



Dane County Humane Society Board of Directors Position Statement Tethering as Primary Means of Confinement

Approved June 16, 2020

Tethering as Primary Means of Confinement

Dane County Humane Society (DCHS) opposes tethering (chaining or tie-out) as the primary means of confinement for dogs because of the adverse physical and behavioral effects on the dogs and potential danger towards people and other animals.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has stated that tethering dogs is inhumane and ruled in 1997 that people and organizations regulated by the USDA cannot keep dogs continuously chained (tethered). (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, 1997)

Due to the negative stresses related to confinement, tethered dogs are vulnerable and hence more at risk for:

- Strangulation and entanglement
- Deprivation of healthy interactions with people and other animals
- Inadequate veterinary care
- Injuries to neck, bones and joints due to the jarring impacts from hitting the end of their tether line hard
- Dehydration from overturned water bowls
- Exposure to extreme weather and temperature changes
- Harassment and injury by people and other animals
- Development of defensive, neurotic and aggressive tendencies (JAVMA, 2003)
- Biting in response to stress, fear and/or frustration (Gershman, 1994)

Tethering does not include: walking a dog on a leash, tying out dog while working in the yard, or letting dog out to go to eliminate on a lead or tie-out.

DCHS supports legislation that prohibits tethering.

References:

- Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, USDA. (1997). Humane Treatment of Dogs; Tethering; Clarification (50244 Federal Register. Vol. 62, No. 186. (25 September 1997), 43272-43275). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved from <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-1997-09-25/pdf/97-25482.pdf>
- Gershman KA, Sacks JJ, Wright JC. (1994). Which dogs bite% A case-control study of risk factors. *Pediatrics*, 93, 913-7.
- Veterinarians team up with plastic surgeons for dog bite prevention week. (2003, May 15). JAVMA News. Retrieved from <http://www.avma.org/onlnews/javma/may03/030515n.asp>