

Electric fences are not humane, safe, and by no stretch of the imagination a reliable barrier.

Time and again, people selling electric fences to contain pets leave customers full of misleading information. More importantly, are the gross distortions and omissions about their safety. 'Protection' & 'safe' are words used in the shock collar industry to describe a product that scientific studies and animal behaviourists affirm can cause [physical and - psychological](#) harm. The claim that an electronic fence offers a "stress- free environment" belies the fact that the shocks delivered by the collars are not just a 'tap' or 'tingle' but are painful and scary. *Shocked cats and dogs are stressed cats and dogs.*

Electric shocks, even a single one, can induce confusion, anxiety, fear and panic. Pain tolerance is different for every individual depending on species, breed, temperament, fur thickness, age and wellness. Those with a low pain threshold or a history of abuse are appreciably more anxious and sensitive. Cats are particularly vulnerable to the pain of shocks due to their thin skin. Pets need to know where they can wander without being hurt and that involves perimeter training and setting shock intensity levels. Electric shock collars typically have a number of levels. The 'appropriate' shock level is determined via a crude system of trial & error i.e. Keep turning it up until you see a reaction. NO-ONE, not even a certified behaviourist can accurately determine how much pain an animal is feeling and certainly not a fence salesman, no matter what they claim.

Animals are likely to associate the shocks they receive with whomever or whatever they are focused on at the time the shock is inflicted. This results in misplaced fears and phobias that bring with them all sorts of further behavioural issues. Studies show even passive dogs are more predisposed to [aggression after exposure to shocks](#). Adding to the many risks is the potential of receiving a poor quality collar that malfunctions causing [severe burns & infection](#).

Another well-documented problem with invisible fences is if a cat or dog is motivated enough they will run through an electrified boundary line and escape. Left to wander, they can be [lost, stolen, picked up by animal control](#) or spend the day dodging traffic, hopefully successfully. The opposing dilemma is unwelcome guests, thieves, badly behaved children and aggressive animals entering an electrified yard unhindered to tease, torment or steal your pet.

Electric shocks are an uncivilized way to control animals and that's why enlightened countries have banned them. If shock collars were really humane and kept the wearer safe children everywhere would be equipped with them. Extensive studies, [prominent animal behaviourists](#), The Kennel Club UK, SPCA's, Humane Societies along with other world renowned organizations agree that shock fences are not humane, safe, and by no stretch of the imagination a reliable barrier. Your pets deserve better. Please, build a real fence.



Invisible Fence collar burns - photo shared by DITR vet tech student in Spokane. Device malfunctioned. This dog was suffering for days before his owners noticed.
Photo and text credit: www.diamondintheruff.com

References

**Electronic Pet Fences: What You Need To Know* - Eileen Anderson; <https://eileenanddogs.com/shock-collar-info/electronic-pet-fences/>

**Electric Fences* – Victoria Stilwell <https://positively.com/dog-training/methods-equipment/training-equipment/electric-fences/>

**What are the implications of using training techniques which induce fear or pain in dogs?* Article from [Welfare in Dog Training](#)

**Aggression in Dogs Be Elicited Through The Use of Electronic Pet Containment Systems?* Dr. Richard Polsky PhD in animal behaviour *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science* 2000 Vol. 3 No. 4 pp. 345-35

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