



Enforcement of Pet Rules - Something New!

By Barbara Holmes on June 30, 2011



Most condo corporations have rules that state that pets are not permitted to soil on the Corporation's property and owners must clean up after their pets. Despite rules like this, dog poop is often found on condo properties, particularly in the winter months when the short daylight hours enable offending pet owners to breach these rules "under cover of darkness".

The Toronto Star recently reported about a service being offered to US condo associations to identify delinquent owners. PooPrints is a dog identification service that maintains a private dog DNA data base for each property, so that any dog poop found on the property can be matched with the culprit. Dog owners are required to register their pets with management, pay the registration fee and provide their dog's DNA sample by way of a cheek swab. When management finds poop on the property a sample is sent to the lab in Tennessee to identify the offending dog from the condo's dog database. The cost of the lab analysis is charged to the owner of the unit in which the dog resides. PooPrints also provides a unique pet identification tag for each dog to wear on its collar so that it is easy for management to confirm if a dog has been registered.

In the US condo associations are imposing hefty fines on owners whose pets soil the condo property, with the hope that the fines will be a deterrent to future breaches. While condo corporations in Ontario are unable to fine owners for a breach of the rules, this type of service can assist condo corporations in enforcing their rules, as it will enable them to identify those owners who are not complying. However, before going ahead with this type of service, condo corporations will need to amend their rules to require that owners register their dogs and provide the cheek swab and to specify that unit owners are responsible for paying the registration fee and the costs related to the DNA analysis of the poop sample. Such rules could also specify that after a certain number of violations, as supported by the DNA evidence, the dog will be deemed to be a nuisance animal and must be removed from the property. We expect that once these rules are circulated to the unit owners this will stir up considerable controversy, particularly among dog owners!

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