

UnChain St. Louis

After many months of time and effort, Randy Grim successfully worked with city leaders to pass a new ordinance for the benefit of companion animals that are chained by their owners/guardians. Signed into law in December of 2007 by Mayor Slay, Stray Rescue is proud to be a small, but mighty organization that is affecting change for animals in St. Louis. This ordinance gives law enforcement officers a better opportunity to save dogs and cats from neglectful and abusive situations. (We wish to thank Mayor Slay; Lewis Reed, President of the Board of Alderman and David Sweeney, General Counsel to the Board of Alderman for their efforts in support and passage of this bill.)

While everyone at Stray Rescue believes every animals should live inside a home and be considered a family member, we also recognize that attitudes, beliefs and family upbringing vary greatly throughout the population. This ordinance is just the first step and with time, we hope to do even more. The following is a summary of the new ordinance.

1. A dog or cat can NOT be tethered outdoors for more than 10 hours continuously or for more than 12 hours in a 24 hour period.
2. The only acceptable means of tethering a dog or cat is a properly fitted harness or collar of nylon or leather construction in proportion to the size of the animal
3. No dog or cat can be restrained using a metal chain, metal tether or metal wire grossly in excess of the size necessary to restrain the dog or cat safely.
4. The tether must be at least 15 feet in length with a swivel at both ends.
5. No owner/guardian shall tether a dog or cat outdoors under conditions where the animal can become entangled on the tether, with another animal or an object that would restrict the dog or cat's access to suitable, edible, and sufficient food, clean water (cool in summer, unfrozen in winter) and appropriate shelter.
6. No owner/guardian shall tether a dog or cat outdoors in unsafe or unsanitary conditions or when the tether does not allow the animal to urinate or defecate in an area separate from where it eats, drinks or lies down.
7. Every dog or cat must be provided sanitary living conditions including proper shelter for the species and sufficient to protect the animal from extreme temperatures, wind, rain, snow and sun.
8. All dogs and cats must be treated humanely and shall not be beaten, tormented, overworked, neglected or cruelly treated.
9. No animal shall be induced or encouraged to perform through the use of chemical, mechanical, electrical or manual devices which may cause physical injury or suffering.

In order to help low income city residents comply with the new ordinance, Stray Rescue of St. Louis, along with Operation Spot, have created a program called "Unchain St. Louis." In support of this new city ordinance, Stray Rescue of St. Louis will provide a free , a nylon dog collar or harness and a tie out in exchange for inadequate and illegal chains that are used to tether their animals. Operation Spot will provide straw bedding through their "Free Straw to Warm Paws" program.

We are currently working to secure the funding for this new program. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor of the program, please contact Stray Rescue at 314-771-6121.

Facts Why Chaining/Tethering a Dog Can Be Harmful

1. According to the Center of Disease Control – chained dogs are 2.8 times more likely to bite.
2. “Never tether or chain your dog because this can contribute to aggressive behavior” – American Veterinary Association
3. “Our experience in enforcing the Animal Welfare Act has led us to conclude that continuous confinement of dogs by a tether is inhumane.” – United States Department of Agriculture, 1996; Humane Society of the United States
4. 25% of the fatal dog attacks from 1965 – 2001 were inflicted by chained dogs. Karen Delise, author of Fatal Dog Attacks.
5. From 1979 – 1988, 28% of children killed by a dog “wandered too close to a chained dog.” – Center for Disease Control
6. According to the Center for Disease Control - Dogs most likely to bite are chained, male and un-neutered male dogs.
7. Chained dogs are not able to protect their guardians because they are chained and there for chaining a dog for protection doesn’t work.
8. Chained dogs are often not socialized with people and can not distinguish a threat from a family member and consequently may bite a family member.
9. Chained dogs are usually not neutered and contribute to hundreds of thousands of unwanted dogs to be born on the streets adding to the over population problem.
10. Over 2 billion in tax payer money is spent in the US to round up, house, euthanize and dispose of unwanted pets. Over

To learn more, visit www.dogsdeservebetter.com and www.chainfreeaustin.org/child_safety.htm.

Thank you for being a responsible animal guardian.