

## Invisible (Electric) Fencing

Invisible or electric fencing is a very popular fencing option that many of today's homeowners are choosing. While there may be some aesthetic and cost benefits to this type of fencing, we in Rescue have discovered a great deal of problems related to safety, security, and humane treatment of the dog with this type of fencing, particularly with its use with a rescued Sheltie.

Because the Sheltie's coat is extremely thick around the neck, in order for the electronic shock collar to be effective on a Sheltie, the shock level must be turned up very high and the length of the prongs must be very long. The high shock level and length of the prongs can cause pain and injury to the dog. Some dogs we have known have tried to scratch the shock collar off, catching their foot in the collar and getting burned and receiving puncture wounds from the prongs.

Another problem with the use of this style of fencing is that a dog will still run through the "fence", accepting the first shock but refusing to return to the yard for a second shock. Shelties are very intelligent creatures. They CAN think and seem to understand cause-and-effect processes as it relates to their behavior. It does not take long for the average Sheltie to learn that if he received a shock leaving the yard, he'll get another shock going back into the yard. The result is a Sheltie loose in the neighborhood, likely a new, unfamiliar neighborhood. The dangers of further injury and possible death are enormous.

This leads us to yet another reason that the use of these fences with Shelties are a great concern. Rescued Shelties have lived in many different environments by the time they arrive into the Rescue program. Many have lived with several families during their lives, then find themselves either living by their wits alone on the streets or dumped in shelters. When they go to a new home, it will take quite a long adjustment period (several months, maybe longer) for them to realize and accept that this is **finally** their home. During that adjustment period, the risk of the rescued Sheltie trying to "escape" is great. An invisible fence will NOT prevent this.

Not only will an invisible fence NOT keep a dog in the yard, it will not keep another animal from coming into your yard and injuring or killing your dog. Nor will it stop a human from coming into the yard and stealing your pet, which happens every day.

These are just some, but not all, of the reasons why we will not adopt a rescued Sheltie into a home in which the intent is to use an invisible fence.