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"Pet owners reminded to keep their dogs on a leash"



The autumn weather is beautiful and people are walking the trails and enjoying the parks in greater numbers. City of Norfolk officials remind pet owners who are walking their dogs that they must keep them under control and on a leash anywhere within a City park. City Code Section 18-6 states it shall be illegal to bring any animal into the park except on a leash.

City of Norfolk Police Chief Bill Mizner said there have been reports of people letting their dogs run loose in the parks.

“These pet owners may think they are doing their dog a favor, but they’re actually allowing the dog the opportunity to attack or be attacked by another dog. It also puts other people in the park at risk of being bitten,” said Chief Mizner.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approximately 4.7 million dog bites occur each year. Over 800,000 of these bites require medical attention. Many of these bites are from otherwise friendly dogs not usually known to bite.

“There’s always the chance that a dog will bite, even if it never has before. With many people including young children using the parks each day, it is unacceptable to have a dog running around without a leash. If you want to let your dog run, then take it to the dog park at Ta-Ha-Zouka Park where there’s a designated fenced-in area where you can take its leash off,” Chief Mizner said.

The dog park is located in Ta-Ha-Zouka Park near McKinley Avenue. There is about a half acre of space for smaller and less active dogs and a larger area about 1 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> acres in size for larger and more active dogs. Both areas are surrounded by six foot chain link fencing with access through a double gated entrance.

For any questions about dogs running at large call the Police Division at 402-644-8700.