

Dogs and the Brown Dog Tick (2007)

A recent outbreak of Brown Dog Tick in Gunnedah has caused many people some confusion as to best deal with it. Although most cases can be traced to a common infestation point, animals are taking the tick home causing new problems in the family home.

While Gunnedah is fortunate and does not have the commonly known Paralysis tick, it does have many other species of tick including the Brown Dog Tick. The Brown Dog Tick is unique in that it can survive for long periods off the host, which means there can be massive numbers of ticks in the dog's environment either in its kennel or even in the home acting as a reservoir for continual reinfestation.

The female brown dog tick can lay up to 5000 eggs in her lifetime, these ticks then live in cracks between bricks or boards in the floors, walls and roofs of buildings and dog housing. Because of the large numbers of eggs produced by the female, huge numbers of tick may appear in a very short time. Eggs may also survive for long periods in the environment causing recurring infestations despite the efforts of pet owners.

Successful control relies on destroying all stages present and treating the environment to kill the larvae, nymphs and adults. It is important to remove all ticks from the animal. It is also important to remember that ticks spread Q fever and Biliary Fever which are both diseases that can also affect humans.

There are a number of products on the market which are available to assist in control of the tick. These include shampoos, powders, collars, spot-on preparations and oral medications. Please talk to your veterinarian about the best combination for your situation.