

COMMON CONCERNS

Appearance of Animal

Listless, dull hair coat; thin (ribs showing, sunken-in flanks); hair loss and scabs; diarrhea; chronic cough; heavy flea infestation; bare ear tips and other body areas (could indicate disease or frost bite); collar embedded in skin, overgrown or ingrown nails.

Housing Conditions

Overturned water bowl (water should be in spill proof container); frozen or dirty water; no evidence that dog has been fed; spoiled food; no shelter from elements; ground covered with fecal matter; strong odor of urine. Proper sanitation is required by law.

Behavior

Depressed, lack of response to attention; excessively fearful; aggressive; excessive vocalization; shy; constant scratching, biting at body; repetitive behaviors (circling, spinning); ingestion of objects.

If the elements above are present, call a veterinarian to examine the animal.

I'm concerned about a dog.

What should I do?

Response to complaints of animal cruelty and neglect are coordinated by county throughout the state of Vermont. For information about how to file a complaint call:

(877) 9-HUMANE

Or visit

www.ReportAnimalCruelty.com



The Vermont Humane Federation's Animal Cruelty Response Coalition

A state-wide network of professionals coordinating Vermont's efforts to prevent and respond to animal cruelty through communication, education, and training.

Members include:

- The VT Humane Federation
- The VT Veterinary Medical Association
- The VT Agency of Agriculture, Food & Markets
- The VT League of Cities & Towns
- The VT Farm Bureau
- The Green Mountain Dairy Farmers Cooperative
- The VT Sheriffs Association
- The VT Police Chiefs Association
- The VT Constables Association
- The VT Animal Control Officers Association
- The VT Agency of Human Services

For more information visit
www.vermonthumane.org

Caring for Dogs



Vermont's Recommendations and Requirements

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**VERMONT
HUMANE
FEDERATION**

Vermont Veterinary
VMA
Medical Association

www.vtvets.org

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Basic Dog Care

Animal Care Practices

- Fresh, clean water in a spill-proof container should be accessible at all times.
- Should be fed at least once a day with good quality dog food to develop and maintain a healthy body condition.
- Even if the dog is outside for short periods, he should have shelter available to protect him from the elements.
- Important—with regard to being outside in winter weather, the hair coat, body condition, size and age of dog must be taken into consideration. Short haired dogs, thin haired dogs, and dogs that are very young, old, small or thin should not be left outside for extended periods in cold weather because they are not able to withstand the cold. They should only be let outside at appropriate intervals that meet individual needs and for short periods of time in order to relieve themselves.

Keeping Dogs Outside

We do NOT recommend that dogs be constantly kept outside alone because dogs by nature are social animals and have a psychological need to be with their families. However, if for some reason a dog is kept outside, the owner must provide a dog house that meets the following standards:

The dog house should accommodate the size of the dog; that is, it should be large enough to allow the dog or dogs to get inside and move about. However, it should not be too large because in cold weather it must permit the dog's body heat to accumulate inside the structure to provide some warmth.

Dog Care (cont)

Keeping Dogs Outside (continued)

A dog house should:

- Be raised at least two inches off the ground to prevent it from sitting in pooled water.
- Be shaded during the hot weather months; during the winter the doorway should have a flap of windproof material to cover it.
- Contain sufficient bedding, such as straw or wood shavings, that are changed often enough to remain dry and clean.

Food and Water:

- To ensure the dog's water doesn't spill, a water pail should be securely attached to the dog house.
- Food should be increased during the winter months to provide the extra calories necessary for warmth, and water must be offered frequently to counteract its freezing.

Tethering (Chaining) a Dog

Any tethering should be done for brief periods of time to allow the dog some exercise. Vermont state law requires that the length of the chain must be at least four times the length of the dog as measured from the tip of his nose to the base of his tail, and shall allow the dog access to the shelter. The dog's shelter should provide him with access to shade and protection from rain and snow.

Problems with constant tethering:

- Abnormal restriction and/or isolation can result in behavior problems (ex., compulsive behaviors such as spinning; anxiety; fearfulness; aggression).
- Chains can get tangled and result in the dog being strangled or dangerously restricted.
- Exposes dogs to attack by other animals.

Common Concerns

Tethering (continued)

- If an owner forgets to check a dog's collar, it may become embedded in the dog's neck.
- As an alternative to tethering - to provide exercise only – we recommend placing a long cable between two trees or poles. A ring can be attached to the cable and the dog's chain or lead can be attached (clipped) to the ring.

Additional Recommendations

- The dog should have yearly veterinary exams to ensure its proper health and to provide preventative vaccinations, vector-borne disease testing, parasite testing, and recommended medication, etc. A rabies vaccination for both dogs and wolf-hybrids is required by law.
- Dogs should be spayed or neutered. This will prevent the birth of additional litters, and may provide health and behavior benefits for the dog as well. To learn more about spay/neuter resources in Vermont call (877) 9-HUMANE.

