

Training Academy,LLC

Please Don't Let This Happen to Your Dog!

By KP from helpinganimals.com, reprinted with permission



For two days, John and his wife, who live in Maryland, were in the emergency room with their infant daughter while a dogsitter watched their dogs, gentle Koukla and playful Spunky. The dogsitter, not being very well acquainted with the dogs, didn't notice how drastically Koukla's behavior was changing, so it continued all weekend: The dog stopped eating and refused to go outside. If she was made to go outside, she would do her business and then scratch to come right back in. Instead of playing with her pal Spunky, she would just lie down, completely withdrawn.

It was several days before anyone realized that her "invisible collar" was burning a ¼-inch hole into her neck (see picture, right). The accompanying photo shows exactly how much damage was done by this hideous torture device. She was wearing a "Texas" collar, made by Invisible Fence. As "invisible collars" go, this one has got to be the most horrendous.

According to John, the prongs are extra long and they poke into the dog's sensitive flesh just behind the ears. Just imagine getting shocked there!

And then imagine having that prong burrowing deeper and deeper into your flesh—and the pain as it was becoming infected. The technician who installed the fence told John to make sure that the collar was "extra tight." By the time the horror was discovered, the wound was giving off a putrid smell. Now, fully two weeks later, it's finally starting to heal.

But Koukla has been traumatized, and it will be a long time before her psychological wounds heal.

John and his wife love their dogs. They thought they were doing a great thing by getting an Invisible Fence—keeping their dogs safe and at home. The Invisible Fence people love for their customers to think that. If you go

to their [Web site](#), you will never see or hear the words "shock" or "pain" or "negative reinforcement" or "risks" or "danger" in connection with the collars. It's all sweetness and light—romping puppies and playful dogs who are all so carefree! The site talks about having "peace of mind," but just ask John how peaceful he and Koukla have been feeling lately. What a sham! The owner of the local Invisible Fence business that sold John his fence, upon hearing about Koukla's injury, said that he *had seen this before*. Clearly, this company has an ethics problem.

As I've written in the past, even without the malfunctions and the irritation of having two prongs poking into their necks all the time, dogs subjected to Invisible Fences can be significantly harmed psychologically, becoming anxious or aggressive, not infrequently associating the electric shocks from the fence with random passersby, like children, or even other members of the household. Dogs who are left unattended inside an Invisible Fence are easy prey to thieves and other cruel people as well as free-roaming dogs. And many dogs are willing to take the jolt of electricity in order to chase a squirrel or a cat down the street, which can then leave them stranded outside their yards, unable to get back in.

Dog training is like anything else—if you cut corners and try to take the easy way out, it either won't work or you're going to pay for it in some other way—usually via damage to your dog's well-being. It's not worth it. Either build a real fence, or don't get a dog in the first place. If I had my way, no one without a fenced-in yard would be allowed to have a dog, period. And by the way, if you're already using an Invisible Fence on your dogs and it seems to be working out OK, don't think you're immune to heartbreak such as this. Koukla didn't get injured on her first day with the fence. That Invisible Fence had been up for a couple of months before it started damaging her neck. But you'd better believe that John has disabled it forever now. If he never sees another Invisible Fence again, it will be too soon—and Koukla couldn't agree more!