

# Tethering & Shelter Guidelines/Ordinance



Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department  
Animal Care & Control Division  
8315 Byrum Drive  
Charlotte, NC 28217

## SHELTERS



Wire crates or plastic crates are not legally approved adequate shelters. They are for indoor use only, as it cannot protect your pet from inclement weather.



Fully enclosed wood dog shelters are legal, adequate and work great to protect your pet from inclement weather.



Fully enclosed plastic igloo style dog shelters are legal. They can be found at most pet stores and work well holding in heat during the winter.

## TETHERING



Metal chains are legal tethers. They are best used for large, strong pets. The chain must be a minimum of 10 feet long and weigh no more than 10% of your pet's body weight.  
Example: For a 60 pound pet, the chain can weigh no more than 6 pounds.



Plastic coated, steel cables work well also. They should be used on smaller pets, as they are not as strong. Steel cables must also be a minimum of 10 feet long.



When tethering your pet, you may only use a buckle style collar. Choke chains or collars with training spikes may not be used.

## TETHERING



*A swivel must be placed where the tether connects to your pet's collar. This prevents it from twisting and potentially choking your pet. It must also connect the tether to the tether base that is being used.*



*A threaded carabiner can be used to attach your tether to a ground spike, or to the swivel on your pet's collar.*



*Ground spikes are the most common way to secure a tether. Be mindful, if you have a strong pet they could pull them out of the ground. Tethers cannot be tied to the property fence and must be away from obstructions that could cause the tether to get tangled.*

### **City Ordinance 3-62 - Abuse of Animals**

- (1) Fails to provide adequate food and/or water for any animal he owns, possesses, or harbors.
- (9) Fails to provide an adequate shelter for an animal he owns, possesses, harbors, or encloses, wherein the animal can be protected from extremes of weather (heat, cold, rain, etc.) and allowed to remain dry and comfortable during inclement weather.
- (13) Keeps animals outdoors without access to shelter to allow them to remain dry and comfortable during inclement weather.

### **City Ordinance 3-71 - Restraint of Animals**

(b) Tethering. Dogs may be tethered to a stationary object only if conditions (1)—(9) are met:

- (1) A tether shall be equipped with a swivel on both ends.
- (2) A tether shall be a minimum of ten feet in length and shall be made of either metal chain or coated steel cable.
- (3) Tethers shall be attached to a buckle-type collar or harness and under no circumstances shall the tether itself be placed directly around a dog's neck. Tethers shall not be used in conjunction with training collars such as choke or pinch-style collars.
- (4) The weight of the tether shall not exceed ten percent of the total body weight of the dog but shall be of sufficient strength to prevent breakage.
- (5) The tether by design and placement shall allow the dog a reasonable and unobstructed range of motion without the possibility of entanglement, strangulation or other injury. The tether shall allow the dog access to adequate food, water and shelter.
- (6) A dog must be four months of age or older to be tethered.
- (7) Only one dog shall be attached to a single tether.
- (8) Pulley systems, running lines, and trolley systems may be used in conjunction with a tether.
- (9) Pulley systems, running lines or trolley systems shall be at least ten feet in length and no more than seven feet above the ground.
  - a. The line of the pulley system, running line or trolley system to which the tether is attached shall be made of coated steel cable.
  - b. No tether shall be affixed to a stationary object which would allow a dog to come within five feet of any property line.

*We are here to help, and build a partnership in responsible pet ownership.  
These ordinances are in place to ensure the safety and health of your pet.  
If any city ordinance is violated, you may be issued civil citations or seizure of your pet.  
If you need assistance obtaining a shelter or proper tether, please ask about our resources.*