



COUNTY of CUMBERLAND

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Public Information Office

NEWS RELEASE

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Unchain Your Dog: It's the Law New Ordinance Effective Aug. 1

FAYETTEVILLE, NC – Effective Aug. 1, Cumberland County residents will no longer be allowed to tie or chain their pets to stationary objects outdoors. The County Commissioners passed the ordinance prohibiting tethering of an animal – securing an animal to a stationary object by means of a chain, cable, rope or similar device -- in February.

The Animal Enforcement Division of the Animal Services Department will be responsible for enforcing the ordinance in the county. However, the ordinance will not be enforceable in Fayetteville, Hope Mills and Spring Lake since to date those municipalities have not passed a similar law, said Scottie Harris, Animal Services Director.

“Violators could be fined \$100 per citation,” Harris said. “If the incident warrants, a cruelty investigation will be initiated, and there is the possibility the animal could be taken into protective custody.”

Animal Services officers and staff are striving to educate pet owners about the safety risks posed to animals that are tethered, as well as risks to the public. Chaining dogs is cruel, especially in inclement or severe weather, and it can contribute to accidental choking or strangulation of the animals. Chaining may also cause dogs to become anti-social or aggressive, which increases the risk of attacks on other animals or people. Such a risk is a threat to the public health, safety and welfare.

Outdoor tethering can also put dogs at risk for attacks by other animals and harassment from humans, as well as create an unsanitary living environment in a confined area.

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There are exceptions to the prohibition on chaining an animal outdoors. Two of these are when the dog's caretaker is outside and within eyesight of the animal; or after taking possession of a dog that appears to be a stray and having contacted Animal Services about the stray. Temporary tethering is allowed during a lawful animal event like hunting, veterinary treatment, grooming, training or law enforcement activity; or when meeting the requirements of a camping or recreation facility.

You can read the entire ordinance at the county's homepage, www.co.cumberland.nc.us.

If you have questions about the ordinance, call the Cumberland County Animal Services at 321-6845.

Other Pet Regulations

Owning a pet requires taking responsibility for the care of the animal and adherence to local regulations affecting the animal. Here are some things you will want to know if you are a pet owner or are contemplating becoming one.

- All dogs or cats four months or older must be vaccinated for rabies by a licensed veterinarian. The vaccination certificate issued by the veterinarian must be maintained by the pet owner until vaccination is renewed. The metal tag issued by the veterinarian must be worn by the animal on a collar at all times the animal is off the owner's premises. Only the owner may remove the collar from the animal. Cumberland County offers rabies clinics annually, usually in April.
- Don't let your pet roam off your property and around the neighborhood. If your pet is not under your control or restraint, it will be presumed to be "running at large" and may be impounded by Animal Services.
- You must list your cats and dogs on your annual Tax Listing form. The fee for each spayed or neutered animal is \$7; if the animal is not spayed or neutered, the fee is \$25. (Senior citizens 65 or older may list as many as three animals at no charge.)
- For more information, visit the Animal Services Department section of the county's Web site, www.co.cumberland.nc.us.