



Tethering of Dogs

Position:

Calgary Humane Society opposes prolonged or continuous tethering of dogs as inhumane and dangerous to both the dog and the community and views such practices as neglectful.

Rationale:

- Tethering or chaining of dogs refers to the practice of fastening a dog to a stationary object or stake, as a means of keeping the animal under control. Tethering does not refer to the periods when an animal is walked on a leash.
- A tether significantly restricts a dog's movement. A tether can also become tangled around or hooked on the dog's shelter structure or other objects, further restricting the dog's movement and potentially causing injury or death.
- Whether the owner is away or at home, tethering a dog in a yard for prolonged periods causes the dog stress and suffering. Dogs are social animals that need and want to be with their families. Prolonged tethering is a form of neglect and can and has led to all of the following:
 - The animal strangling itself to death.
 - Aggression against people and animals entering the yard while the dog is tethered.
 - Psychological and physical suffering for the dog.
 - Development of problem behaviours like destructive digging, self-mutilation, excessive barking, and anxiety.
- Calgary Humane Society strongly recommends alternatives to tethering, such as keeping pets indoors or in an enclosed area (such as a fenced yard). The Society does not discourage pet owners from letting their dogs spend time outside, so long as the dogs are supervised and under control at all times.
- It is a violation of City of Calgary Animal Bylaws to tether a dog in a public place such as a store or coffee shop, or to tether a dog while the owner is not at home.
- It is an offense under Alberta's Animal Protection Act to tether a dog without providing adequate shelter, water and food.

References:

1. Edmonton Humane Society Policy on Improper Psychological Environment as A Form of Animal Abuse, October 2004.
2. Pet Cruelty and Other Issues. "What you can do about a dog that's being left outside all the time." HSUS programs, Companion Animals, 2/17/01.