

Managing Brisbane's Health, Safety and Amenity

Why a Health, Safety and Amenity Local Law?

Brisbane City Council is the largest local government in Australia, and as Brisbane continues to be a magnet for visitors and new residents, the challenge to maintain all those elements that make our City such a drawcard becomes greater.

Council takes its responsibilities to provide leadership and manage our resources to create a vibrant, successful and liveable city for the future very seriously. The *Living in Brisbane 2026 Vision* was developed through extensive consultation with residents, businesses, employees and other stakeholders to find out what it is that makes Brisbane such a unique and attractive city, and how we can maintain those qualities well into this century. This consultation showed that having a friendly, clean and safe city is an important value to the people who live and work here.

The *Health, Safety and Amenity Local Law 2009* was created to manage some of the concerns raised by the community about environmental health, personal safety, and the attractiveness of our city. These concerns have been brought to Council's attention over a period of time through letters, petitions and complaints to our call centre. Our community has made it clear that they would like Council to be involved in reducing the impacts of undesirable behaviour on our quality of life.

While some of the provisions included in the local law have been around for many years in other pieces of legislation, others are new. Both the new and existing provisions are designed to help Council manage behaviours that threaten the health or safety of our community, or reduce the attractiveness or pleasantness of our suburbs and places of work.

What Does the Law Cover?

The *Health, Safety and Amenity Local Law 2009* helps to address the following:

- waste control, including standards for bins, and management of flies and odour
- backyard burning
- vehicle maintenance and camping on public roads
- hazardous fencing
- maintenance of swimming pools and ornamental water features
- abandoned shopping trolleys
- graffiti on private property
- unsolicited advertising material and community newspapers
- unsightly objects and vegetation
- fly poster signs

Community safety is a key priority for Brisbane City Council. Managing **backyard burning** and **refuse control** is important for community health – keeping our air clear and our natural environment safe, and ensuring rubbish doesn't cause odour or become a breeding ground for flies.

Managing the way in which our **roads** are used is important in ensuring our citizens' safety, as are some of the requirements for **fencing on private property** and **ornamental lakes, ponds and pools**.



Bins being left on the footpath long after they have been emptied is both a source of frustration for residents and a safety hazard. When bins are left out on some of Brisbane's narrower footpaths, they can force pedestrians onto the road. When they're left on the road, they're a hazard to all road users. The community has made it clear that they'd like Council to manage this issue. Of course we realise that sometimes it's not possible to bring your bin back inside on the day it's emptied, which is why we will always talk to you before we do anything else.

If people are having difficulties meeting these requirements due to age, disability or other health condition, they should contact Council on 3403 8888 and we will be happy to assist. People who are reasonably unable bring their bins in will not be fined.

Shopping trolleys taken outside of shopping precincts are both a safety hazard and an amenity concern. Often they end up left on the side of the road or the footpath where they obstruct movement or create a traffic hazard. They may also end up in waterways, where they trap debris and contribute to localised flooding. Abandoned shopping trolleys also cost Council money to retrieve and store, and are an eyesore. The *Health, Safety and Amenity Local Law 2009* asks both shop owners and shoppers to be responsible for ensuring that shopping trolleys are not taken out of shopping precincts and left abandoned on streets or in parks.

If there is a good reason for the trolley to have been taken outside the shopping precinct you will not be penalised. Things like age, disability or other health condition; or your ability to understand what the law means for you (e.g. English is your second language) might be discussed with you.

Graffiti can make an area look run down and unattractive. Often the presence of graffiti leads to an increase in other petty crime activity in the area, and can make residents and visitors feel less safe. Most graffiti is committed on public, commercial and industrial property and while Council already has measures in place to manage graffiti in public places, this new local law provides us with the tools to also manage graffiti in these other target areas. Council does not intend to fine the owners or occupiers of residential premises that have been the victim of graffiti crime.

The local law also provides Council with the means to manage other amenity issues like **community newspapers, unsolicited advertising material, unsightly yards and gardens and fly poster signs.**

How Will Council Enforce the Law?

The *Health, Safety and Amenity Local Law 2009* is about keeping Brisbane clean, green, safe and attractive. We know that the majority of Brisbane's residents and visitors do the right thing already and care about Brisbane as much as we do. However where that is not the case, or where education and requests for compliance haven't changed behaviour, this local law provides us with additional tools to keep Brisbane beautiful.

Our enforcement approach focuses on explaining why we all need to protect our health, safety and amenity; and working with our residents and visitors to find solutions. Council would much rather achieve voluntary compliance than pursue enforcement action. Most importantly, for those members of the community who, for whatever reason, find it difficult to comply with Council's requirements, we are committed to helping them.

To find out more, contact Council on 3403 8888 or visit our website www.brisbane.qld.gov.au.

