

MAKING SURE YOUR PROPERTY WILL PASS AN INSPECTION: HOW TO CHIHUAHUA-PROOF YOUR BACK YARD

Prior to approving an adoption, we always conduct a home check of an Adopters property – to make sure that the boundaries are safe (and Chihuahua proof) but also that there are no other safety concerns. We have added a PDF to our website under the “Adoptions” tab and “Foster tab” but the below is what we consider -

- 1. Fencing** – we look thoroughly at fencing to make sure there are no holes or gaps. If your fence has a large gap underneath or the design of it means that there are large gaps throughout – you will need to add some strong mesh or boards underneath to ensure dogs cannot get through or out. Adequate fencing is a huge part of keeping dogs safe! We cannot place a dog in a home that does not have adequate fencing. Chihuahuas can slip through very tiny holes – please take a close look at fencing to ensure it is not weak in some areas also.

Examples of inadequate fencing we often encounter:



Not acceptable: Gap under and through fence



Not acceptable: Gap under fence requires a board



Not acceptable: gaps through the fence and underneath

- 2. Garden waste** – Please make sure that any large piles of tree branches, sticks, garden waste etc. is removed prior to applying to us and completing your safety check. These piles can be a safety issue – we worry about dogs climbing them, hurting themselves, or poking their eye on garden rubbish dotted around your backyard. If there are any piles present we will ask that these are removed prior to any dog coming into your care.



Unacceptable: large piles of green / garden waste to be removed

- 3. Clutter** – We consider clutter to be another safety issue. A backyard with large amounts of clutter, including items laid against the house that can fall and crush a dog (ie. doors, piles of brick, ladders etc) needs to be removed. We ask that you de-clutter your backyard prior to submitting the photos to us - Anything that could fall on a small dog or hurt them will be an issue for us. This is often something Adopters overlook.



Unacceptable clutter: this can pose a safety risk. please remove all unnecessary clutter from the backyard.

Entries/Exits – We need to make sure that all entries/exits to the property are well secured. This means, backyard gates secured in place with locks and clasps. Also child-gates if your front yard is un-secured is a great idea, to prevent dogs running out of your house and to the road.

OTHER COMMON DANGERS TO CONSIDER:

In terms of your own pets, there are a couple of items you need to be aware of:

- 4. Compost** – be careful about ensuring your dogs don't have access to compost. This can be hazardous and toxic for your pets. Some keep open boxes of compost similar to the below in their backyard – this will need to be fixed/removed so the dog does not have access.



- 5. Fertiliser** – Blood and bone fertilisers can be an issue causing sickness and vomiting in dogs if consumed.

- 6. Slug and snail, rat and mouse bait and other gardening products** – Goes without saying these baits can be enticing to dogs but deadly. Make sure to keep your dog's away from areas of your property when using baits and also make sure ALL gardening products are safely locked away.

- 7. Watch the plants you place in your back yard (and indoors)** – Many can be deadly to dogs including: Lillies, Barley Grass, Tomato Plants, Black nightshade, Karaka, Onion, Deathcap mushrooms, Garlic, New Zealand tree nettle (Onga Onga), “Baby’s Breath” also known as Gysophila, Daffodils, Foxglove, Ivy, Rhubarb, Aloe Vera, Birds of Paradise and much more. *Signs of poisoning include: rapid breathing, coldness to the touch, trembling, racing or irregular heartbeat, excessive salivation, among other symptoms. In this event please contact your vet IMMEDIATELY.

