



KEEPING DOGS SAFE at PILGRIM BARK PARK

Please familiarize yourself with the information below which we've compiled from a number of resources to make Pilgrim Bark Park as safe as a dog park can be.

Remember Pilgrim Bark Park is visited by tourists and guests with dogs who may not be familiar with the information so it's up to all of us to pass along.

Keep your dog away from the front gate to allow a new dog inside: We've all experienced it: meeting a person who stands way too close when we don't even know them. It's like this for dogs too. Introductions are important and make a difference in how dogs will get along. Please try and keep your dog away from the gate (disperse the pack) to allow a new dog to enter the park. Allowing your dog to run full speed to that new dog, allowing your dog to be a part of the welcome pack, and/or allowing your dog to mount the new dog in a dominance display could be the catalyst for an instant fight. *Give a new dog some time to acclimate.*

Quiet your dog before entering the park: Unleash your dog in the outer entry area and try and decrease/quiet your dog's excitement before opening the gate.

Don't keep your dog on a leash inside an off-leash area: New owners often feel more secure keeping their dog on a leash, thinking that it'll be easier to control a dog whose quirks and reactions they haven't quite yet learned or a dog who has never been to a dog park. However, a dog on leash creates a dangerous hazard, especially if the leashed dog begins to play. Other dogs can trip on the leash or get caught up in it. In addition, dogs on a leash can feel more insecure because they know they can't escape if they need to, so they can actually trigger fights that might not otherwise have happened.

Small dogs in same play area as large dogs: Small dogs may be mistaken and viewed as prey by large dogs. The squeaking barks and speedy movements of a small dog might be mistaken for a squirrel or another small animal which could trigger the prey instinct in a large dog.

Helping dogs 'work it out.' Many people think that if they leave the dogs alone, they'll get through whatever is happening. Dogs meeting for the first time in a stimulating environment are not on the best path to being able to work out differences. If a dog is being picked on or circled by more than one dog, or if there are signs of dislike between two dogs, it's up to us to intervene. Often we view dog behavior as, "they're just playing". It is up to us to notice signs of trouble.

PLEASE if you are talking on your phone or talking with a friend in the park, make sure you know where your dog is and what he/she is doing. If you can't do both, your dog is the priority!