

## URBAN DOG PARK ETIQUETTE

City-dwelling dog keepers are faced with greater challenges than their suburban and rural counterparts. Without a large fenced yard for exercise, city dwellers must take their pets to the community parks. The City of Kalamazoo Ordinance requires that owners keep dogs on a six-foot leash, license their pets, and pick-up-after-their-dogs. These laws are designed to protect both dog and community. Although the Parks and Recreation Department will be exploring the possibility of a dog off-leash area, until such a time, all dogs must be on a six-foot leash.

The following tips will make your dog's walk in the park more enjoyable for you, your dog, and your neighbors!

- Stoop and Scoop - always clean up after your dog. If you see a dog go and their owner does not, politely ask them to clean up. This is the community's park area and no one wishes to walk in dog poop. Bring an extra bag in case you see a pile of poop, so that you can pick it up and leave the park cleaner than when you arrived.
- Dogs must be on a six-foot leash. Retractable leashes should not be used in areas with large crowds of people, joggers, or other dogs.
- Have your dog licensed and shots up to date. Please don't risk other dogs' health.
- Spay and neuter your dog. Animal shelters and rescues are full of unwanted pets.
- Keep a distance from playgrounds and playing fields. Safety is your responsibility.
- Protect wildlife and the environment. Do not allow your dog to chase wildlife or dig holes. Protect our natural environment – keep your dog away from wetlands.
- If your dog becomes unruly, leave immediately.
- Cigarette butts can be an unhealthy attraction to dogs. Please dispose of cigarette butts properly.

We all must share the parks with community residents, many of whom are not dog owners. Some are frightened of dogs and feel their presence infringes upon their right to enjoy the park. However, dogs are a welcome component of our urban environment. Education and our behavior as a community will determine our ability to welcome all – dogs included.

### HAVE A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE SUMMER



**City of Kalamazoo Department of Parks and Recreation – 337-8191**