



## DAVE WINDSOR ANSWERS YOUR REAL ESTATE QUESTIONS

### Dog Musher Moving Into Neighborhood

**Dear Dave:** Someone has moved a dog team into our Anchorage residential neighborhood and it is creating quite a disturbance. What can we do?

**Answer:** Depending on what kind of disturbance you mean, there are several courses of action you could take. First is always to seek a cordial resolution with your neighbor but, if this fails, here are your steps:-

First step is to check if the lot is in a subdivision with Covenants. Those covenants may well have rules about dog numbers and activities. Violations of covenants may be prosecuted.

Second line is to call Animal Control, who operate under the regulations of Title 17. They will take action, by way of citation, if the disturbance is a noise issue. If the issue is a safety or animal welfare problem, they will attend the property for an inspection. The officers at Animal Control are concerned about safety, animal welfare and noise but, beyond that, you will need to go the next step.

If you live in a neighborhood zoned under any of the Residential categories (always starting with 'R' - e.g. R1, R2A, R6 etc.), Title 21 is the law covering use of the property. Code Enforcement

at the Municipality are charged with monitoring Title 21 zoning regulations.

If, for example, the 'dog team' is a commercial operation, this is not permitted in Residential zones. Even as a designated home business, nobody can allocate more square footage to the business than the square footage of the residence.

Although there is no specific limit on the number of dogs a homeowner can have inside their home in Residential Zoning, the number of animals kept outside on a lot of 6000 sq. ft. or less is limited to 5. If you have more questions, call Code Enforcement at 343-4141.

Failing success under Title 17 or Title 21, you still have 4 remaining courses of action if you really need to curtail the disturbance.

First is you Municipal Ombudsman (343-4461), second your local Assembly Member, third your local Community Council and, finally, if all else fails, you may need to hire a Land Use Attorney.

Generally speaking, nobody wants trouble in the neighborhood. While horses and other farm animals are more directly regulated under the various Residential zoning ordinances, dogs are a permitted animal in suburban areas.

However, the intention of City regulations is to protect everyone's quiet enjoyment of their neighborhood and, in fact, most dog mushers moved out of Anchorage to more rural, larger lots many years ago. Good luck with resolving your problem. Dog teams themselves only respond to 3 commands - 'Alright' (Go), 'Gee' (Turn Right), and 'Haw' (Turn Left) but the owners of those teams are subject to many laws when in a Residential neighborhood.

Dave  
Windsor

