

A dog's tail *Tale*



Kia ora Masterton dog owners

The Animal Services team would like to start this year's edition of A Dog's Tale by thanking all the dogs who have kept their owners out of trouble in the past year.

We know dogs are a huge part of life for many people in Masterton District. Here's some of what we do to keep dogs and people happy together.

Dog safety programmes offered by Animal Services

School Visits:

An officer will come to your child's school and give a talk about how to stay safe around dogs, including how to approach a dog and what to do if they are confronted by an aggressive dog. The talk also includes a meet and greet with Scruffy, our little Schnauzer cross dog, who has been doing this for the last three years. They can pat him and practice how to approach a dog properly. Please contact us if interested at: animalservices@mstn.govt.nz

Community Visits:

We also offer a short presentation aimed at people entering private properties, e.g. courier drivers and community carers. All we need is a computer with a USB drive connection. We focus on what to do before and during a visit, and how to take evasive action against an aggressive dog. We come to the business to make it easier for you. The presentation takes about 10 minutes plus time for questions.

Should I walk my dog off leash?

Before letting your dog explore off-leash, honestly assess if they're trained well enough to reliably return when called. Your dog must consistently respond to verbal commands like 'sit', 'stand', 'stay', and most critically, 'come'. Remember, as a dog owner, you must maintain control of your dog at all times. This is not just good practice but a legal requirement under regulations like the Dog Control Act 1996. Always verify that you can walk your dog off-leash in the area before making the decision.

A dog running up to other people or dogs uninvited is not "friendly" behaviour - even in designated off-leash areas. It's disruptive and potentially threatening. Many dogs, even social ones, can be startled or defensive when approached by an unfamiliar dog rushing toward them. Remember, not all dogs are suitable off-leash candidates, regardless of how well-behaved they seem at home.



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Updating dog details

I am selling or want to rehome my dog, what do I do?

If you sell or rehome a dog it is important that both you and the new owner advise the Council, in writing (easy online), of the change of ownership. Both you and the new owner need to give us full details of the new owner, complete with residential address and contact details. You have 14 days to this - it is free.

I am moving to another address or to a new district, what do I do?

When you move house within the district where your dog is registered, you need to advise the Council in writing (easy online) within 14 days of your move. If you are moving to a new district, you have six weeks to notify both the council where your dog was registered and the council in the area you are moving to your change of address. It is free.

My dog has died, what do I do?

If your dog has passed away, you need to notify the Council in writing (easy online) to update your records. If it is part way through the registration year you will receive a refund, pro rata, for the time left in the registration.

Online forms can be found on our website www.mstn.govt.nz by searching "update dog account".



Some Events to look out for:

Wagging Trails will be back again – July/August (This will be dependent on the parvo situation at the time)

Dogs in Togs – October/November 2025 and March/April 2026

Cheap Chips (Microchipping) – October 2025 (prior to Guy Fawkes)

Opening of the new Animal Shelter – November/December 2025

Key Dates to remember

Mark them on your calendar!!

Early June

Registration invoices sent

30 June

End of 2024/25 registration year. RDO Owners must pay in full by this date

31 July

Registration must be paid in full to avoid additional 50 percent penalty

1 August

50 percent penalty added to all unpaid registration fees

1 October

\$300 Infringement notices issued for failing to register (registration must still also be paid)

December

Unpaid infringements are sent to court

Reminder: ALL dogs must be registered and microchipped by three months of age (12 weeks).

Parvo virus threat

Parvo virus has hit the headlines again with local veterinary clinics reporting a rise in cases. Parvovirus is a highly contagious and potentially deadly virus that primarily affects dogs. It spreads through direct dog-to-dog contact or contact with contaminated faeces, surfaces, food bowls, and even people's shoes.

The virus causes severe vomiting, bloody diarrhoea, dehydration, lethargy, and fever.

Without prompt treatment, the disease can be fatal – especially for young or unvaccinated dogs.

The best protection is vaccination.

- Ensure your dog's vaccinations are all up-to-date
- Avoid dog parks or public spaces until puppies are fully vaccinated.
- Disinfect shoes and wash hands after contact with unknown dogs.
- Regularly sanitise pet bowls, crates, and high-contact surfaces.



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