

## Ordinance Awareness

### Dogs: Responsibilities and Requirements

Having a dog comes with a set of responsibilities. A dog needs to be provided with good care and maintenance. A dog needs to learn behaviors that help to make it compatible with the environment in which it lives. While it is said that dog is man's best friend, it could also be said that man must also be dog's best friend in order to help the dog learn the necessary behaviors. By complying with local ordinances, man can contribute to making his dog a more appreciated member of the community.

Our local ordinances are designed to protect dog, owner and public. Observance of these ordinances is required, and when adhered to, they make for a safer and more pleasant setting for all residents. The Chatham animal ordinance covers several topics outlined below:

**Licensing:** A license must be acquired for each dog in the household. A newly acquired dog must be licensed within ten days of acquisition or by the required age. The licenses are good from the time they are obtained through to January thirty-first of the following year.

**Rabies:** Protection against rabies is required. Rabies injections are offered annually at a designated Chatham Borough facility, are preannounced and can be obtained free of charge.

Rabies exemptions due to infection or medication regimens are permissible

**Lost Tags:** Lost license or rabies tags can be replaced by applying to the health department. There is a charge.

**Pet Waste:** All dog owners and keepers are required to immediately and properly dispose of dog waste that is deposited on public or private property that is not owned or possessed by owner of the dog. Exemptions are made for owners or keepers of disability/assistance animals while such animal is being used for the purpose of assisting.

**Leash Requirements:** Owners are required to keep their dogs on leash whether walking through the neighborhood or on any public or private property that is not their own unless specific consent allowing the dog to run unleashed is given by the owner or keeper of the particular premises.

For dogs running at large, fees will be charged, a minimum of fifty dollars for first time offenders and one hundred dollars for said offenses occurring two times or more.

**Front yard confinement:** When permitted to freely roam their front yards, dogs must be kept a minimum of six feet back from pedestrian walkways. The means of restriction and confinement must be secure so as to avoid any possible emotional or physical injury to either human or animal passersby.

In the event of a dog bite, the bite must be reported to the health department or Chatham Board of Health.

Consistent and responsible adherence to the aforementioned ordinances is valued and appreciated. Thank you to all Chatham residents who make a concerted effort to comply.

Details pertaining to these, and other Chatham ordinances can be found in the book of ordinance codes available at the Chatham Municipal Building.