

What to do about Dogs on Beaches

If there is an unruly dog owner with an unleashed dog on the beach, call the town constable or local animal control to report the incident. SEE BELOW FOR LOCAL ORDINANCES.

Westbrook (Town Beach)

Town Constable

860-399-7304

Animal Control

860-790-1075

West Haven (Sandy Pt)

Animal Control

203-937-3642

Stratford (Long/Short Beach)

Animal Control

203-385-4068

WHAT TO REPORT TO ANIMAL CONTROL OFFICERS (what info to include in your message):

- Exact location of incident
- Time of incident
- Description of action
- Description of person, vehicle, license plate number, any other pertinent information
- Your contact information for any follow-up questions they may have

Remember that while the officer may not be able to respond to the incident in a timely manner, leaving a message creates a record that there is an issue at this particular site. The officer may be able to follow up and catch chronic offenders if he/she can establish patterns of the offense with information that you have provided.

State of Connecticut Dog Laws:

Roaming Dogs

The Connecticut General Statutes do not mandate that dogs be leashed at all times but a dog's owner/keeper must not allow it to roam on another person's land or on public highways (including sidewalks) if it is not under his control. The methods of "control" are not defined in the statutes therefore it is a gray area as to whether a dog can be under "voice control" by its owner. Violating the state roaming law is an infraction punishable by a fine of \$92 (CGS § 22-364).

In addition to the state's roaming dog statutes, there is a statute that gives local governments the power to create leash ordinances. See below for the town ordinances for dogs in the towns that piping plovers breed in. Additionally, the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection requires that owners keep their dogs leashed in state parks at all times. Some parks have a seasonal restriction for dogs being allowed on beaches.

Town and City Dog Laws:

Please keep in mind that above mean-high tide is private or municipal property and below is public land. Many of these ordinances are aimed at public and town-owned property only. Beach dog ordinances usually DO NOT trump private property (that is beach) rights.

Westbrook:

Dogs prohibited on town-owned beaches between May 1-September 30.

Section 2-10 Use of Town Properties (c) Horses, Other Livestock, Dogs and Other Pet Animals: In no event shall any horse, other livestock, dog (except as set forth herein) or other pet animal be permitted, either leashed or unleashed, walked or ridden, on any park, athletic field, playground or beach, except in such areas and at such times as may be designated by the Board. Dogs shall be permitted on any beach between October 1 and April 30, provided they shall be properly leashed.

Stratford:

Beaches: Long Beach, Short Beach

Dogs prohibited on beaches from April through November.

152-17(a) Town of Stratford Beach Law

Dogs are not permitted on any portion of any town beach. This includes, but is not limited to, all of Short Beach Park, Long Beach, Long Beach West and the beach at The Sea Wall.

§ 83-15 Leash required; removal of feces; violations and penalties.

No owner or keeper of any dog, whether licensed or unlicensed, shall allow such dog to roam at large upon the land of another and not under the control, by leash or similar restraint, of the owner or keeper or agent of such owner or keeper, provided that nothing in this section shall be construed to limit or prohibit the legal use of hunting dogs during the open hunting or training season. The unauthorized presence of any dog on the land of any person other than the owner or keeper of such dog or any portion of a public highway, street or sidewalk or any other Town property when not under the control, by leash or similar restraint, of the owner or keeper, shall be prima facie evidence of a violation of the provisions of this article. Any person who violates this article shall pay a fine of \$25 for the first offense and \$50 for the second offense, and for any subsequent offense, the same shall be a misdemeanor in violation of C.G.S. § 22-363, Nuisance, and a court appearance would be required.

West Haven:

Beaches: Sandy Point

Dogs prohibited from April 1-September 1.

Per West Haven Shoreline Regulations.