



Clarion Poodles

(209) 368-9069 ~ FAX (209) 369-3933

info@clarionpoodles.com

The Importance of having Dog Emergency Contacts

Whether we are working with a puppy buyer or getting our own affairs in order, we need to arrange for many different possible scenarios which might impact the care of the dog(s). It is important that dogs be cared for 24/7/365. One of the situations that puts a dog at the most risk is travel away from home by people and dogs separately or together. Many dogs are lost each year by traveling families. This can be essentially prevented by permanent ID's such as microchips and registry with national databases such as *AVID* and the AKC's *HOME AGAIN* companion animal recovery systems in addition to the normal collar tags. If a dog owner is suddenly incapacitated by illness or accident while away from home, however, both the traveling dogs(s) and dog(s) left at home face a different set of potential risks.

Emergency personnel are tasked with caring for people rather than animals. Their protocols dictate that local animal control officers or police take custody of animals left behind by injured or ill patients treated by medical personnel. This will involve the removal of the animal(s) to an animal shelter, where local ordinances will determine their care, treatment, and disposition. This is a worst nightmare scenario for most of us. Especially on short trips, animals left at home may fare even worse than traveling animals with minimal arrangements made for such essentials as food, water, and shelter.

It is obvious that back up plans are needed. It takes a village to maintain a dog, as it does to raise a child. Part of a dog's village is emergency coverage, which is most critical when the owner travels or if the owner lives alone. We suggest that travelers and dog owners who live alone carry an Emergency Form with them to cover both traveling animals and animals left at home. The form needs to clearly identify all dogs both traveling and at home with any special care requirements such as medication to be given or medication to which the dog is sensitive. It needs to clearly identify the dog owner, the dog's regular veterinarian and the back up caregiver and indicate financial responsibility for any expenses incurred by the dog. We have included in your packet a sample emergency list. It covers all the emergency essentials outlined above and can be adapted to one dog or many or to multiple types of animals: dogs, cats, birds, etc.

Beyond the plans that we suggest you make for your animals when you travel, there are the more permanent plans that are needed for your animals as part of your estate. The terminology of wills and trusts has very specific legal definitions that define the status of animals, monies left for their support, and the options and obligations of your heirs. The specifics of this can vary from state to state, so the only way to be truly sure that your wishes will be carried out to the fullest extent of the law in your state is to consult your estate attorney.