



Animal Control Newsletter



Town of Sterling - May 2016



THE HIDDEN DANGERS ON UNDERGROUND FENCE SYSTEMS!

Equipment Malfunction-Electrical fences depend on underground wiring to stay connected and on the collar batteries to stay charged. The dog must also be wearing the collar at all times in the yard, of course. If any of these situations fail, the most common being the collar batteries running out, the dog will no longer be shocked when approaching the fence and thus will not be contained by the fence. This opens up the dog to all the dangers of roaming loose, such as being hit by a car. Occasionally, a collar will short-circuit and cause an electrical burn to the dog; these occurrences are rare but can cause significant physical and psychological damage to the dog.

Intruders-The largest drawback of electric fences is that they do not keep other critters out of the yard. A dog with an invisible fence is more vulnerable to an altercation with a roaming dog, skunk, raccoon or other wildlife; the other animal can easily get into the yard, but the dog cannot escape by leaving the yard. Without a physical fence, a child could wander into the yard, a highly potential bite situation. In addition, dog thieves typically find electrical fences far easier to overcome than physical fences.

Aggression-For some dogs, electrical fencing can lead to aggressive behavior. The frustration of seeing prey such as rabbits and squirrels or stimuli such as kids on bikes or skateboards, not to mention other dogs walking past, can lead the dog to charge the fence line and get a shock. The dog then associates the shock with the squirrel or other dog or child and becomes afraid of or aggressive toward them even when outside of the fence. When installing underground fence system try to remember when placing the wire (which is underground) place it mostly in back of your house and not to close too your neighbor's property on the sides depending on how close you are to your neighbor's house. Then in the front of your house go only half way up the drive way, depending how much frontage you have. If your dog has fear issue already I would even do less than half way up the driveway. Installing the wire this way will help prevent some of these hidden dangers with underground fencing. Any questions call the Sterling Animal Control Officer at-978-422-7331.

BLACK BEAR INFORMATION



Black Bears are now active and seeking food. It is time to take down bird feeders. Bears will often ignore natural foods such as skunk cabbage and head to a bird feeder for an easy meal. To avoid this problem, **Mass Wildlife** is asking property owners to be proactive by removing feeders and other food sources promptly. Once a bear gets food from a feeder, garbage can, or open compost, it will revisit the site and look for similar foods in other yards.

There are at least 4,000 Black Bears in Massachusetts and their range is expanding eastward. Take action now, by securing trash and removing bird feeders, to help avoid conflicts with bears now and in the future. If food such as bird seed, pet food, or trash are easy for Black Bears to find, conflicts can arise that pose hazards to both bears and people.

For more information on black bear go to Division of Fisheries and Wildlife Webpage

www.mass.gov/bears

Click on the video about Black Bears!

The Animal Control Officer of Sterling... wants to remind residents if you do see a black bear in your yard you can scare it off by making any loud noise, such as banging pots/pans together turning a radio on loud, use an air horn, car horn or whatever you have to make available to make noises. The black bear will run off and head into the woods to get away, but sometimes they can go up a tree because they get scared. If this does happen, leave the black bear alone and it will eventually come down when things are quiet.

ACO REMINDER

The Animal Control Officer (ACO) of Sterling wants to remind residents that failure to license a dog/dogs in the Town of Sterling may result in a criminal complaint being issued against you at the Clinton District Court. The deadline was April 15th, so if you have not licensed your dog/dogs please do ASAP. **Late fees and fines are added on to your licensing fee after April 15th.**









