

Inquiry about Business Licensing By-law

Environmental Stewardship and Action Community Advisory Committee | April 3, 2024

Background

ESACAC's mandate includes the development and monitoring of London's Urban Forest Strategy and Climate Emergency Action Plan and a resource for other related policies and strategies; the maximization of the retention of trees and natural areas; and other aspects of environmental concerns as may be suggested by the Municipal Council, its other Committees, or the Civic Administration. The following questions are regarding an item included in the 2024 work plan for ESACAC that was received by Council in February: *"targeted public education at points of sale about preventing spread of invasive species."*

The sale of fireworks in London is a relevant example. Fireworks business licensing is subject to certain conditions under the [Business Licensing By-law](#). The March 18, 2024 [report to the Community and Protective Services Committee](#) included a recommendation to amend the Business Licensing By-law L.-131-16 by adding the new schedule 20 "Consumer Fireworks Sales Business". Under the new schedule, section 2.0 Powers of Licence Manager includes: *2.1 Prescribing the manner, form, and content of information regarding the regulations of the Fireworks By-law including public safety information as outlined in the **consumer information requirements** of this Schedule.* (bold emphasis added)

Section 3.0 Prohibitions includes: *3.4 No person shall possess for the purpose of sale, offer for sale, cause, or permit to be sold, or sell Consumer Fireworks to any person without providing consumer information regarding the Fireworks By-law and any associated public safety information in the form and content prescribed by the Licence Manager.*

The Business Licensing By-law schedule 14 applies to licensing of Pet Shops. Similar to the fireworks licensing, under schedule 14, section 2.0 Powers of the License Manager includes *(d) prescribing the information that a Pet Shop licence holder is required under section 4.6 to provide to a person who purchases, acquires or obtains an animal from the Pet Shop licence holder.*

Schedule 14 section 4.0 Regulations includes: *4.6 Every Pet Shop licence holder shall provide to a person who purchases or acquires an animal from them all of the information about the animal as prescribed by the Licence Manager.*

Goldfish are [a problematic invasive species](#) causing harm in London's natural heritage system. The City of London currently provides a print brochure related to dumping of pet goldfish (see Appendix) with information intended for consumers to consider prior to making a purchase. However, this brochure is not made available to consumers at many pet stores in the City that sell goldfish. Correspondence with some franchised pet stores found they are unwilling to voluntarily provide consumer information from the City.

Questions for staff:

1. Where can the public access public safety information about consumer fireworks as outlined in the consumer information requirements? (per the Business Licensing By-law, draft schedule 20, section 2.1) Is this information posted on the City of London website?
2. How do license holders acquire printed materials related to the consumer information requirements? (e.g., are print copies provided by the City or do license holders print their own?)
3. What kinds of consumer information about purchasing animals is already encompassed by the Business Licensing By-law Schedule 14 Regulation 4.6 – *"all of the information about the animal as prescribed by the License Manager"*?
4. Could a similar requirement for providing consumer information about goldfish, such as the existing City of London goldfish pamphlet, be incorporated into requirements for Pet Shop license holders per schedule 14, regulation 4.6?

Appendix

City of London goldfish brochure

What's the problem?

You may bring a Goldfish into your home with the best intentions and then find yourself in the future with a need to find somewhere else for it to live. Goldfish are an invasive species, and bring with them a variety of problems:

- can grow to be 30-35 cm (12-14 in) and weigh several pounds
- can live for 30-40 years
- are messy and should not be kept in small containers
- need large containers as adults with water filtration, oxygen circulation and regular water changes.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I don't want to, or can't, take care of my Goldfish anymore. Can I just flush or release it outside?

A: Pet fish (alive or dead) should never be released outside or flushed down the drain. Released fish can become invasive and/or transmit diseases. Dead fish can also transmit diseases to wild fish. Live fish may survive being flushed and end up in the wild.

Q: What should I do instead?

A: To find a new home for live fish, submit a classified ad or post on social media, offer your fish to a local school, look for a rescue, or ask pet stores if they will take it.

Q: Where can I find more information?

Learn more at these websites:
www.invasivespeciescentre.ca/goldfish
www.thamesriver.on.ca



Protecting our waterways

The problem with Goldfish – what you should know about this invasive species

Prepared by the City of London
Ecological Community
Advisory Committee

london.ca



Why are Goldfish considered an invasive species?

Goldfish are from East Asia and do not belong in nature in North America

Dumping Goldfish creates a bigger problem

Dumped or flushed Goldfish harm native species by:

- growing and multiplying quickly
- eating other fish species' eggs and young
- eating plants and animals native species feed on
- stirring up mud, causing cloudy water that disturbs native fish and destroys their habitat.

Infestation: a growing problem

Goldfish infestations currently occur in London in the Thames River, Westminster Ponds, Sifton Bog, The Coves and other waterways.

Before you buy, consider alternatives to Goldfish

Other types of fish or amphibians are easier to keep as aquarium pets:



Betta fish

- Live 2-5 years
- Remain small, low-mess
- Solitary (easier to keep alone)



Freshwater tropical fish like Guppy, Danio, Tetra, Platy

- Live 1-5 years
- Most remain small in size
- Thrive in most water conditions
- May require a water heater
- Social (best kept in groups)



African dwarf frogs

- Live up to 5 years
- Remain small
- Breathe air from water's surface
- Social (best kept in groups)