

Why do communities enact pet limits?

In many cases, pet limits are put in place because of nuisance barking or roaming dogs. Some communities also believe that if there are limits in place, it will take care of the few irresponsible dog owners who breed dogs in unsanitary conditions.

This simply is not true. There are existing Local and State animal nuisance and cruelty laws that can be applied to these few offenders. There are also existing State laws regarding human health that may be applied under certain circumstances.

Fancier permits in some Wisconsin communities take away a person's Constitutional Rights.

There are some communities in Wisconsin that have enacted pet limits that allow for more dogs if a person applies for a "fancier's permit". The problem with most of these permits are that you have to get approval from your neighbors every year, you must open your home (if that is where you keep your dogs) to inspections, and pay yearly fees that are sometimes cost prohibitive. This yearly fee is on top of the yearly licensing fee.

The inspections are performed by people who do not understand the various types of dog husbandry that is based on the breed of dog, rather than generalizations.

DFOW is a volunteer organization.

Members include individual pet owners and breeders, dog clubs, veterinarians, and breed specific rescue volunteers.

DFOW works with elected officials to try to help with laws that make sense and do not cause hardship on responsible dog owners.

DFOW's membership base consists of the most knowledgeable people in Wisconsin in regards to dogs. We can provide elected officials with substantiated materials regarding the proper way to



raise dogs; why breed specific legislation, mandatory spay/neuter, and pet limits do not work, and why intrusive laws can actually create public health risks by driving people underground to protect their pets.

The Dog Federation of Wisconsin is registered with the State of Wisconsin for lobbying efforts. Our lobbyist is Gary Goyke.

Please notify DFOW if your community is considering revising their existing animal code.

DFOW

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Dog Federation of Wisconsin

Educational Series

"Why Pet Limits Don't Work"

Many communities in Wisconsin have passed or are consider passing laws limiting the number of dogs a person may own.

This brochure will explain why pet limits don't work.

Why don't pet limits work?



There is no "magic number" of how many dogs a person may own before they create problems in a community.

The majority of police complaints deal with single dog incidents caused by irresponsible pet owners.

When a community enacts a pet limit law, many people stop licensing their dogs and some stop taking their dogs to the veterinarian so that there is no "paper trail". The reason people feel they are forced to do this is because they love their dogs and do not want to get rid of them because of some arbitrarily chosen limit put in place by well-meaning, yet not understanding local government officials. This creates a public health risk.

People who are animal hoarders are not affected by pet limit laws. Animal hoarding is a mental disorder. Existing State health and animal cruelty laws can—and have been successfully applied in these cases.

Why responsible dog owners in many cases can't be compliant with limit laws.

Dog fanciers who may also breed an occasional litter of dogs may have written contracts with their buyers. Many of these contracts state that if the new owner needs to relinquish their dog for any reason, that it comes back to the breeder. It is not uncommon for a typical fancier to own more than 4 dogs. There are communities in Wisconsin where there are combined pet limits of 2–5 animals.



If a breeder needs to take back a dog of their breeding, they would be breaking the law.

For someone who is trying to be a responsible dog breeder by doing all the right things (such as providing for the puppies that they produce for that dog's lifetime), limit laws turn these people into criminals.

Even fanciers who do not breed their dogs are affected by pet limits. These people (many times husband and wife have their own dog) compete in canine events. When their dogs have achieved all titles available, or have become elderly, they will purchase younger dogs. They love their other dogs and would not consider getting rid of them in order to meet some arbitrarily chosen number that was enacted in their community.

Pet limits cripple breed specific rescue and humane societies.

When there are pet limits in place in a given community, even if a person would like to purchase a dog from a rescue organization to help the dogs, if they have existing dogs, pet limits might prevent them from adopting. Some humane societies have only a few days waiting period for a dog to be adopted before the animal is euthanized.

Breed specific rescue organizations face the biggest challenge when it comes to pet limit laws.

Many fanciers support their breed's rescue organizations by providing foster care for dogs that need to be re-homed. These people own their own dogs and if pet limits are in place in their community, it would prevent them from taking care of any other dogs.



When it comes to the proper care of pure bred puppies, fanciers are the best resource to place a puppy for foster care.

Pet limits will effectively eliminate foster care of dogs.