

Why TLC does NOT offer community play or pet sitting services

“Stress occurs when any demand is placed upon a dog that requires the dog to change or adjust” (Lindsay, 2000). For stress to occur events or situations do not have to be unpleasant, but rather any biological or psychological demand placed on an animal is capable of producing stress. There are certain amounts of healthy stress all animals are capable of adapting to, however chronic stress may lead to stress-related conditions. This is an important consideration when making your decision on how, where and under what conditions you will lodge your animals.



THE FACTS

Stress-related hormonal changes occur during separation in a number of species. Tuber and colleagues (1996) studied dogs and found a “differential glucocorticoid (cortisol and corticosterone) response” occurs during five conditions of separation.

1. Alone in a novel (unfamiliar) environment
2. With a conspecific (another dog) in a novel environment
3. Alone in a familiar environment
4. With a human in a novel (unfamiliar) environment
5. With a conspecific (another dog) in a familiar environment.

The results of their study showed dogs left alone in novel (unfamiliar) environments had the highest level of cortisol output with the lowest level occurring in home kennels with a familiar conspecific (another dog). However, dogs tested in novel (unfamiliar) environments with a *human companion* had significantly lower cortisol levels when compared to dogs kept in the novel (unfamiliar) environment with a conspecific (another dog). These results lend support when considering your decision concerning your dog’s welfare when lodging or in-home pet sitting.

What exactly does my dog prefer?

People time.

According to these studies, dogs prefer the company of humans even in novel (unfamiliar) environments when compared to dogs left at home even with a familiar dog! What this means, is you may need to consider your dog’s stress levels and need for human contact while away from home.

