

Tethering Horses in Iowa

... *Should it be against the law?*

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This IA horse is tethered within mere FEET of a busy highway.

Again, LAWS MUST CHANGE in order to protect our equines in Iowa against this type of neglect/abuse.

I simply can't repeat this enough! - Karla



When a horse is tethered in a roadside ditch to eat the grass there, can anything be done about the hazards to both automobile drivers and the horse?

This is just one topic of interest that requires review within the current Iowa Livestock laws.

During equine investigations, IERAL often runs across this commonplace practice. Some horse owners surprisingly feel that, "it is ok!" to tether their horse(s) in the county ditch.

Is this against the law?

Nope!

Tethering is legal in all 50 states, and frankly, in Iowa, it is more than just an animal welfare issue. It is a car and driver issue as well. Most horses have rope, chain, or cable burns around their legs and necks, and yet some county officials feel the need to turn the other way, ignoring the fact that this is a welfare issue.

When an owner tethers his horse in the ditch for grazing, how does the animal obtain the water that is required by law?

What about a horse giving birth in a ditch while being tethered to a county fence post, and then the colt dies 48 hours later? Who is responsible for the welfare of the mare giving birth while being tied to a post and then not being able to reach her newborn, and ultimately the colt dies. Is this right? Does law enforcement have the power to charge a person for neglecting to take care of a situation like this? Doesn't seem to.

In the most recent case, we found a horse being chained to a tree, (see photos) with the chain around the horse's neck. The chain was not attached to a halter, but was simply secured around the horse's neck. The horse was within mere **feet** of a major highway, and with **no water supply available**.

Is this legal?

Yes.

Does law enforcement need to look beyond their codes and realize this is both hazardous to animal and driver?

In my opinion, YES!

This particular horse was struck by a car a year ago, according to court documents, and yet, the owner fails to understand the importance of custom animal husbandry. IERAL received calls on this horse for over two months, and at the time of this article, nothing has been done. The horse owner's approach to IERAL was, "I understand YOU have a problem with my horse?"

I countered by stating, "No, sir, YOU have a problem with your horse."

Why does it seem that some horse owners really don't want to take responsibility for their horse(s), and blame others for their ignorance? Not sure, but possibly if laws could change in Iowa, horses like the two I've mentioned may have a better life beyond the ditches of Iowa.

So, what should be done about this tethering issue? Is it responsible horse ownership?

I'm open to feedback on this ongoing issue, so please feel free to contact me or write your legislator, asking them for their support on your views of tethering. (address above)



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