



## **Mine! Mine! Mine!**

by  
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### **Resource Guarding in Dogs-Overview**

Resource guarding is a common problem in dogs. It is felt that there is a genetic component and that some breeds and mixes are more apt to be “born” resource guarders. This behavior makes perfect sense for a pack animal in the wild. If a pack member is unwilling or unable to guard his/her share of the food, den area or mate he/she would soon be hungry, sleeping in the cold, alone and without offspring!

Unfortunately, like some other instinctual behaviors in a pet dog, resource guarding is unacceptable in our homes. Resource guarding can result in injury to other dogs, humans and even euthanasia of the offending dog. It is very important to understand resource guarding and to know how to safely handle and retrain a dog who is exhibiting this behavior.

**Before discussing this issue, it is important to understand that resource guarding should NEVER be addressed as an isolated behavior.** There has to be ongoing, daily training in basic obedience and manners with resource guarding issues as just a part of the overall process. Occasionally, simply by establishing boundaries and good leadership, resource guarding will diminish but it is usually necessary to address the guarding issues specifically.

In each of the following handouts, certain training protocols and interventions will be suggested and briefly explained. If more detailed help is needed, contact one of our trainers online, get help by enrolling in a dog training class, or contact a professional trainer for individual help.

We also recommend the books “Leader of the Pack” and for multi dog households, “Feeling Outnumbered” both by Patricia McConnell Ph.D. They are in paperback, inexpensive, easy to understand and extremely useful in providing training, manners and boundaries for all dogs.