

## If A Fight Erupts ...

Stay calm. In most cases, do not attempt to get in the middle as you risk increased injury to the dogs and yourself. In a serious fight, if you feel something must be done, here are some suggestions:

- Startle/distract the dogs - Make a loud noise. Throw water or a coat/blanket on them.
- Owners simultaneously grab the tails and lift up, or the rear legs of their dogs and pull them apart, releasing them immediately.
- Leash them, move them farther apart and calmly check for injuries. If emergency care is needed, owners should trade contact information.
- Remove them from the park, one at a time.

## Health Issues Related to a Dog Park

**Heat Stroke** – Dogs' cooling systems are not efficient. They sweat only through their paws and can only cool themselves by panting. On hot days, take them out earlier and/or later in the day and keep it short. Wet your dog down. **Heat stroke can cause brain damage or death.** Look for **rapid panting, bright red gums, unsteadiness, vomiting, anxiety or staring.** Bring to the vet *immediately*.

**Bloat** – Life threatening, bloat can occur if your dog is exercising vigorously on a full stomach, or if they eat a meal while still panting heavily after exercise. Gas builds up in the stomach causing it to rotate. Bring to the vet *immediately*.

**Intestinal Parasites** – Transmitted through feces, eggs can stay in the soil for years. **Please pick up dog waste immediately!**

# Merrymeeting Dog Park

## In Memory of Jake Horgan

*Tips for a safe & enjoyable visit!*



Lab Dance art by Jim Williams  
MainelyLabs.com

[www.barkmaine.org](http://www.barkmaine.org)

Merrymeeting Dog Park in Memory of Jake Horgan  
is a privately funded project in cooperation with  
the Town of Brunswick.



**Everyone who enters this dog park does so AT THEIR OWN RISK.**

Per Maine State Law, dog owners or keepers are solely liable for damages or injuries caused by their dog(s).

**No aggressive dogs.** If your dog has a history of aggression, bringing them to a park setting may worsen the problem and cause trauma and injury for other dogs and people. A single aggressive encounter can negatively impact a victimized dog for life!

**Dispose of pet waste immediately.** What we don't pick up, we and our dogs may wear home. Feces transmit intestinal parasites or disease to other dogs. Bags and receptacles are provided!

**Dogs must be licensed, free of infections, parasites, and have ID and rabies tags.** Maine law requires all dogs to be licensed and vaccinated against rabies. Dogs using public spaces should also be vaccinated against parvovirus, distemper and other diseases as recommended by your vet.

**NO female dogs in heat, or puppies under 4 months of age and without core vaccines allowed.** A female in heat will stimulate fights and leave odors that will agitate dogs. Puppies under 4 months do not have mature immune systems, therefore their required vaccines cannot be completed before then.

**Bring no more than (3) dogs per adult inside the park.** It is difficult to closely monitor multiple dogs. Also, some dogs that live together may "gang up" on and bully other dogs.

**No children under 4 years old allowed. Children under 13 must be accompanied by an adult.**

Some dogs are uncomfortable around young children and high-pitched voices can trigger predatory behavior. Young children on the ground can also be exposed to feces that may have parasites. Older children should be reminded not to run inside the park as it can arouse predatory behavior, and to always ask owners' permission to approach their dogs. If a fight erupts, they should walk calmly and silently away. Bare feet are not advisable.

**You may ask dog owners not observing these and other posted rules to leave the park.** If necessary, ask someone else to join you before approaching another park user and politely asking for their cooperation. For extreme or persistent problems with owners or dogs, call **Brunswick Animal Control at 725-5521. In the event of an emergency, call 911.** Any serious dog bite to a human being should be reported PROMPTLY to the police.

Animal Emergency Clinics (for after hours and weekends): **37 Strawberry Ave., Lewiston (207-777-1110), or 739 Warren Ave in Portland (207-878-3121).**

### **Your First Visit ...**

Visit at a relatively quiet time of day so your dog won't be overwhelmed. Peak usage tends to be early morning and after work hours on weekdays, and midday on weekends. Stand outside the fence with your LEASHED dog and observe the off-leash dogs inside before entering. If your dog seems reluctant to enter, it is better to try again at another time.

If your dog seems comfortable, take your LEASHED dog through the first gate and close it securely behind you. Remove their leash, halters, and spike, prong or pinch collars while in the double-gated area. Wait until any dogs that gather outside the second gate to meet your dog have moved away. When you are both comfortable, enter with your dog and close the second gate securely behind you. And of course ... **HAVE FUN!**

**For more detailed information and resources, visit [www.barkmaine.org](http://www.barkmaine.org).**

**Thank you for keeping YOUR park safe and clean!**