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"Top ten reasons to keep your dog on a leash"



People enjoy walking their pets on the city's trails year around. Pat Mrsny, City of Norfolk Park Superintendent, reminds citizens that they must keep their pets on a leash at all times in Norfolk parks and on City trails and they must pick up their pets' waste.

"People have a responsibility when they bring their pets to a City park. Our parks are for the use of all citizens so people need to be prepared to pick up after their dogs, whether in the dog park or in any City park and have a leash on their dog at all times. If they don't comply with these rules then they should not use our City parks," Mrsny said.

"Animal feces have to be picked up and disposed of properly. The wastes may contain harmful organisms and parasites including E. coli, tapeworm and roundworm. Dog stations are available in Ta-Ha-Zouka Park and Skyview Park that contain bags in which to place the feces and a receptacle to dispose them in," he added.

Along with picking up their pet's waste, owners must also keep their pets on a leash when using a City of Norfolk park or trail. Here are the top ten reasons to keep a dog on a leash when in a City park or on a trail:

1. It's the law in Norfolk with a fine of up to \$500.
2. Off-leash dogs can easily get in a walker or runner's way and cause an accident or injuries.
3. Off-leash dogs can run away and get lost.
4. An encounter with an off-leash dog can be terrifying for many people, especially children.
5. Off-leash dogs can cause fights with leashed dogs. Each year, the City of Norfolk receives numerous reports of problem encounters, several resulting in dog bites or injuries.
6. If an off-leash dog causes a serious issue, the owner could be held liable which could equal criminal charges, lawsuits or even the loss of the pet.
7. Pet owners are unable to find and dispose of their dog's wastes which is a health hazard for park users.

8. When off-leash, dogs can quickly eat something it should not or get trapped in tall weeds, water or traffic.
9. The City of Norfolk offers a dog park at Ta-Ha-Zouka Park for dogs to run and play freely.
10. Pet owners love their dogs and want to keep them safe.

For more information about pets in City Parks call the Parks Division at 402-844-2180.