

California Governor Says 'No' to Dog Tethering

The state joins Connecticut in limiting the practice.

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A bill signed into law by California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger prohibits the tethering of dogs to stationary objects for more than three hours at a time. This legislation, which became effective Jan. 1, makes California the only state besides Connecticut to institute such a rule.

Supporters of the dog-tethering law argue that long-term tethering makes dogs more aggressive and more likely to bite. According to statistics from the Animal Law Coalition, at least 107 people were attacked or killed by chained dogs in the U.S. between February 2000 and January 2006. About two-thirds of those incidents involved children.

Depending on the specific offense, violation of this new law could result in an infraction or misdemeanor punishable by a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per dog and up to six months in jail.

Some exceptions to the law allow for dogs to be tied to a pulley system or tethering to allow owners to complete temporary tasks longer than three hours.

Schwarzenegger had come under fire early in his governorship for proposing a reduction in the minimum amount of days that a dog could be held in a public shelter before being euthanized. He also signed a bill that stiffens penalties for pet owners who leave their animals in cars parked in the sun.