

Dear Retailer;

My family, friends and I are committed to using our power as consumers to shop at retail outlets that do not sell shock collars. We are educated pet owners and understand the risks and dangers of using shock to train. We choose to give our loyalty & business to retail store owners & staff who would never mislead a person into using these painful collars on their beloved companion dogs, cats and horses. To ensure the humane treatment of pets we are asking pet supply chains and retailers to take shock collars off their shelves. We are reaching out to ask your organization to take a position.

Why are we doing this? Common sense, recognition of the sentience of animals and the



current scientific research all affirm that animals learn as we do. Learning is enhanced by providing the learner the freedom and safety to think, decision make and process without the fear of being punished. It is positive and it is reinforcing. In essence, electric shocks are antithetical to everything we know about how to improve a dog's ability to learn.<sup>1</sup> The risk of harm is not only physical. The psychological damage is often difficult for a pet owner to measure but can wreak havoc with an animal's emotional state long after the shocks have ceased.<sup>2</sup>

Veterinarians and Behaviourist's across the country are dealing with the fallout of the unrestrained use of shock collars for basic training and behavioural concerns. As the world-renowned and impeccably credentialed Dr. Karen L. Overall, MA, VMD, PhD, DACVB, CAAB. states *"the use of shock in the treatment of behavioural conditions is abusive, is doomed to fail, and will make situations less, not more, safe and reliable."*<sup>3</sup>

In the last two decades an enormous increase in canine research has provided us with a wealth of insight and understanding about dogs. Animals are conscious beings, self aware and live rich emotional lives, just like us. As an international group of prominent scientists proclaimed July 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, *"...the weight of evidence indicates that humans are not unique in possessing the neurological substrates that generate consciousness. Non-human animals, including all mammals and birds, and many other creatures, including octopuses, also possess these neurological substrates."*<sup>4</sup>

We, pet guardians, are more informed than ever before. We are making buying decisions based on facts. And the facts are clear. Shocking animals is cruel and unnecessary. All this new knowledge about our canine companions is transforming our culture and elevating how most of us treat animals. We can be assured the next generations will be even stronger in their resolve to treat animals with respect & kindness, and to achieve this will exercise their power as consumers. The first retailer to be congruent in their code of ethics with what they actually promote and sell will win us as customers. Today it is not pet owners who need to shift their perceptions; it is the pet industry that is lagging behind by promoting and selling harmful products. An independent survey commissioned by the UK Kennel Club in 2014 indicated almost 3/4

of the public disapprove of shock collars and would support a ban. Almost 80% believe negative training methods are not needed at all. <sup>5</sup> A [BanShockCollars.ca](http://www.banshockcollars.ca) Survey Monkey poll in 2017 showed the clear majority of pet owners in both Canada and the USA would never consider using shock on their pets, believe shock products are cruel and unnecessary and would support legislation to ban such products. Unfortunately, that still leaves millions of animals of misdirected pet guardians vulnerable to harm.

All products can't please all people but those documented as causing harm and pain clearly need to be excluded from the inventory of any business claiming to be pet friendly. To do so would invite accolades. Not to do so, makes them part of the problem. We share common ground in our desire to provide for the well being of our companion animals. Removing shock collars from your shelves can only be seen as progress. It would affirm to the public you are responsible and sincere in your assertions that your operation has our pet's best interests at heart.

Thank you for listening.

## References

<sup>1</sup> The Defra Study & Research Project Final Report<sup>[1]</sup>

[http://www.banshockcollars.ca/pdf/Defra\\_Study.pdf](http://www.banshockcollars.ca/pdf/Defra_Study.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Training dogs with help of the shock collar: short and long term behavioural effects<sup>[1]</sup> Matthijs B.H Schilder, Joanne A.M van der Borg <http://eldri.ust.is/media/ljosmyndir/dyralif/Trainingdogswithshockcollar.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Manual of Clinical Behavioral Medicine for Cats & Dogs, Dr. Karen L. Overall 2013

<https://www.elsevier.com/books/manual-of-clinical-behavioral-medicine-for-dogs-and-cats/overall/978-0-323-00890-7>

<sup>4</sup> The Cambridge Declaration on Consciousness

<http://fcmconference.org/img/CambridgeDeclarationOnConsciousness.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> UK Kennel Club Commissioned Electric Shock Collar Survey, 2014 & Banshockcollar survey

<http://www.thekennelclub.org.uk/our-resources/kennel-club-campaigns/electric-shock-collars/><sup>[1]</sup>  
<http://www.banshockcollars.ca/alerts.php - a62>

## Other Resources Available

Pet Professional Guild

[Position Statement on the Use Of Pet Corrective Devices](#)

Policy Statements of Leading Animal Welfare Professionals

<http://www.banshockcollars.ca/policies.php>

Experts Say Dominance-Based Dog Training Techniques Made Popular by TV Can Contribute to Bites

<https://www.elsevier.com/books/manual-of-clinical-behavioral-medicine-for-dogs-and-cats/overall/978-0-323-00890-7>