

## **Tethering**

**The Alabama Humane Federation considers long-term tethering to contain a dog as inhumane and supports legislation and ordinances that prohibit cruel tethering practices.**

Tethering refers to the practice of fastening a dog to a stationary object or stake, usually in the owner's backyard. Dogs are inherently social animals that thrive on interaction with human beings and other animals. Tethering is cruel to dogs and dangerous for people because over time it creates anxious, frustrated, and aggressive dogs that are more likely to bite and engage in fatal attacks. According to a study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention chained dogs are 2.8 times more likely to attack than dogs that are not tethered. Children are the most common victims of chained-dog attacks. Chained dogs kill as many children as do firearms, and chained dogs kill more children than falls from trees, playground equipment and fireworks accidents put together\*.

\*Attacks on Children News Stories <http://www.mothersagainstdogchaining.org/attacks.html>

Rarely does a continually tethered or chained dog receive sufficient care. Tethered dogs often suffer from sporadic feedings, overturned water bowls, inadequate veterinary care, and exposure to extreme weather conditions. Some chained dogs become entangled in their chains and are unable to access food and water. Some chained dogs have collars embedded in their necks from years of neglect at the end of a chain. Tethered dogs are caught in a vicious cycle as they are frustrated by long periods of boredom and isolation and often become neurotic. This neurotic behavior makes dogs difficult to approach, and therefore they end up receiving minimal affection. The tethered dogs become part of the scenery and are easily ignored by their owners.

Tethered dogs do not make good guard dogs as chaining creates aggression, not protectiveness. A protective dog is used to being around people and can sense when his/her family is being threatened. Statistics show that one of the best deterrents to intruders is an inside dog since intruders will think twice about entering a home with a dog on the other side of the door.

### **Who says tethering dogs is inhumane?**

- The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a statement in the Federal Register against tethering: "Our experience in enforcing the Animal Welfare Act has led us to conclude that continuous confinement of dogs by a tether is inhumane."
- The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) ruled that people and organization regulated by the Animal Welfare Act cannot keep dogs continuously chained.
- The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has stated, "Never tether or chain your dog because this can contribute to aggressive behavior."
- The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) concluded in a study that the dogs most likely to attack are male, unaltered, and chained.

***Any city, county, or state that bans this practice is a safer, more humane community.***