



Pea Stone Awareness Form

Sleepy Creek Pet Lodge uses pea stone in some of their play and bathroom areas. Pea stones are small, round stones with no sharp or rough edges. Pea stone is a great surface for dog play areas because it is a more forgiving surface than concrete, making it easier on dog's joints. This stone allows urine to sink through to the ground and fecal matter sits on top of it, where it is easily seen and quickly picked up. This allows us to keep the outdoor areas free of waste so dogs are not running and stepping in it while outdoors. Having this type of surface also aids in keeping bacteria and viruses at bay as we can sanitize and clean throughout the day.

While the majority of dogs have no issues running and playing on pea stones, some dogs (especially those who have not built tough paw pads due to their age or lack of exposure to surfaces other than those in their homes and grass outdoors) may experience irritation. While walking and running, pea stones can rub in between paw pads, causing redness and irritation. Some dogs may lick their paws to relieve the irritation or may favor an exceptionally sore paw by limping.

At Sleepy Creek Pet Lodge, we do all we can to help prevent sore paws by rotating dogs between the grass and pea stone yards, however dogs who are here for longer periods and those who are more active in the yards can develop sore pads even with preventative measures.

What should you do if your dog gets sore paws from the pea stones?

The best thing to do is to clean their paws between the pads with a wet cloth, and apply a triple antibiotic ointment with pain relief (such as Neosporin). This will help to relieve the pain as well as speed the healing process. Discourage your dog from licking as this will exacerbate the soreness.

How can irritation be prevented in the future?

To prevent or reduce future irritation from the pea stone, a paw wax or balm can be used. Paw wax is a substance that is applied to the paw pads and in between the pads. It provides a protective barrier which reduces irritation caused by rough surfaces such as pea stones. The paw wax often times contains healing properties as well. At Sleepy Creek Pet Lodge, we use the store-bought brand *Musher's Secret*, a paw wax used for dogs whose feet are exposed to snow and ice or rough ground encountered while hunting, sledding, or hiking. There are also many homemade recipes that can be found online as well. Wax's are recommended in the winter as well to help protect your dogs' paws while walking on city streets where harmful salts and chemicals are used.

Signature _____

Date _____