



COLORADO MOUNTAIN MUSHERS MUSHER ETIQUETTE CHAPTER 1

DOGS AND MOTELS

One of the aspects of our sport is the need to take all our 'equipment' with us in our dog trucks. The problem is, that some of that 'equipment' 'TALKS.....' Now most of us like communicating with our furry friends but not in the middle of the night.

Our races take us to various towns and require overnight stays or take several days to get to a particular race. Unless we camp at the side of the road somewhere far away from others, our dogs' chatter will be very much frowned upon by motel guests and campers. Even camping at the trail site requires us to be considerate of the other mushers camping there. If you are going to arrive at your motel or campsite after 9pm, be considerate of your fellow campers and motel guests and drop your dogs for the night before you get there. They will be settled down from your trip and ready to sleep.

Dropping dogs at some motels is fine as long as we keep our area around our trucks cleaned up and our dogs as quiet as possible while we do it. Most mushers drop dogs for the night around 10pm. The dogs are good until around 6:30 or 7am, again dropping them and keeping them as quiet as possible.

Although it is a pain to move your dog truck for the drops, sometimes it's necessary to do it. I would rather move my truck to some snow or even dirt to drop mine as opposed to dropping them on the concrete or asphalt parking lot. And even if there is snow on the parking lot some guests might not care to walk out of their rooms onto a big 'yellow' or 'brown' patch.

If you move your truck, you also take the chance of some other guest taking your parking spot. Some mushers carry orange cones to mark their spots and hopefully assure that someone else doesn't take it. If you drop at your motel room door, consider carrying some bleach with you that you can spray on the area your dogs 'went'.. One old musher several years ago use to do that. Its just a small consideration.

Some of us have dogs we take into the rooms with us. Just because we are only staying in the rooms for a couple of nights, it is still our responsibility to make sure our dogs have no 'accidents' and if they do, to clean them up as if they were in our own homes. There used to be a musher, and I use that term loosely, who took a dog or two into his room with him and if the dog made a mess on the floor, he just left it for the maid to clean up. Not the way to promote our sport and ensure that mushers are welcome back to that motel in the future.

Its always best to leave your dogs in your truck overnight a few times at your house before getting on the road with them. This helps train them for staying at the motels or campsites and is much easier to correct them from whining or barking in the

middle of the night than waiting for the first race and motel stay. If you are carrying puppies, they can be especially noisy and hard to keep quiet. It might be wise to carry a dog crate with you that you can bring into your room to put them in if they make noise during the night.

There were some musher many years ago at one of their first races in Meeker, (and you know who you are....:) , that had a puppy keeping everyone up all night. In the morning, the new mushers had the wrath of the 'Brendas' on them. Only you old mushers know who the 'Brendas' are... but believe me, you didn't want to see them walking across the parking lot at the motel or a race coming your way with that 'look' on their faces... You knew you were in deep doo-doo.....!!

When you drop your dogs, don't leave them unattended. Not only can a snap come loose or break but some 'honorary' PETA member might come by and intentionally turn them loose. Any number of things can happen when your dogs are on their drop chains or cables. You or someone else needs to keep an eye on them all the time when they are on the ground. You never know when that little kid is going to come over to pet them with his Hershey candy bar and share it.. And those that don't know, chocolate can be deadly to dogs...!

When I drop my dogs I always figure something could happen. They are, after all, dogs... Never leave them unattended..!!!!

Always try to pick up after them as soon as possible. You don't want to step in it and you don't want them getting it all over themselves either. It just makes for a cleaner truck.

There are probably many more suggestions and ideas concerning keeping your dogs at motels so always listen to what everyone has to say about it then formulate what works best for you. The bottom line is, keep our dogs as quiet as possible and the area as clean as possible.

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