



**KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
your council, your community

## *Keeping Backyard Chooks fact sheet*

There are a many good reasons for keeping a small number of hens in the backyard of the suburban house. Chooks are an elegant solution to common garden chores such as weeding, fertilizing, tilling and controlling pests.

Chickens are actually quite friendly animals and provide a great way to teach children about responsibility and how to care for living things. They provide experience in small animal farming and egg hatching.

Feed is inexpensive, and other natural foods can be fed to them such as food waste from last night's dinner e.g. fruit and vegetables, cooked meat, pasta, rice and bread, which can then be turned into fertilisers allowing households to live more sustainably.

Hens need to have a good, warm, and safe environment in which to lay their eggs. If their environment is conducive to production, they can lay a great deal of eggs every week.



## What are the regulations for keeping poultry?

Keeping chickens is a popular activity for many people, however it can result in public health and nuisance complaints to Council if the poultry are poorly kept and maintained. Particular requirements are outlined under The State Environmental Planning Policy (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008, part 2, subdivision 21.

In an urban residential area, a chicken coop structure must be:

- limited to one per property
- limited to a floor area of 15m<sup>2</sup>
- located in the rear yard
- adequately drained
- a distance from the boundary of 3m
- occupied by no more than 5 fowls or poultry
- a maximum height of 3m above ground level (existing)
- made of materials that blend with the environment and be non-reflective

- located at least 4.5m from any dwelling, public hall, school or premises used for the manufacture, preparation, sale or storage of food
- paved with concrete, mineral asphalt, or situated on clean sand underneath the roosts or perches.

The poultry yard must:

- at all times be kept clean and free from offensive odours
- be enclosed to prevent poultry from escaping
- be kept under such conditions as to not create a nuisance or a health risk

Should the coop, yard and/or birds not be kept to the above standards made under Schedule 2 of The LOCAL GOVERNMENT (GENERAL) REGULATION 2005, orders may be issued to ensure healthy conditions are maintained and public health is protected.



To prevent noise nuisances and protect the amenity of the area, Council does not permit roosters to be kept within a residential area.

Remember that it is always best to speak with your neighbours before purchasing poultry.

For further information on housing, space and equipment, health and welfare please contact NSW Department of Primary Industries on 1800 808 095.

Should you wish to discuss the requirement for the keeping of poultry please contact Council's Environmental Health Officer on 4232 0444.

