



Report to: General Committee

Date Report Authored: May 29, 2012

---

**SUBJECT:** Prohibiting the Keeping of African Dwarf Frogs in Markham  
**PREPARED BY:** B. Wiles, Manager, By-law Enforcement & Licensing, ext. 4851

---

**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1) THAT the report titled 'Prohibiting the Keeping of African Dwarf Frogs in Markham' be received; and,
- 2) THAT Attachment 'A'- the 'Proposed Amendment to the Animal Control By-law to Prohibit the Keeping of African Dwarf Frog By-law' be enacted; and further,
- 3) That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

**PURPOSE:**

To respond to a request to report on the feasibility of prohibiting the keeping of African Dwarf Frogs in the Town of Markham. No additional costs or staff resources are anticipated should the proposed by-law amendment be adopted.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the February 15, 2012, Animal Care Committee Meeting, the Committee moved a motion to have staff investigate the feasibility of prohibiting the keeping and sale of African Dwarf Frogs in Markham because of concerns of possible salmonella poisoning from handling these animals.

In 2011, the Centre for Disease Control (C.D.C.) in the United States reported a total of 241 individuals were infected with the outbreak strain of *Salmonella* Typhimurium. The cases were reported in 42 states since April 1, 2009. These infections were associated with African Dwarf Frogs and the water from their habitats (e.g., tanks or aquariums).

The C.D.C. has since warned parents that children under 5 years old were at high risk for serious *Salmonella* infections and should avoid contact with these frogs, their water and their habitats. Others at high risk and who should avoid contact with water frogs and their habitats include: pregnant women, people who have weak immune systems, such as cancer patients, and those undergoing chemotherapy or organ transplants.

**OPTIONS/ DISCUSSION:**

In February, 2012, the Animal Care Committee raised a specific concern that a children's toy retailer located in Markham was selling the frogs and not providing parents or purchasers with clear instructions or warnings about the potential dangers in handling the frogs. Staff have since spoken with representatives from the retailer and discovered that they have decided to no longer sell the frogs in Markham. No other retailers have been identified as selling these frogs here in Markham.

Legislative Services staff contacted the Infectious Diseases Control Division of the York Region Health Department to inquire about any cases of Salmonella poisoning and since the outbreak in 2009, there have been no cases of salmonella attributable to African Dwarf Frog exposure in York Region. In October of 2009 however, there was one case of salmonella in a resident of Markham, who was linked to the CDC investigation in the United States. This case had the same strain of the virus as the one identified in the U.S. outbreak attributable to contact with African frogs (or food used to feed African frogs). The records for this individual however indicated an exposure to a reptile (lizard) as opposed to a frog.

Staff are recommending the passing of the proposed by-law to amend the Animal Care and Control By-law to prohibit the keeping of African Dwarf Frogs in Markham. This will prevent anyone who does not already have an African Dwarf Frog, from obtaining one.

**FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND TEMPLATE:**

No additional costs or staff resources are anticipated should the proposed by-law be adopted.

**HUMAN RESOURCES CONSIDERATIONS:**

None

**ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

The proposed by-law to prohibit the keeping and sale of African Dwarf Frogs addresses the concerns of residents and protects their health and well-being.

**BUSINESS UNITS CONSULTED AND AFFECTED:**

Legal Services

**RECOMMENDED BY:**

06/06/2012

X



Kimberley Kitteringham  
Town Clerk/ Acting Commissioner Corporate Ser...

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 'A' - Proposed Amendment to the Animal Care and Control By-law to Prohibit the Keeping of African Dwarf Frog By-law