

Dog Park Members 2011 Manual

Guidelines, Park Rules & Information



Urbana Park District / Questions? Call (217) 344-9583

901 N. Broadway / Urbana, IL 61801

Why a Dog Park?

Dogs are such an important part of many people's lives today. Being social creatures, dogs like to interact--both with the humans they live with and with other dogs. A dog park is designed as a fenced area where dogs can exercise and socialize without having to remain on a leash.

In spring 2000, a group of citizens approached the Urbana Park District Board of Commissioners about creating a place where they and their dogs could go. Leash laws in the City of Urbana and in Urbana Park District parks prohibit off-leash activity with dogs. The board agreed that a place should be provided to let dogs exercise off leash. However, the funds to build the park were not in the capital budget. Therefore the park was built (and amenities continue to be added) exclusively through donations and grant money.

Where is the Dog Park?

The Dog Park is located at 1501 E. Perkins Rd., Urbana, 1/2 mile east of Cunningham Avenue. The dog park is a nearly 10-acre site along Perkins Rd., and is part of a larger park that has been leased from the Champaign-Urbana Sanitary District.

Hours

The Dog Park is open daily from dawn to dusk. For security of all members, please do not visit the park after dark.

The Dog Park Features:

- ⇒ Nearly 10 acres, grass surface
- ⇒ Central wooded natural area with wood chipped trail
- ⇒ Six-foot-high perimeter fencing and a double-gated entrances
- ⇒ Water fountain with watering station for dogs is available seasonally April through November.
- ⇒ Dog rinsing station outside the dog park fence – available seasonally April through November. Water from the hydrant is not potable and is for animal use only.
- ⇒ Accessible parking area for people with disabilities
- ⇒ Accessible entry and water area for people with disabilities
- ⇒ Benches
- ⇒ Waste bag dispenser and garbage cans for dog waste
- ⇒ Timid, training or small dog fenced area with separate gate entrance
- ⇒ Accessible Port-a-Potty

A Park Within a Park

The Dog Park is only one part of a larger park system. The Perkins Road Park site and Webber Park are two adjacent parks on Perkins Road. The district has adopted a master plan for the park. The master plan for both areas will be developed as funding allows. **Currently only the Dog Park is open for public use.**

What is a Dog Park Tag?

In order to enjoy the Urbana Park District Dog Park, all dogs are required to have a Dog Park Tag. To renew your membership at the end of the year, stop by the Phillips Recreation Office:

Phillips Recreation Offices
505 W. Stoughton
Urbana, Illinois 61801
(217) 367-1544

Office Hours: M-Th 8-6 p.m.
F 8-5 p.m.
Sa 8-noon

How to Become a Member

In late autumn or early December current members will receive a membership evaluation form and membership registration form for the next year. Memberships may be purchased in Mid-December at the Phillips Recreation Office; 505 W. Stoughton, Urbana by completing the following:

1. Obtain and show the following information – it is required to complete registration:
 - County registration tag or other proof of rabies vaccination.
 - Current vaccination record from vet for proof of distemper vaccination.
2. Pay the membership fee. Resident and non resident rates apply. *Reciprocal Agreement:* The Urbana Park District and Champaign Park District have a reciprocal agreement that allows for a resident of one district to participate in programs at the other district at the resident rate.

Tags must be visibly attached to your dog's collar. Tags are valid from the time they are issued until the following December 31. **Fees will not be pro-rated.** There is a daily-use fee option for visitors. Tags contain a registration number and the year for which the tag is valid.

Resident: Annual Dog Park Tags are \$38 per dog

Non-resident: Annual Dog Park Tags are \$78 per dog

Additional Dogs: \$6 for each additional tag (members may take up to three dogs to the park at one visit).

New

Two memberships for the price of one!







The Champaign Park District operates a dog park on the corner of Windsor and Rising Roads. The two park districts have a reciprocal agreement that allows members of either dog park to use both dog parks. Rules for both parks are the same.

Rules & Regulations

1. The dog owner agrees to assume the full risk of any injuries, damages or loss connected with or associated with the use of the Dog Park. Owners are responsible for the actions of their dogs and may be subject to state laws and local ordinances concerning dangerous or vicious dogs.
2. Annual membership costs is for the calendar year purchased (January –December). Membership is not pro-rated or refundable.
3. All dogs must be current with required vaccination and be registered with the county.
4. Registered member dogs must wear **both** the UPD membership tag and county registration tag when in the park. Members must carry a photo ID with them and present upon request.
5. Dogs must be leashed while entering and exiting the park. Member must have a leash at all times. Please remove pinch (prong) collars and spike collars from dogs before entering the park. Other dogs can be injured while playing.
6. Dogs may not be left unattended or out of sight range or voice command. A member age 16 or older must be present at all times and is solely responsible for the actions of their dog(s). Always keep an eye on your dog. Never leave your dog unattended.
7. Children must be at least 6 years old and accompanied by a parent or guardian to enter the park. Some dogs exhibit unpredictable behavior around small children.
8. Dogs known to exhibit vicious, fierce, aggressive, or dangerous behavior are not permitted in the Dog Park. If your dog becomes unruly or aggressive toward other dogs, you must leash your dog and exit the enclosure immediately. Excessive barking is strongly discouraged.

9. Female dogs in heat are not permitted in the park.
10. Dogs less than 4 months old are not permitted in the park. Puppies are not fully vaccinated and are vulnerable to disease and injury.
11. Cooperation between members is expected and required.
12. Members must immediately pick up after their dog(s). Bags are provided for waste disposal.
13. Food (people food, dog food or dog treats) is not allowed in the park. Many owners do not feed treats and some dogs may be allergic. Food may also make a dog aggressive.
14. Smoking is not permitted inside the Dog Park. Cigarette butts can be dangerous if swallowed.
15. Members are limited to three dogs per visit.
16. Maintenance needs of the site will vary based on weather and use. You may be asked to leave the dog park during maintenance activities.
17. Dogs, owners, and users creating a disturbance or violating posted rules must leave the dog park if requested by law enforcement personnel, park personnel, or their designated agents.
- 18. Infraction of any of these rules can result in temporary or permanent loss of park privileges.**

Recommendations for Fun and Safety

-  Do not open the outside gate if an inside gate is open.
-  Check all entrances before unleashing your dog.
-  Dogs should receive year-round heartworm prevention treatment.
-  Have drinking water readily available for your dog before and especially after exercise. The dog park has a frost-proof hydrant, there is water year round.
-  ALL dogs benefit from guidance and structure. Basic obedience is a must for a well-socialized happy dog.
-  Children must be at least 6 years old and supervised by an adult.

Potential Risks

The Urbana Park District strives to provide a fun, safe environment for you and your dog. However, by using this facility you agree that you understand and assume all responsibility and liability for the risks of unleashing your dog in the facility.

Potential risks include, but are not limited to:

- Infectious diseases such as rabies, kennel cough or Lyme disease.
- Dog theft or unlawful capture by other people.
- Dog escapes over or under fences.
- Park vegetation that may have burrs or seeds that could get tangled in a dog's coat or lodge in a dog's feet, ears, or eyes.
- Mosquitoes, ticks, chiggers, fleas or other insects that may be present.
- Dog fights, dog bites and injuries to humans and other dogs.
- Wild animals in the parks such as skunks, raccoons, or stray dogs, all of which might injure or infect your dog.

While it may be tempting to stand back and be a passive observer, all users will have a much more rewarding experience if basic rules are actively observed. Use of the Dog Park is not a right; it is a privilege. Please do not allow unacceptable or irresponsible behavior to ruin the fun for other users.

Children and Dogs

Children under 6 years of age are not allowed in the dog park at any time. Young children are easily knocked over or trampled by running dogs. Herding dogs may nip at children while attempting to round them up. This is the dog's park. Not all dogs are child-friendly. Never allow any child to approach or pet a dog without the owner's presence and approval.

Play or Fight? Know Your Dog!

Before you use the Dog Park, know your dog! Check your ego at the gate and be realistic rather than idealistic when it comes to your dog's temperament.

Be aware that dogs have different play styles, temperaments and physical abilities. Many dogs love rambunctious play, but some dogs suffer from injuries and some are more timid and aloof. Some dogs have rough play styles and can be overpowering though non-aggressive. Mounting can initiate a potentially harmful situation. If your dog is visibly stressing another dog-- please remove your dog to another part of the park. Don't wait for someone to ask you to do the polite thing. Remember, a little common sense and courtesy go a long way when the success of the Dog Park relies on the people who use it. Always respect the wishes of the handler and be prepared to move to another area of the park if your dog is too rambunctious. Leash up and leave if your dog is acting aggressively. Aggressive dogs are not allowed and are not appreciated by others. No matter how cute you think he is and no matter how much you want your dog to be able to use the park, if he's acting aggressively he needs to leave.

Prevent a Dog Fight Before It Happens - Learn the 4-P Warning Signs:

- ✓ **Posture:** A dog's body language can communicate fear, hostility or submission. Learn to read and respond to your own dog's body language, and others.
- ✓ **Packing:** More than 2 or 3 dogs packed together can lead to trouble. Break it up before it starts by leading your dog to a neutral area at least 30 feet away.
- ✓ **Possession:** Whether it's you, a ball, or a treat, most dogs will protect what is theirs. Remain aware.
- ✓ **Provoking:** If your dog is continuously annoying another dog, or provoking attention, it's time to leave the park.

What You Can Do To Prevent a Fight:

- ✓ Pay attention to your dog and be aware of where he is and what he is doing at all times.
- ✓ Stay close enough to control or protect your dog in the face of a potential fight.
- ✓ Keep a collar on your dog at all times so you have something to grab, if needed.
- ✓ It is recommended that you not bring dog toys or balls to the Dog Park. Toys may provoke possessive or aggressive conduct.
- ✓ Leave the Park. Some days it's just a bad mix. Go for a walk or come back later. You and your dog will be better off.

What You Can Do If a Fight Occurs:

- ✓ Never reach your hands into the middle of a dogfight. You may get bit, and often by your own dog.
- ✓ Distract the dogs and divert their attention. A blast of water from a water bottle, a loud whistle, or a pocket air horn may work.
- ✓ If your dog is not in the fight, make sure he does not join in.
- ✓ If a fight occurs, control your dog and remove him to a neutral area.
- ✓ Maintain a cool head. Getting upset and yelling will only add to the frenzy.
- ✓ When warranted, exchange contact information with the other dog owners. If you can't because you must attend to your dog, designate someone else to get information.

A dogfight can be violent and is upsetting to everyone present.

- **Attitude:** Even the calmest, most pleasant, well-adjusted person may become upset, angry or belligerent, if they or their dog is injured in a fight. Emotional behavior is automatic; try to remain calm and as objective as possible.
- **Legal Responsibility:** Owners are solely liable for injuries or damage caused by their dogs. This includes injury to another dog or person, no matter how it began, who said what, or whatever.
- **Exchange Information:** All involved parties should provide pertinent information including name, address, phone numbers and vaccination records to each other.
- **Report the Incident:** Minor scuffles occur frequently. In the case of a serious fight or injury or a dog that clearly exhibits aggressive or dangerous behavior, call the police by calling 333-8911 to report the incident immediately. Also report the event to the Urbana Park District by calling 344-9583 so a record can be kept. You must have information on the offending person, even if it is only a license plate number.

Your Dog Is Your Personal Property. You Are Legally Responsible for Damage or Injury Caused by Your Dog!

What to Do if a Dog Bite Occurs

☎ Call 333-8911 for immediate police assistance and the Urbana Park District at 344-9583.

In order for the bite to be defined as a bite - it must break the skin and must have been caused by oral contact (not a nail scratch).

A dog bite to a human or another animal must be reported. The biting animal will be quarantined for ten days to ensure it is healthy and does not pose a rabies risk. In this case, the bite most likely happened inside the confines of the Dog Park so the dog will be considered legally restrained at the time of the bite. If a dog bite happens while at the park:

- Immediately secure the biting dog and the victim dog. Leash them and keep separated.
- Any wounds should be washed immediately with clean water.
- Owners of dogs involved should exchange names, addresses, and telephone numbers.
- Owners should then take their dog home or to a veterinarian for necessary medical care. If a bite has occurred to a person, consult a physician.

Making a Report: The dog park is in the city of Urbana and any bites need to be reported to the Urbana Police immediately by calling 333-8911. Please make a report with the Urbana Park District as well by calling 344-9583 or visiting the Urbana Park District at 901 N. Broadway, Urbana, IL 61801.

Dog Park Police

The Urbana Park District has hired Dave DeJong and Lana Schultz as the dog park police officers. Their responsibilities include assisting members with questions and concerns, visiting the park at various times of the week, enforcing park rules and investigating reports of rule abuse. They work between 10 and 15 hours weekly throughout the year. Users are required to abide by posted rules and etiquette at all times while on the premises. Urbana Police and Animal Control Officers will make periodic site visits.

For immediate assistance call 333-8911

For Urbana Police Department - non-emergency call 384-2320

For concerns/comments about Dog Park call 344-9583

For membership information call 367-1544

Doggie Etiquette

- **On leash or off?** Believe it or not, many dog parks request dogs to be off leash, unless dog and owner are specifically traveling from one end of the park to the other. Off-leash dogs intimidate leashed dogs. When leashed, a dog knows he doesn't have the same freedom of movement and tends to react defensively or fearfully. You may want to let him run around with the leash still attached, so you can grab him at a greater distance, if need be.
- **Dog fights.** Because they are on "neutral territory" in a park, dogs have less to fight about. Even territorial dogs become friendlier when off their home turf. However, fights do occur occasionally. Dogs that have the most fun at parks are those that have been well socialized at an early age.
- **Health issues.** It is extremely important for your dog to have up-to-date vaccinations (rabies and distemper, for instance). Likewise, don't bring your dog if he's not feeling well. He may get even sicker or make someone else's dog ill.

Human Etiquette

- **Scoop the poop.** The biggest complaints arise when nature calls. The park is NOT a convenient place to let your dog do its business. Scooping the poop is always the responsibility of the owner. Bags and trash cans are available at the Dog Park entrance to make this necessary task easier. Take one when you enter so that you will have it with you when needed.
- **Overly friendly dogs.** Think of your dog's behavior as a reflection on your own manners. Is it polite to let a child run up to strangers and kiss them repeatedly? (Hopefully, you answered no to that one.) Well, it isn't polite to let your dog run up to other people uninvited and plant sloppy kisses on them either. This is a major complaint at dog parks.
- **Supervise children closely.** Children under six are not allowed in the Dog Park. This is because young children may become frightened by a friendly dog, or could get knocked down and hurt accidentally.

New to the Dog Park?

- If your dog shows aggressive behavior, take it out of the park. It can endanger other dogs and dog owners. Please do not be afraid to encourage other park users to remove their dog if it exhibits inappropriate behavior.
- Supervise younger children. They can get hurt and sometimes scare other dogs. Children under six are not allowed in the dog park.
- Ease your dog into the park atmosphere. Plan visits during off-hours (weekends and weekdays after 3 p.m. are the most crowded).
- Always keep a leash handy.
- Allow your dog to meet and greet other dogs. They need to establish a relationship and feel comfortable with each other.
- Keep dogs away from entry gates. They may intimidate newly arriving dogs or dash out the gate.
- Always clean up after your dog. Waste bags and trash cans are provided at the park entrance.

Questions or Concerns?

If you are concerned that someone is not following the posted rules and s/he or her/his dog is presenting a problem for others (even after receiving considerate requests from others to comply) please do not hesitate to call for help from park district office or Urbana Police to handle the situation. Do not confront combative or argumentative individuals, just call the authorities or leave the park (and call the authorities).

Contact the Urbana Park District 344-9583 Monday through Friday 8- 4 p.m. For immediate assistance call 333-8911.