



## WAGS 2 WISHES ELECTRONIC FENCE POLICY

Why many rescues don't approve invisible fencing for adopters explained here:

We completely understand why invisible fencing sounds like a convenient option especially in neighborhoods with HOA rules or when a traditional fence feels expensive. But most animal rescues strongly prefer a secure, physical fence (or leashed/patio supervision) for one simple reason: Invisible fences don't reliably keep dogs safe.

1) Dogs can still blow through it... and then they're "locked out" When a dog is excited, scared, chasing something, or in high drive, some dogs will run through the boundary anyway. Then the biggest problem happens: they may be afraid to come back because returning means getting shocked again. That can turn a "contained dog" into a lost dog very quickly.

2) It does not keep anything else out of your yard Electronic/invisible fencing is not a physical barrier. That means loose dogs, wildlife and even people can still enter the yard and your dog can't safely get away. The MSPCA specifically notes invisible containment does nothing to keep other animals out, which can lead to confrontations and injuries. Veterinary sources also warn that stray dogs/wildlife can still access the yard and interact aggressively with a dog inside.

3) It can increase fear, anxiety, and even aggression Invisible systems rely on aversive stimulation (shock/static) to stop a behavior. That can create fear of the yard boundary, fear of triggers near the boundary (people/dogs passing) and barrier frustration sometimes showing up as barking, reactivity or aggression. The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) advises against aversive methods due to potential welfare and behavior impacts, recommending reward-based approaches.

4) No visual boundary = confusion (for dogs and visitors) Because there's no visible fence line, dogs may not generalize the boundary well in real-world situations especially in a new home, during storms or with distractions. And other people (kids, delivery drivers, neighbors) may unknowingly walk right up into your dog's "space," increasing risk of a bad interaction. The MSPCA notes the lack of a visual barrier can contribute to these problems.

5) Equipment failure happens Collar batteries die. Wires break. Settings get bumped. Training steps get skipped. And if the system fails for even a moment, there's nothing physical preventing a dog from leaving the property.

6) It can cause physical injury or stress Some dogs experience skin irritation from contact points, stress responses or heightened anxiety around the yard. PetMD's overview highlights risks including injury and behavior issues associated with invisible fencing systems.

Wags 2 Wishes stance on Invisible Fencing is as follows: At Wags 2 Wishes / Wags 2 Wellness our adoption decisions are based on safety and long-term success. Because invisible/electronic fencing does not provide a physical barrier, can fail and may increase fear or reactivity, we do not consider it a secure method of containment for many dogs especially rescues who may bolt when startled. We strongly prefer a secure, physical fence or a plan for leashed/supervised outdoor time to keep dogs safe and set every adoption up for success.

Helpful alternatives:

- Physical fence (secure height, no gaps, gates that latch)
- Leash walks + long line in yard (with supervision)
- Covered dog run/kennel run (secure top if needed)
- Enclosed patio/deck option
- Training + management plan for safe outdoor time (reward-based)