
- The dog or cat is introduced to the use of the collar in accordance with a training program that complies with a code of practice made under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act (if any); and
- The collar complies with the following specifications¹: a) the power of the collar must not exceed either 15 milliamps root mean square or 100 milliamps single pulse with a maximum of 3 milliamps per second; and b) the length of the stimulation period must be limited by an automatic safety cut-out; and c) the collar must provide for variable levels of static stimulation; and
- The collar contacts have safe, rounded points¹; and
- The distance between the collar contact points does not exceed 60 millimetres¹.

Specific legal requirements relating to containment collars

'Containment collar' means an electric collar that is designed to be worn by an animal as part of a containment system.

'Containment system' means a method of containing animals to a specific area through the use of a boundary wire and transmitter that sends a radio signal to a receiver in a containment collar, which then delivers an electric shock to an animal wearing the collar if it gets too close to the boundary wire.

¹ If the collar meets the Electronic Collar Manufacturers Association (ECMA) standards you can presume it meets these requirements.

A person must not use a containment collar on a dog unless the person has ensured that the dog is trained to the use of the containment system and collar by

- A veterinary practitioner, a qualified dog trainer or competent trainer; or
- A person under the supervision and written instructions of a veterinary practitioner, a qualified dog trainer or a competent trainer.

A person must not use a containment collar on a cat unless the person has ensured that the cat is trained to the use of the containment system and collar by

- A veterinary practitioner or competent trainer; or
- A person under the supervision and written instructions of a veterinary practitioner or a competent trainer.

A 'qualified dog trainer' is defined as "a person who meets the requirements of regulation 49(2) of the Domestic (Feral and Nuisance) Animals Regulations 2005".

A 'competent trainer' means a person who is employed by a company that sells containment systems and who is competent to conduct a containment system training program for dogs or cats that complies with the relevant Code of Practice (if any).

For more information

Contact the Department of Primary Industries Customer Service Centre on ph 136 186, or visit www.dpi.vic.gov.au/animalwelfare

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