

Seagulls

ADVICE FOR BUILDING OWNERS/BUSINESSES

In recent months there has been a significant increase in the number of seagulls observed within central Dandenong. Silver Gulls, or Seagulls as they are commonly known, are an Australian native bird that is protected under the Victorian Wildlife Act 1975, which makes it an offence to harm them.

Background

The normal seagull roosting season is from July to October-November. There has been a strong roosting season in Dandenong this year and action is needed to prevent the return of a larger problem next season.

Council has sought advice from experts who suggest the seagulls have easy access to food from surrounding landfills and tips as far away as fifty (50) kilometres. The advice also indicates the seagulls are more likely to be here for seasonal roosting because of the abundance of flat roof spaces available.

Health risks

The Victorian Department of Health and Human Services advises no specific public health risks are associated with the presence of seagulls and seagull faeces.

Risks that can arise from the increase in bird numbers include:

- Damage to assets, both public and private – corrosion caused by bird droppings
- Blockage of gutters and flooding
- Impact on local economy
- Contamination of stormwater off roofs
- Amenity issues involving unsightly fouling of roofs, cars, work and recreation areas
- Creation of slip hazards
- Animal welfare

What is Council doing?

Council will be undertaking work at four buildings in central Dandenong as follows:

1. Installing UV exclusion systems on the roof of the following buildings:
 - a) Dandenong Civic Centre
 - b) Drum Theatre
 - c) Thomas Street multi-deck car park
 - d) Walker Street multi-deck car park

These are designed to emit intense light that birds interpret in the same way humans visualise fire and therefore stay away.

2. Removal of empty nests from these buildings after breeding season has ended.
3. Thorough cleaning and deodorising of all nest areas where they are found.
4. Installing appropriate infrastructure at these sites to prevent future roosting.
5. After the items above have been actioned, Council will clean these building facades to remove any bird dropping residue.

Council is also committed to ensuring businesses follow correct food waste procedures. If you see any businesses not following best practice, you should report the details to Council for investigation.

What else can you do?

If you own a building or operate a business within the Central Activity District there are many ways you can help discourage seagulls from nesting and increasing in population.

1. Preventing access to these spots is the most effective solution.
2. Removal of any (empty) nests found on your building using an experienced contractor.
3. Removal of bird droppings from building surrounds using an experienced contractor.
4. Organise an experienced cleaner to sanitise the area to ensure that any scent left behind this breeding season will be gone.
5. Once the roof, flat surfaces and building surrounds have been sanitised, businesses can invest in appropriately fitted roof exclusion systems to prevent future access to their premises.

Please note, the ineffective and inhumane use of roof exclusion structures is in breach of State Government legislation and is an offence under the Wildlife Act 1975, so this must be done properly.

You should avoid:

- Spikes/physical barriers/ fine wires
- Intimidating structure
- Kites

Further assistance

There are a number of companies that can provide assistance with the management of seagulls, including:

- > Ensystem Australasia Ph: 133 536
www.ensystem.com.au
- > Elite Bird Control Ph: 1300 675 502
www.elitebird.com.au
- > A Class Bird Control Ph: 0414 173 173
aclassbirdcontrol.com.au

Local Wildlife carers can provide advice to businesses and assist with care of injured birds:

Animalia Wildlife Shelter (0435 822 699)

AWARE Wildlife Rescue (0412 433 727)

South Oakleigh Wildlife Shelter (9503 9872)

Information regarding permits and regulations or issues relating to wildlife, contact the Department of Sustainability and Environment: Wildlife Officer (136 186)

For Information regarding animal welfare, contact the RSPCA on 9224 2222.

For more information on seagull management, check our website: www.greaterdandenong.com/birds



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