

# DocuPet and the City of Port Colborne

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## Summary

Through direct partnership with the Welland & District SPCA DocuPet has been contracted to manage the City of Port Colborne's Pet Licensing Program since June 20th, 2016. In the first year of managing the program, licence sales increased by 11% over the baseline of 680. Since launch, the program has been successful in reducing labour burden, adding new tools and functionality to animal control officers and administrators, and adding new value for pet owners.

Recently DocuPet ran a by-law awareness campaign (explained in detail below) that has led to a 97% increase in pet licence sales over the baseline in 2018. Total pets licensed in Port Colborne as of March 19th, 2018 is 1344.

## Background

The City of Port Colborne requires all dogs living in the City to be licensed. This is an important by-law for the City and its constituents, for the following reasons:

- For the pet owner - community funds generated from this by-law support important initiatives such as animal control services and shelter services for stray animals.
- For the individual pet owner and their pet - this by-law is intended to protect both from unidentifiable pets not being able to be returned home should they become lost.

- The community at large - is serviced by the mandate for pet owners to practice responsible pet ownership and by-law officers and animal control staff having the tools and information required to do their jobs well.

## The DocuPet Service

DocuPet is the most advanced service of its kind in North America and services more than 20 communities and regions. DocuPet provides a fully-outsourced solution for municipalities including an online pet licensing website, quality pet tags, customer service, renewal reminders, and marketing programs.

The DocuPet solution has been developed to combat the four primary reasons pet owners fail to license their animals:

1. Lack of convenience: "Ugh, what a pain!"
2. Lack of awareness: "I didn't even know!"
3. Perception of the license fee as "another tax grab": "What's in it for me?"
4. Lack of enforcement: "...and what if I don't?"

DocuPet improves convenience: pet owners can license their pets online, over the phone, or at many offline locations such as City Hall or local retailers.

## Information About the Bylaw Awareness Program

### The Role

Community Representative are attracted to the role based on its physical nature and the company's mission to provide a safe and happy home for every pet. ***The role is to drop off materials only - representatives do not knock on doors or ring doorbells. They do not seek to disturb anyone throughout the course of their day.*** Our representatives are however happy to speak with anyone they meet along their route, should anyone wish to speak to them. Their hours of work are between 9AM and 5:30PM. Representatives will at all times be wearing at minimum one of the following pieces of DocuPet-branded clothing: a toque, a polo, or a fleece jacket. Representatives do not bear ID.

### The Process

Representatives follow an assigned route each day. Consulting this route, they determine which homes not to visit because they are already home to licensed pets, as well as which homes that, based on our records, are home to pets with expired licences. As they visit all other homes on their route, if a dog barks as they walk up to the door, or a home features a "Beware of Dog" or "Save My Pet Sticker", they will leave material indicating a pet has been identified at the residence. Our

representatives have been formally trained both in the classroom and on the job, and are under strict instruction to only make note of obvious signs and respect residents privacy.

### The Materials

These representatives are following an assigned route and carrying two different sets of materials. One is for residences at which they clearly identify a pet, or based on our records show to be home to an expired pet licence. It explains that a pet has been identified at the residence and that this pet must be licensed. The second door hanger simply explains the by-law and makes it clear that pets must be licensed. A letter is sent to homes where a pet was identified but no licence was purchased within two weeks of the representatives visit.

All of the materials are listed below for reference.

### Pet Identified (front and back)

**We have identified a dog at this residence.**  
Our records show that this dog is not licensed with the City of Port Colborne at this address.

## **YOU MUST LICENSE YOUR DOG WITH THE CITY OF PORT COLBORNE**

You must license your dog(s) by:

1. **Visiting [portcolborne.docupet.com](http://portcolborne.docupet.com) to license and pay online.**
2. Visiting the Welland SPCA at 60 Provincial Street. Please note operating hours for Welland SPCA are 10:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm on Saturdays, and 12:00pm to 3:00pm on Sunday (closed on holidays).

**How much does it cost to license? →**



	Nov 1 – Mar 15	After Mar 15
Fertile Dog	\$25	\$35
Spayed/Neutered Dog	\$15	\$25

*Dog licences are valid from January 1st to December 31st in the year they were purchased.*

### **HOMES WITH UNLICENSED DOGS WILL BE SUBJECT TO BY-LAW OFFICER FOLLOW UP.**

Failure to license dogs with the City of Port Colborne may result in charges being laid pursuant to the City of Port Colborne Dog Control By-law.



Pet Unidentified (front and back)

**DID YOU KNOW?  
DOGS MUST BE  
LICENSED WITH  
THE CITY OF  
PORT COLBORNE**

You must license your dog(s) by:

1. **Visiting [portcolborne.docupet.com](http://portcolborne.docupet.com) to license and pay online.**
2. Visiting the Welland SPCA at 60 Provincial Street. Please note operating hours for Welland SPCA are 10:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm on Saturdays, and 12:00pm to 3:00pm on Sunday (closed on holidays).

**How much does it cost to license? →**



**Welland & District SPCA**  
Welland & District Humane Society

905-735-1552

	Nov 1 – Mar 15	After Mar 15
Fertile Dog	\$25	\$35
Spayed/Neutered Dog	\$15	\$25

*Dog licences are valid from January 1st to December 31st in the year they were purchased.*

**HOMES WITH UNLICENSED DOGS  
WILL BE SUBJECT TO BY-LAW  
OFFICER FOLLOW UP.**

Failure to license dogs with the City of Port Colborne may result in charges being laid pursuant to the City of Port Colborne Dog Control By-law.



1-855-249-1370

### Follow Up Letter Copy

We have identified the presence of a pet during a recent visit to your residence. Our records indicate that **THIS PET IS NOT LICENSED WITH THE CITY OF PORT COLBORNE** at this address. The City of Port Colborne Dog Control By-law, as amended states that every owner of a dog shall license the animal(s) with the City.

#### You must license your dog(s) by:

- 1) Visiting portcolborne.docupet.com to license and pay online; or
- 2) Visiting the Welland SPCA at 60 Provincial Street. Please note operating hours for Welland SPCA are 10:00am to 5:00pm, Monday through Friday, 10:00am to 4:00pm on Saturdays, and 12:00pm to 3:00pm on Sunday (closed on holidays).

**How much does it cost?** *All licences purchased after December 31<sup>st</sup> are valid for the calendar year which they are purchased in. Licences purchased between November 1 and December 31<sup>st</sup> are valid for the following year.*

<i>Pet</i>	<b>Nov 1- Mar 1</b>	<b>After March 15</b>
<b><i>Fertile Dog</i></b>	\$25.00	\$35.00
<b><i>Sprayed/ Neutered Dog</i></b>	\$15.00	\$25.00

\*Please note that Port Colborne's licensing program operates on a calendar year. This means that all licences expire on December 31st.

Upon licensing you will receive access to lost and found pet services provided by the DocuPet system. Within 5 - 10 business days, you will receive your licence package including a unique pet identification tag.

**HOMES WITH UNLICENSED DOGS WILL BE SUBJECT TO BY-LAW OFFICER FOLLOW UP.** Failure to license dogs with City of Port Colborne may result in charges being laid pursuant to the City of Port Colborne Dog Control By-law. **If your pet has been licensed within the past 5 days no action is required.**

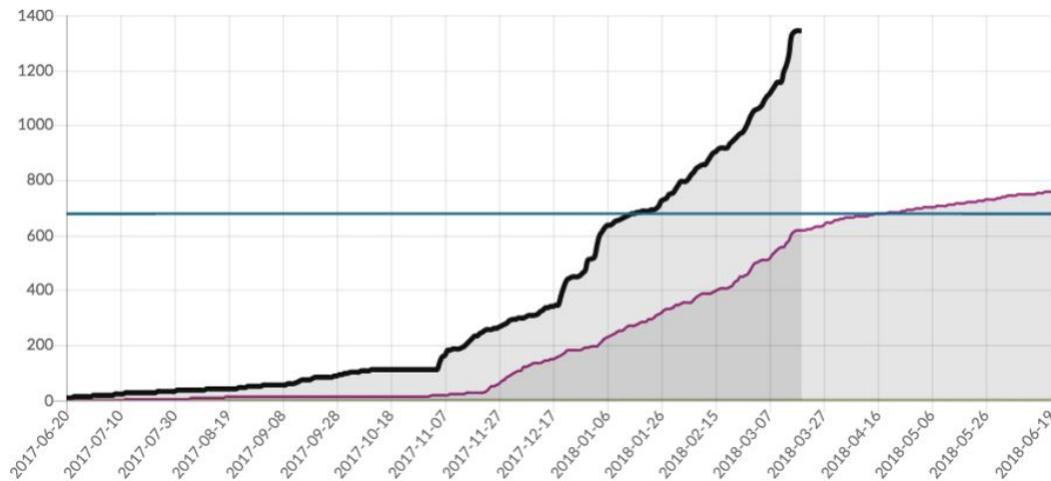
**If you have any questions about this notice please connect with:**

- DocuPet at 1-855-249-1370 or info@portcolborne.docupet.com, or
- The Welland and District SPCA at 905-735-1552

## Results of the By-law Awareness Program

Beginning on the 12th of December, 2017 DocuPet launched it's By-law Awareness Program in the City of Port Colborne to further increase licence sales. 3822 homes have been visited by our representative resulting in a total of 271 licence sales. The below chart illustrates Port Colborne's licence sales up to March 19th, 2018 from contract Year One (2017) in purple, and sales from contract Year Two (2018) in black.

On March 15th, 2018 all routes had been visited in the City of Port Colborne and the campaign was completed. Follow up letters will continue to be mailed into April.



## Handling Comments from Residents

The following outlines common questions from pet owners on licensing and the by-law awareness program. Suggested responses are italicized.

**What is the bylaw awareness program?**

*DocuPet's Bylaw Awareness program is a city approved initiative that is currently operating in Port Colborne as well as several cities across Ontario. The purpose of the program is to send representatives door to door to visit homes with the intention of educating citizens about pet licensing by-laws.*

**I received a Did You Know knocker from DocuPet - I do not have a pet**

*Thanks for letting us know. We are running a pet licensing by-law awareness program in the City of Port Colborne and this knocker was left for informational purposes only. You won't receive any further communication.*

**I received an identified knocker or letter from DocuPet - I do not have a pet**

*Thanks for letting us know. We are running a pet licensing by-law awareness program in the City of Port Colborne and this knocker was left because there was evidence of a pet at your home.*

- *Beware of Dog Sign: It is common for these to be posted for security reasons when there is no pet at all. Good news - it works because you fooled us!*
- *"Save my Pets" Sticker: Please do remove this sticker if it is from a previous home owner or was posted for a pet that you no longer have. Often these stickers are recognized by emergency responders and keeping it posted may cause someone take a risk for an animal that is not actually in the home.*

*\*Regardless of how the pet is identified, indicators will be placed on these addresses so there is no further follow up.*