

Beggin to Behave Dog Training

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The Invisible Fence

Victoria Stilwell of Animal Planet's dog trainer on *It's Me or the Dog*, in a recent Positively newsletter,

"Dogs contained behind electric fences tend to become more reactive and in some cases more aggressive toward strangers and even family members because of anxiety and frustration. Recent studies show that dogs without previous aggression problems are more prone to attack family members when the systems are activated. Only a proper fence will keep people or other animals out of the yard and offer more protection. Keep your dog inside your home and take him out for regular toilet breaks and walks or invest in a solid fence around your yard. It is a much safer and more humane and effective containment option than an electric fence will ever be."

Dogs can go through the invisible fence. When they do it is likely they saw something 'worth' the shock of the fence (a squirrel, cat, a friendly human). Now that the dog is out he isn't likely to come back. The drive to leave the yard may override the shock but the drive to come back in...not so much.

The fence will not keep other dogs, animals, or people, out of your yard. Your dog can be teased, hurt, or even taken.

Dogs are more likely to make associations from the shock...so a child, a cat, or the mailman may seem like the reason for the shock rather than the boundary being crossed.

Dogs may also become fearful...of the yard or of the fence boundary. Some dogs won't go outside because they know the shock is out there.

Many owners use the invisible fence as a way of leaving their dogs in the yard for hours and hours without the need to keep an eye on them. These dogs become bored. Bored dogs may dig to relieve their boredom, or bark and growl at passersby, and if the passersby have a dog, it may become more reactive as well.

If, for any reason, your invisible fence goes down, you now have no way to keep your dog in the yard. A power outage will give your dog freedom to roam without you. The collars run on batteries and those batteries can die.

Aggression can be created in dogs that were previously non-aggressive. Especially at the boundaries of 'his yard'. Frustrated, dogs will lunge and bark...and terrorize passersby. If they have a dog with them, both dogs will become reactive. Your dog may get maced because the passersby don't know you have an invisible fence that 'may' keep the dog inside of it.

"Can Aggression in Dogs Be Elicited Through the Use of Electronic Pet Containment Systems?' *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, Volume 3, Issue 4 October 2000 , pages 345 – 357.

<http://www.dogexpert.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Electronic-fences.pdf>

"Simply Shocking" Miller, P. *Whole Dog Journal*, April, 2003 Volume 4, No. 2

<http://www.kerryblues.info/WDJ/SHOCKING.HTML>

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