

New GPS Device for Dogs Developed

The gadget, which is being marketed to hunters, has a range of up to five miles.

Posted: January 6, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

A Kansas-based navigation device manufacturer says it has created a one-of-a-kind Global Positioning System device specifically for dogs and their owners.

Garmin International Inc. says it plans to unveil its Astro GPS Dog Tracking System during the 2007 Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The device is expected to be on display at Garmin's booth beginning Jan. 8.

The company says the Astro will also be on display at the 2007 SHOT Show in Orlando, Fla. starting Jan. 10.

"With the Astro, there's no wondering where your dog is or what he's doing. There is no subscription or setup fee required to use the device," said Garmin vice president of worldwide sales Dan Bartel.

The Astro system has two components: the dog's transmitter and the user's handheld receiver. The receiver is mounted into a lightweight neoprene harness that straps to the dog's collar, around his chest and behind his front legs.

Users can also thread the unit directly onto a standard 1-inch collar so that the unit fits on the back of the dog's neck, according to Garmin.

Once the transmitter and receiver acquire a GPS signal, the receiver automatically lets users know the location of their dog. Unlike existing radio collars, the Astro features a dog page that shows the precise direction and distance to a dog -- even indicating if it is running, sitting, on point, or treeing quarry -- and does it all without beeper collars.

The Astro can track up to 10 dogs per receiver at once, according to Garmin, and the collar gives location updates as often as every five seconds. In flat, unobstructed terrain, the transmitter and receiver have an effective range of up to five miles, the company says.

Battery life is 17 hours on the rechargeable collar and over 20 hours on the receiver, which is powered by two AA batteries.

The Astro is expected to be available in June 2007. For an interactive demo and a chance to win a tracking system, visit <http://www.garmin.com/astro>