



Kennel Dig Guard Protection Systems

Austin Development Services | February 2026

Webinar Purpose



**To present proposed improvements to the
safety and welfare of animals at dog
boarding facilities and collect community
feedback**

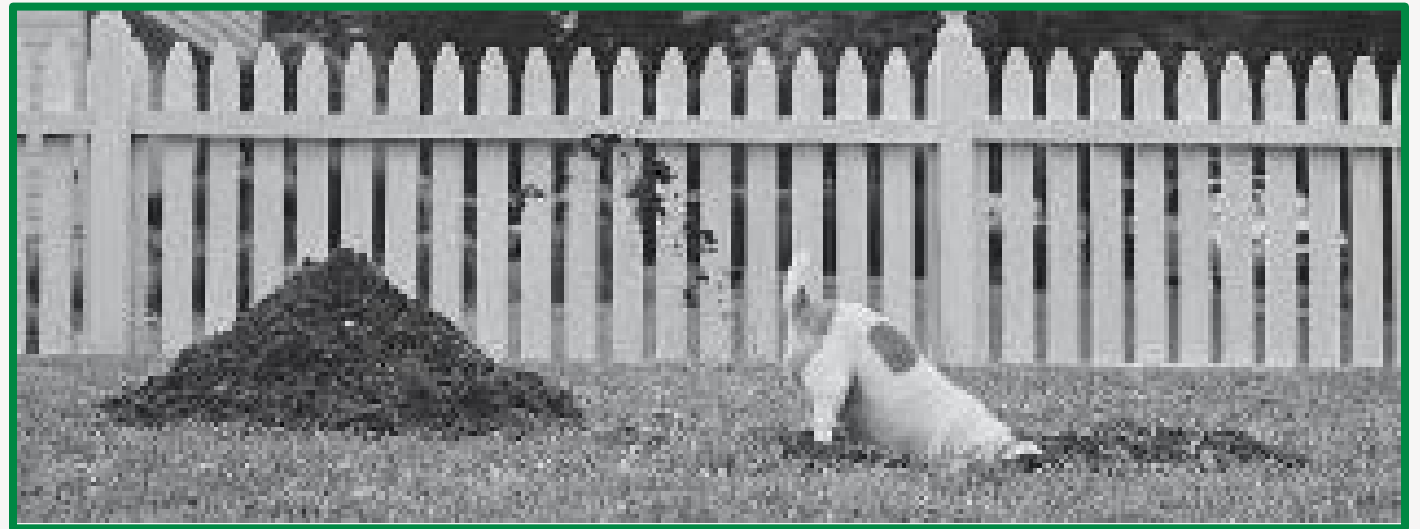
Overview

Eliane Garrett

Assistant Director, Code Compliance

Resolution 20250828-096

- Pet-friendly city with a multitude of resources and amenities catering to pet owners
- 58.2% of households in Texas own at least one pet, with dogs being the most popular
- In 2023, Council expressed its support for ensuring the safety of boarded pets in Resolution No. 20230608-042
- Barriers that prevent dogs from digging under fences and escaping yards serves several important purposes:
 - Ensures public safety
 - Protects the welfare of dogs
 - Promotes responsible pet care



City Council Directive

Prepare a City Code amendment requiring new dog boarding facilities include a dig guard protection system or other comparable anti-dig system.

City Code amendment should also consider when it is appropriate to require an anti-dig or dig guard system at an **existing** dog boarding facility.

Why the Change?

- Implementing best practices that address dog digging and escape will assist communities in creating safer and more enjoyable environments for both humans and their canine companions
- Installing a dig guard protection system along the fence at a kennel facility can ensure additional safety for pet owners and pet caregivers
- Austinites have consistently voiced their support for the safety and welfare of their animal companions, such as policies that increase the quality of life of pet owners and pets



Peer Examples

San Antonio, Texas

[Chapter 5 - ANIMALS | Code of Ordinances | San Antonio, TX | Municode Library](#)

- In our City’s municipal animal ordinance, we do not currently have language that specifically addresses digging prevention (such as requirements for underground barriers or dig-proof fencing). Instead, our ordinance approaches outdoor containment more broadly by focusing on preventing animals from becoming free of restraint.
- Under the ordinance, dogs must be confined or restrained such that they do not run at large outside the boundaries of the owner’s property. The City defines “run at large” as being free of restraint while outside the owner’s property, and officers have authority to enforce when animals are found at large or otherwise improperly restrained. The intent of these provisions is to ensure that owners maintain adequate and secure confinement to prevent dogs from escaping their enclosures as a whole, regardless of the specific method of escape (for example, digging, jumping, or damaged fencing).
- While not applied universally, the code does provide clearer guidance on what constitutes a “secure enclosure” within the dangerous dog provisions. In those cases, a secure enclosure is one that is designed to prevent the animal from escaping and to prevent entry by the public, serving as a reference point for what the City considers effective containment when heightened safety concerns are present.

Bernalillo County Albuquerque, NM

- CONFINEMENT AND RESTRAINT
- Effective August 26, 2013, tethering as a form of confinement will be prohibited under Bernalillo County ordinance. WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? This means that if you own a dog, that dog is required to have an area where it is free to move about and cannot be restrained by a tether of any kind. This includes single point tethering (chaining) and trolley systems. Dogs must be adequately contained behind a fence on the property of their owner (adequate to prevent escape) and/or restrained in a kennel that provides adequate space for exercise suitable to the age, size, species and breed of the animal.
- If not restrained behind a fence, kennels must provide your dog with adequate space for exercise.

Examples of Escape Prevention



Helotes, Texas – [Ch. 14, Article V, Sect. 14-82](#)

- Commercial Animal Establishments: Fencing shall be solidly anchored to the ground to prevent animals from escaping by digging under the fence and sufficient height to prevent animals from escaping.

De Soto, Iowa - [Ch. 57 - Dangerous and Vicious Animals](#)

- Confinement of vicious dogs must, “have a secure bottom, floor or foundation attached to the sides of the pen or the sides of the pen must be embedded in the ground no less than two (2) feet so as to prevent digging under the walls by the confined dog.”

Examples of Escape Prevention



Gwinnett County, Georgia – [Sec. 10-107](#)

Forsyth County, Georgia – [Ch. 14 – Animals](#)

City of Elberton, Georgia - [Ch. 6 – Animals](#)

Jessop, Georgia - [Ch. 14 - Animals](#)

- Define a *proper enclosure* as:
 - “a structure whose sides are so constructed at the bottom so as to prevent the dog's escape by digging under the sides. The sides must either be buried two feet into the ground or sunken into a concrete pad.”

Recommendation

Types of Barriers



- **Pavers/Rocks:** Heavy concrete pavers, bricks, or large rocks along the inside base of the fence to block digging access.
- **Invisible Fence:** An underground wire or wireless signal creates a boundary; dogs must have special collar that gives a warning tone and then a mild static correction.
- **Bury Wire Mesh:** Chicken wire or welded wire mesh attached to the bottom of your fence, bent it into an 'L' shape, and the flat part buried horizontally into the ground.
- **Dig a Trench:** Fence posts or fencing material buried at least 12 inches deep into the ground along the perimeter.
- **Commercial Barriers:** Pre-made "no-dig" barriers with spikes buried and anchored into the ground and attached to your fence. **Recommended Option**

No permits are required for these recommendations

Affordability Impact

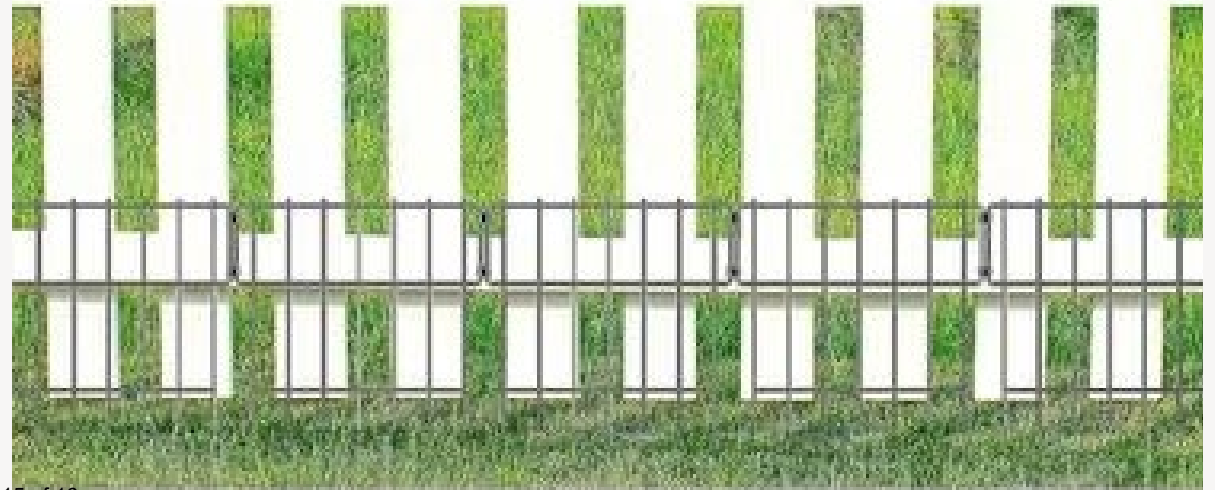
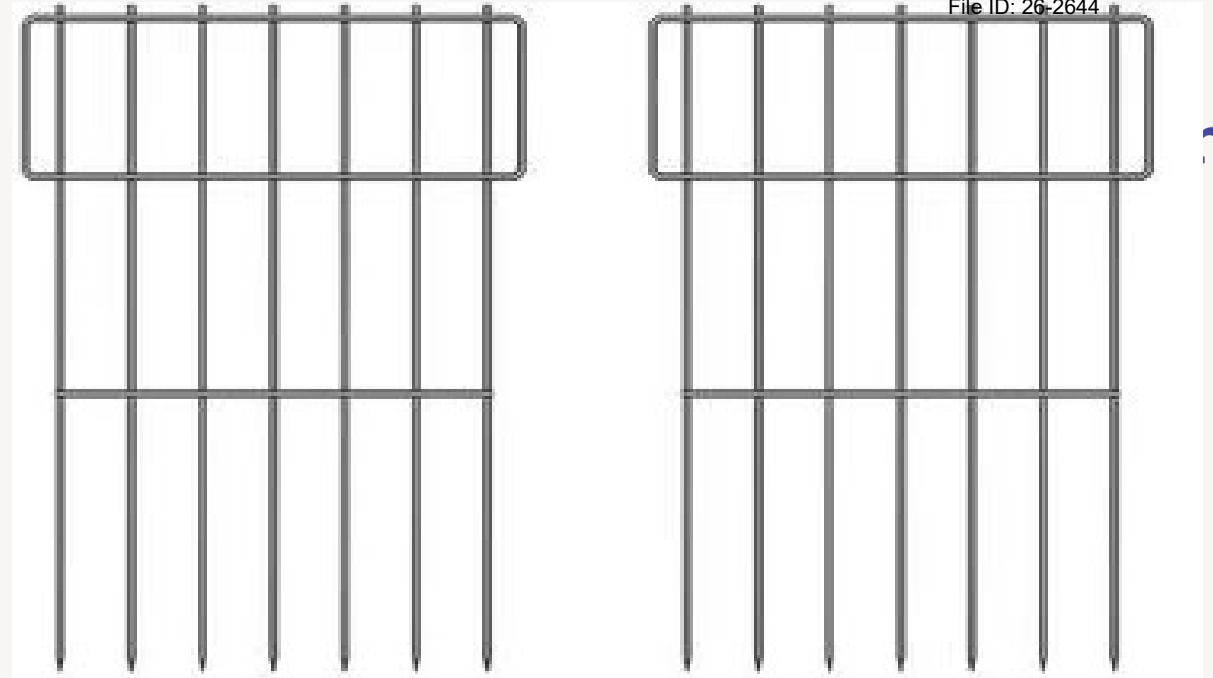
Recommended Options

- Under Fence HDPE Dig Guard: ≈ \$4.07/ft
- YARDGARD GapGard Animal Dig Barrier: ≈ \$5–10+/ft
- Dig Defence Small/Medium, 4-Pack: ≈ \$3.20/ft
- Dig Defence Animal Barrier, 10-Pack: ≈ \$2–\$2.60/ft
- Dig Defence Large Animal, 25-Pack: ≈ \$2.80–\$3.20/ft
- Dig DeFence Underground Fence, 40': ≈ \$6.10/ft
- Dig Defence XL, 2-Pack: ≈ \$9–\$11/ft
- HDPE Root Control Fence: ≈ \$2–\$7+/ft



Recommendation

- For a kennel with one or more outdoor spaces, a kennel owner must make the outdoor space escape-proof.
- (B) An outdoor space is escape-proof if the fence is:
 - (1) buried two or more feet into the ground; or
 - (2) supplemented with a physical blockade that prevents digging underneath the fence.



Proposal Comments



Engagement Survey



Contact Information:
DSDCommunications@AustinTexas.gov