



# Critter's Inflatable<sup>®</sup> Owner's Manual

## World's ONLY Inflatable Pet Life Jacket

Rinse with fresh water after each in-water use.

Do not use harsh chemicals.

Do not machine wash or dry clean



	<b>Model</b>	<b>Weight Range</b>	<b>Chest Range</b>
___	<b>Small</b>	6 to 15 lbs.	13 to 17 in.
___	<b>Medium</b>	10 to 40 lbs.	17 to 30 in.
___	<b>Large</b>	35 to 200 lbs.	27 to 48 in.

**WARNING: This device is not authorized for use as a human personal flotation device (PFD).**

This product is covered by U.S. Patent No. 6,659,824

**CONGRATULATIONS!** You have just purchased the finest life jacket made for your pet. Now your pet can have the same quality of life-saving protection and comfort that manual and automatic inflatable lifejackets have provided to you. The **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket is lightweight and comfortable. Even in hot weather, your pet won't realize it's on. The unique design provides buoyancy directly under the pet's neck as well as the rest of the body. If your pet were to tire, it can rest its head on the inflation chamber and relax. Your **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket may be manufactured with either a Halkey-Roberts V85000 or V90000 automatic inflation system. It is important to know which inflator you have so that you order the correct rearm kits.

- **Model Small** - Provides approximately 8 pounds of buoyancy, sufficient for pets weighing up to 15 pounds. Uses an 8 gram CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder with 3/8"-24 threads if Halkey-Roberts V85000 inflator is installed; or uses an 8 gram CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder with 1/2"-20 threads if Halkey-Roberts V90000 inflator is installed (see figure 4).
- **Model Medium** - Provides approximately 12 pounds of buoyancy, sufficient for pets weighing up to 40 pounds. Uses a 12 gram CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder with 3/8"-24 threads if Halkey-Roberts V85000 inflator is installed; or uses a 12 gram CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder with 1/2"-20 threads if Halkey-Roberts V90000 inflator is installed (see figure 4).
- **Model Large** - Provides approximately 25 pounds of buoyancy, sufficient for pets weighing up to 200 pounds. Uses a 25 gram CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder with 3/8"-24 threads if Halkey-Roberts V85000 inflator is installed; or uses a 24 gram CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder with 1/2"-20 threads if Halkey-Roberts V90000 inflator is installed (see figure 4).

**NOTE!** Flotation devices only reduce the risk of drowning. They do not guarantee survival. Before using the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket, check the inflation system. Make sure there is a good CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder that has not been spent. If the cylinder has been spent, follow the rearming instructions before using. For appropriate status indicators, refer to Figure 5 for automatic inflation and Figure 6 for oral inflation.

When putting the life jacket on your pet, be sure the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> logo is facing you (on the outside), otherwise it is inside out. **You must fully inflate the Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> **life jacket to provide the proper flotation for your pet.** In below-freezing conditions, the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder will not provide full inflation, and you may need to blow into the oral inflation tube to achieve full buoyancy.

## **USING CRITTER'S INFLATABLE® FOR THE FIRST TIME:**

There are three steps that should be followed before you take your pet out for the first time. They are: (1) selecting the inflation method; (2) securing the life jacket on your pet for proper fit; and (3) testing for in-water performance. On subsequent outings, it is only necessary to check the condition of the inflation system.

### **Step 1. Select the Inflation Method:**

The **Critter's Inflatable**® life jacket comes with an inflation system that can be used with automatic CO<sub>2</sub> inflation or oral inflation. Select the inflation method which best meets your pet's activity. Once you've decided which method is best, follow the instructions in the appropriate section of this manual.

**NOTE!** The instruction hang tags attached to the inside of your **Critter's Inflatable**® life jacket is the standard information provided by the inflator manufacturer, and the same information used on U.S. Coast Guard approved inflatable life jackets for humans using this inflator system. Their instructions assume that the user will have the lanyard hanging on the outside of the device for use with manual CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. However, we do not recommend using the manual CO<sub>2</sub> inflation method for pet devices because of the risk of the lanyard snagging and causing accidental inflation.

### **Automatic CO<sub>2</sub> Inflation:**

When armed for automatic inflation, the life jacket will automatically inflate within ten seconds after it is submerged in water. The bobbin, located inside the inflator, has a water-sensitive element. When the bobbin gets wet, part of it dissolves and allows the spring mechanism to drive a pin into the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder, which releases the CO<sub>2</sub> gas into the inflation chamber. This inflation method is great for your pet while on a boat or around the dock where you wish to provide protection in the event your pet falls or jumps in the water.

### **Oral Inflation:**

The oral inflation tube may be used to inflate the life jacket by mouth, or to deflate the **Critter's Inflatable**® life jacket for folding and storage. This method allows you to inflate the life jacket without using up a CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder. It may be necessary to separate the Velcro® on the front and back covers to make it easier to use the oral inflation tube. This inflation method is great for (1) testing in-water performance, (2) swimming pool use, or (3) any time your pet would like to go into the water as a planned activity. The oral

inflation method allows your pet to use the **Critter's Inflatable®** life jacket as often as possible without using-up CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders and bobbins.

**NOTE!** If you use the oral inflation method make sure you first remove the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and bobbin before your pet goes in the water. **Failure to remove the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and bobbin before orally inflating the Critter's Inflatable® life jacket will result in the automatic system being triggered resulting in over-inflation and possible damage to the inflation chamber!**

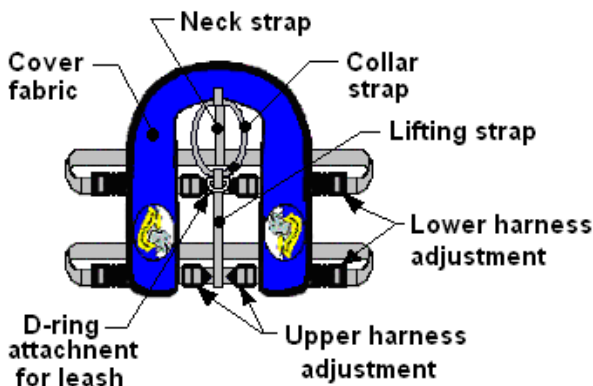


Figure 1 - Critter's Inflatable® pet inflatable life jacket

## Step 2. Secure the Life Jacket on Your Pet:

The **Critter's Inflatable®** life jacket has four buckles with adjustable straps on the lower harnesses (two forward and two aft), four slide-type adjustable straps on the upper harnesses (two forward and two aft), and an adjustable neck strap (see Figure 1).

If you need to reposition the forward harness, place the **Critter's Inflatable®** life jacket face down on a flat surface so that the Critter's logo is not seen. Then disconnect only one of the side buckles of the forward harness. Undo the Velcro® sandwiched section and slide the webbing with buckle out of the belt loop. Slide this section into the desired belt loop (for best fit for your pet) and reconnect the Velcro® sandwiched section. Buckle that side of the lower harnesses. Repeat this procedure to relocate the other side of the forward harness.

**NOTE!** It is important to relocate only one side of the forward harness at a time so you can always refer to the other side if you have any difficulty. Take notice of the sandwiched Velcro®

construction so you can reassemble this section correctly.

For male pets, make sure that the aft harness is forward of the pet's genitals so there will be no discomfort. If necessary, reposition the aft harness forward using the same procedure discussed above for repositioning the forward harness.

When putting the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket on your pet, disconnect the harness on only one side, by unbuckling the two lower buckles on the same side and the buckle on the neck strap. Place the life jacket over the pet's head so that the yoke rests under the neck (see Figure 2 for positioning). Then buckle the collar strap and adjust it enough to keep the front from dropping down. Then adjust the upper harnesses so the life jacket rests comfortably on the pet's sides as shown in Figure 2. As previously discussed, the forward and aft harnesses may be repositioned for a proper fit on your pet. The straps of the forward harness should fit behind your pet's front legs with the neck strap centered between the front legs.

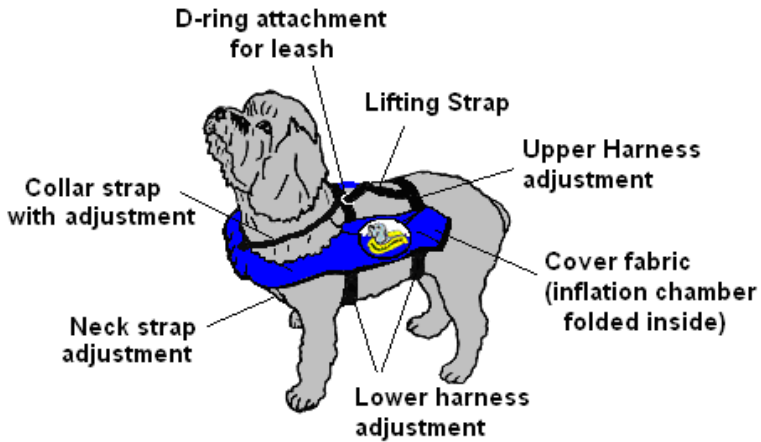
Fasten the two buckles on the lower harness, fasten the buckle for the neck strap and adjust for a comfortable fit (you may need to loosen the lower harness straps before buckling). Adjust the straps equally on both sides so the neck strap is properly centered. To avoid catching the hair on longhaired pets, you might need to place your hand under the straps while adjusting.

The free ends of the lower harnesses have a wrap-around strap fitted with Velcro<sup>®</sup> type fasteners to allow securing the free end to the inside harness webbing. However, if you need more adjustment or the straps hang after securing the wrap-around straps, you may wish to cut off the excess strap (do not cut the straps until you have seen how the life jacket floats your pet in the water).

### **Shortening harness straps:**

If you need to shorten any of the harness straps, first mark or measure the section(s) of strap to be shortened while the life jacket is still on your pet. Then remove the life jacket from your pet by unbuckling the lower harness buckles and neck strap. To avoid damage to the inflation chamber of the life jacket we recommend that you completely remove the harness from the main body of the life jacket before making any modifications to the straps. For the forward harness make sure you cut the same amount of strap from both sides so the neck strap will remain centered. After cutting off the section of strap, use a match or lighter to heat seal the cut surface of each strap to prevent fraying. Turn up about a ½ inch of strap and stitch a tab similar to the ones located on the free ends of the upper harness, and then

reattach the harness to the main body of the life jacket.



**Figure 2 – Critter’s Inflatable® worn uninflated**



**Figure 3 - Critter’s Inflatable® worn inflated**

**Step 3. Test Critter’s Inflatable® for In-Water Performance:**

It is very important to test the **Critter’s Inflatable®** life jacket on your pet either in a swimming pool or in shallow water (but deep enough to float your pet) to ensure that you have properly adjusted the harnesses and the neck strap. There is no substitute for testing the **Critter’s Inflatable®** life jacket in the water. The sides of the life jacket must be positioned properly midway on your pet’s body. If the life jacket is located too high it will not provide the available amount of lift out of the water. Locating the life jacket too low could interfere with your pet’s movement.

Rather than using up a CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder for testing the fit and in-water

performance for your pet, we recommend you orally inflate the **Critter's Inflatable®** life jacket.

Some pets may be startled by the suddenness of the CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. Therefore, we highly recommend that if you wish to test your pet's reaction to CO<sub>2</sub> inflation, do it outdoors, and preferably in the water.

### REARMING INSTRUCTIONS:

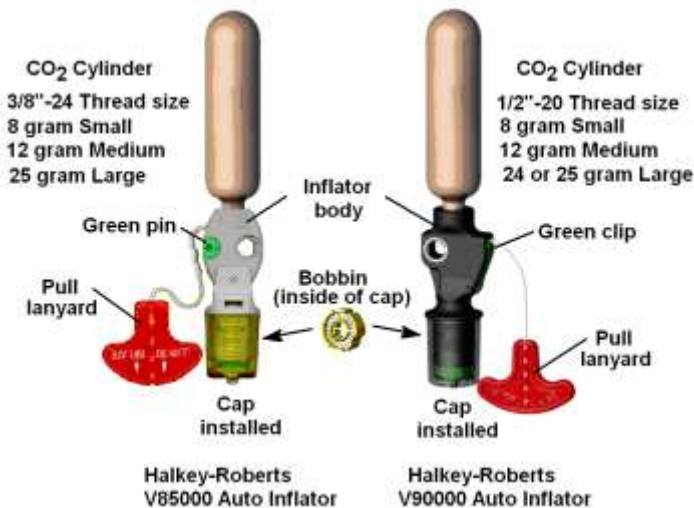


Figure 4 – Automatic Inflator Assembly

### Setup for Automatic Inflation (Rearming):

1. Open the left side of the life jacket so that the automatic inflator is visible.
2. If installed, unscrew and inspect the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder. If spent or damaged, discard the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder. If the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder is in good condition set aside for use in step 9.
3. Remove the cap (it is the clear plastic cap with the red/green indicator and spring) from the base of the inflator.
4. Inspect the cap and base of the inflator body to ensure they are clean and dry. If the inside of the cap and base of the inflator body are wet, rinse them in fresh water and thoroughly dry them so they will not damage the bobbin and cause unwanted inflation. Let dry thoroughly before going to step 5.
5. Install an unfired bobbin into the base of the inflator. There are grooves on the outer edge of the bobbin so that it can only be put in the correct way.

The inflator manufacturer's requirement (located on the hang tag instruction) to replace the bobbin every 3 years is a requirement for human inflatable life jackets. For **Critter's Inflatable**® life jackets we recommend that you inspect the bobbin periodically and replace the bobbin if used (spent) or appears damaged.

6. Install the cap on the base of the inflator and hand-tighten. If the day-glow red spring (indicator) is exposed either the bobbin has been fired or is damaged, or the auto cap is incorrectly threaded (correct before going to step 7).

7. Check the manual lever to ensure it is in the up and ready position.

8. If available, install the green indicator clip (or pin). For a pet inflatable life jacket this green indicator clip (or pin) is not essential and the inflator system will function properly in the automatic CO<sub>2</sub> inflation mode with or without the green indicator clip (or pin) being installed.

9. Install a good CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder by screwing it into the top of the inflator and hand-tighten. Do not over tighten as this can damage the internal gasket.

10. See Figure 5 for the status indicators for the Automatic Inflation Mode.

11. Fold the **Critter's Inflatable**® life jacket in accordance with the folding instructions on pages 12 and 13 of this manual.

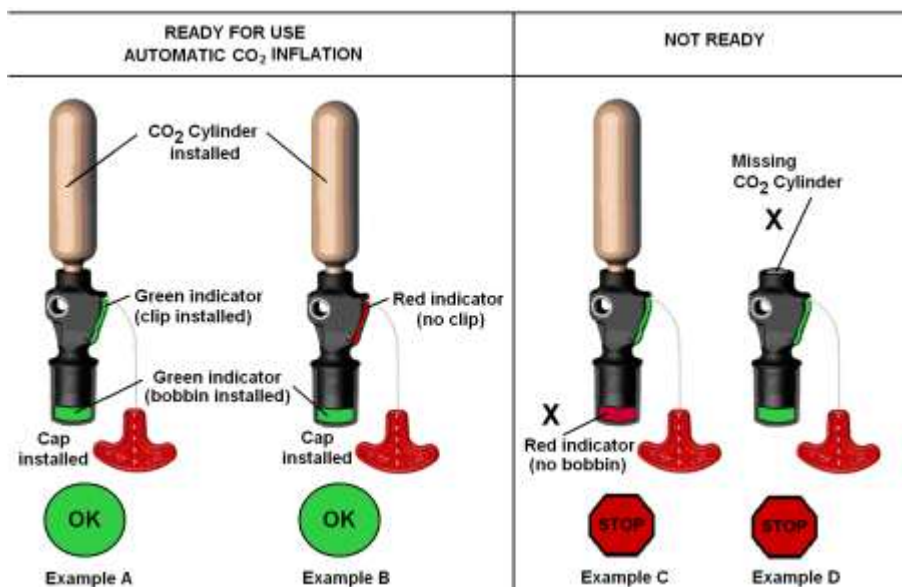


Figure 5 - Status Indicators for Automatic Inflation

**Example A** – shows the inflator fully armed for automatic inflation.

**READY** for automatic inflation use because:

- (1) Lever is in the locked position
- (2) Green indicator clip (or pin) is installed, and
- (3) Cap is installed with a green indicator shown (indicates a good bobbin is installed).

**NOTE!** Even though all the indicators are OK, you should periodically unscrew and check the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder to make sure that it was replaced with a good cylinder the last time the life jacket was serviced.

**Example B** – shows the inflator fully armed for automatic inflation.

**READY** for automatic inflation use because:

Same as Example A except the green indicator clip (or pin) is missing.

**NOTE!** For a pet inflatable life jacket, the inflator system will function properly even when the green indicator clip (or pin) is missing. However, for human inflatable life jackets, the U.S. Coast Guard requires all indicators to be installed to meet their requirements.

**Example C** – shows the inflator is not armed for automatic inflation.

**NOT READY** for Automatic Inflation use because the red indicator shows that the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and bobbin have been used (prior automatic CO<sub>2</sub> inflation). Rearm the inflator for automatic inflation.

**Example D** – shows the inflator is not armed for automatic inflation

**NOT READY** for Automatic Inflation use because the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder is missing.

### **Setup for Oral Inflation:**


1. Open the left side of the life jacket so that the automatic inflator is visible.
2. Remove the gas CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder by firmly rotating cylinder counterclockwise. A spent cylinder should be discarded, but if it is in good condition set it aside for reuse later when rearming in automatic mode.
3. Remove cap by turning counterclockwise.
4. Remove bobbin from cap or inflator body. A spent bobbin should be discarded, otherwise store it in a dry place for reuse.

**NOTE!** Store the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and bobbin together in a plastic zipper bag to keep clean and dry for future use in automatic inflation mode.

5 While not required, you may provide additional protection to the inflator cap threads and help to keep the inside of the inflator clean by installing the cap (indicator must be red) on the inflator.

**NOTE!** if you install the cap for oral inflation, remember that before you rearm for automatic inflation, you must first remove the cap.

**Failure to do so will actuate the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder.**

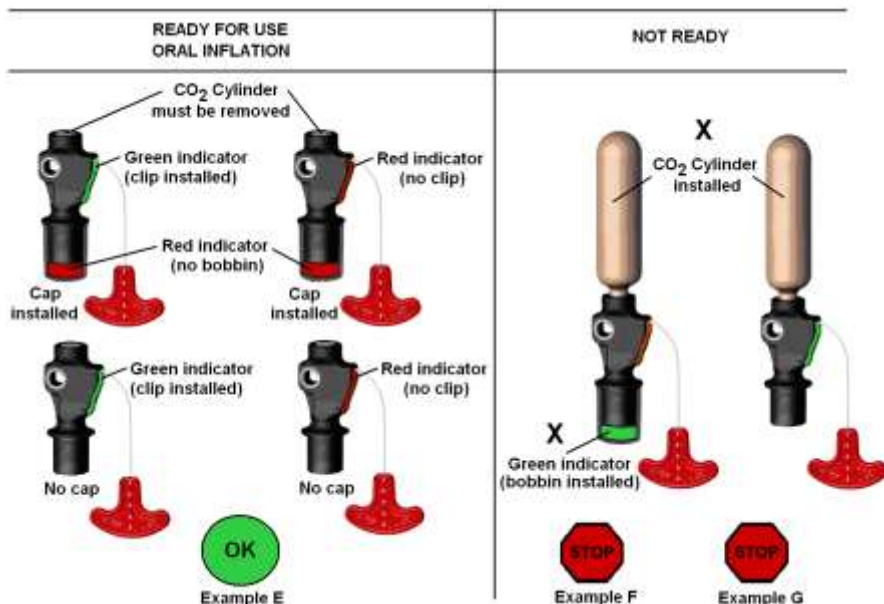


**Never install a CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder if the cap is installed with its red indicator showing.**

**CAUTION**

6. Open the right side of the life jacket, remove the dust cap from the oral inflation tube and orally inflate by blowing into the tube until the life jacket is fully inflated.

**NOTE!** It may be necessary to separate the Velcro<sup>®</sup> on the front and back covers to make it easier to use the oral inflation tube.



**Figure 6 - Status Indicators for Oral Inflation**

**Example E** – shows the inflator with the automatic system disabled, including the removal of the bobbin and the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder.

**READY** for oral inflation:

OK if green indicator clip (or pin) is installed.

OK if green indicator clip (or pin) is missing.

OK to install the cap to provide protection to the inflator threads, but only if the indicator is red (indicates the bobbin has been removed).

**Example F** – shows the inflator with a CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder, bobbin installed (armed for automatic inflation).

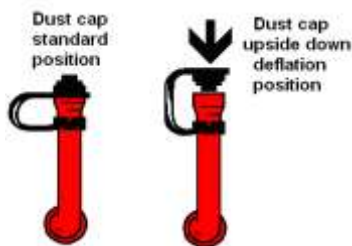
**NOT READY** for oral inflation. The automatic system has not been disabled. If the life jacket is orally inflated, it would automatically CO<sub>2</sub> inflate in the water resulting in dual inflation and possible damage to the inflation chamber.

**Example G** – shows the inflator with a CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder installed (armed for manual inflation).

**NOT READY** for oral inflation. The CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder has not been removed. If the life jacket is orally inflated the lanyard could be accidentally pulled activating CO<sub>2</sub> inflation. This would result in dual inflation and possible damage to the inflation chamber.

## DEFLATING:

Deflating the inflation chamber is achieved by using the oral inflation tube located at the right side of the inflation chamber. Remove the dust cap, turn it upside down and insert the deflation tab inside the opening of the oral inflation tube (see Figure 7). Hold the deflation tab in place with your finger and gently squeeze the inflation chamber to get all the air out. If the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket is not totally deflated it will be difficult to fold. Replace the dust cap to the original position on the oral inflation tube. Before removing an inflated **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket from your pet, it may be necessary to partially deflate the inflation chamber.



**Figure 7 – Oral Inflation Tube**

## MAINTENANCE:

The **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket requires minimal maintenance, but you should check it regularly for rips, tears, or punctures.

Check the inflation chamber to ensure there are no leaks. To check for leaks, orally inflate the inflation chamber until it is firm and leave it for at least eight (8) hours. If the inflation chamber is damaged do not use it.

You should check the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and indicators between outings. Each model size uses a different size CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder (see Figure 4). A CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder and bobbin may be used only once to inflate this pet inflatable life jacket and then they need to be removed and replaced with new ones (see the rearming instructions starting on page 6). Make sure that the CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder has not been spent by visual inspection of the threaded end. There should not be a hole in the threaded end cap of the cylinder or any other corrosion damage to the cylinder. Install a good CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder into the inflator body and hand tighten.

Make sure the inflator lever is properly cocked by checking that the lever is in the up and locked position (see figure 4).

The lanyard should be tucked inside the cover so it is not exposed.

Inspect the bobbin for cracks and if damaged, replace it (see rearming instructions starting on page 6).

If your **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket is armed in the automatic CO<sub>2</sub> inflation mode and the bobbin fails, the life jacket will immediately inflate. We recommend that you have a rearm kit available in the event the bobbin fails or your pet falls or jumps into the water and you need to rearm your **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket.

Replacement CO<sub>2</sub> cylinders, bobbins, and green clips (or pins) may be purchased as a rearm kit on-line at: <http://www.crittersinflatable.com>.

## How to Clean:

Before cleaning, remove the bobbin (if set in the automatic inflation mode). Only use warm soapy water to clean the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket. Rinse with fresh water. Do not use harsh chemicals. Do not machine wash or dry clean.

## How to Dry:

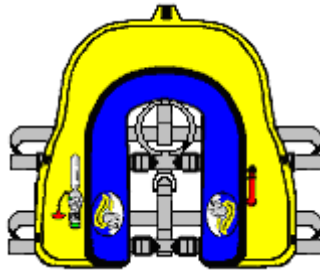
To dry the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket, hang it up and let it dry naturally. Do not spin dry, or dry in front of a radiator or other source of

direct heat.

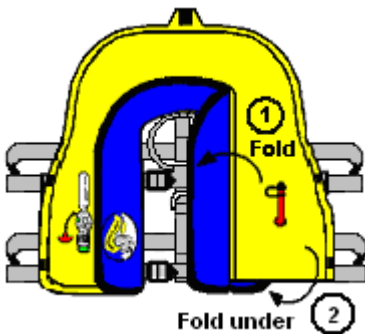
### How to Store:

Store in a well ventilated area. Do not store in direct sunlight or damp areas. Avoid exposure to chemicals.

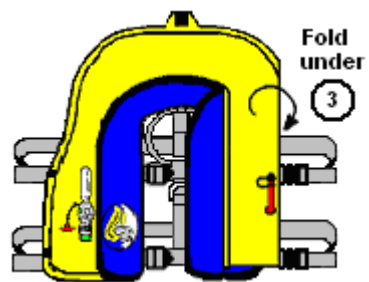
### FOLDING INSTRUCTIONS:



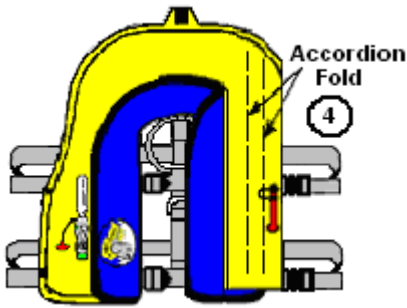
Before folding, make sure all of the air is out of the inflation chamber. Lay the life jacket flat and face up.



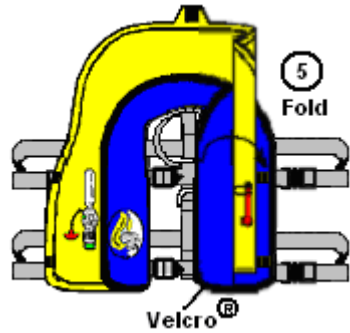
1. Fold the right side cover towards the center.
2. Fold the bottom of the inflation chamber under.



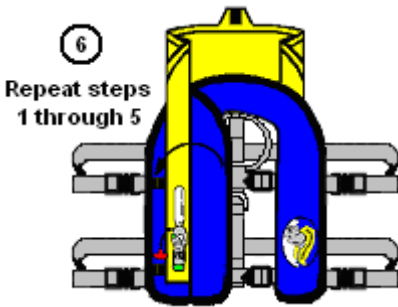
3. Fold the right side of the inflation chamber under, just to the edge of the inflation tube.



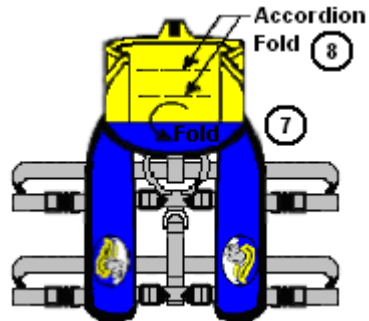
4. Fold the inflation chamber like an accordion in three equal sections.



5. Fold the right cover back to the right side and fasten the Velcro® of the front and back covers together.

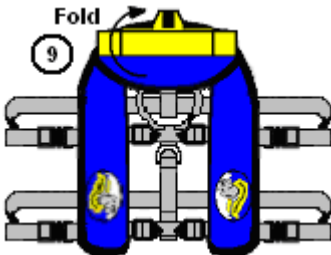


6. Complete steps 1 through 5 for the left side of the life jacket. Ensure the pull lanyard is tucked inside the cover.

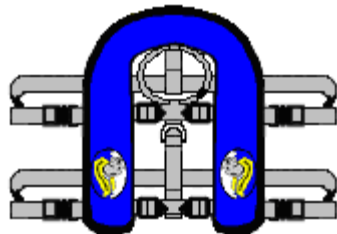


7. Fold down the top cover towards the center.

8. Fold the inflation chamber like an accordion in three equal sections.



9. Tuck in the top and side corners, fold up the top cover, and fasten the Velcro® of the front and back covers together.





**CAUTION**

**Using the wrong size CO<sub>2</sub> Cylinder can damage  
The pet life jacket's inflation chamber.**

**Only use the correct size CO<sub>2</sub> Cylinder when  
rearming your pet life jacket (see page 1 & Figure 4).**

**DISCLAIMER:**

**Critter's Inflatable®** life jacket should only be used as described in this manual. No liability is either expressed or implied.

The manufacturer does not guarantee the safety of the animal or that the use of the products removes all risk of drowning.

**WARRANTY:**

**Critter's Inflatable®** is guaranteed for one year, from date of purchase, from defects in materials and workmanship under normal conditions of use and service. We guarantee satisfaction or your money back.

Defects caused by misuse, accident or fire, and products that have been altered are excluded from the warranty.



**CAUTION**

**Keep this life jacket away from fuels, oils, and acids.  
DO NOT allow the inflatable chamber to come in  
contact with sharp or pointed objects.**

## **OWNER'S MANUAL UPDATE VERSION - AUGUST 2009:**

This update addresses the following:

1. Eliminates all discussions and references about how to rearm the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket in the manual only CO<sub>2</sub> inflation mode.
2. Removes all references and figures regarding the yellow manual cap, since this cap is needed for manual CO<sub>2</sub> inflation mode.
3. Adds discussions and figures about the Halkey-Roberts model V90000 inflation system.
4. Adds discussions and figures about setting up the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> life jacket for oral inflation use; and includes a discussion for proper use of the cap to protect the inflator cap threads when orally inflating the pet life jacket.

Additionally, our Website incorporates the changes reflected in this version of the **Critter's Inflatable**<sup>®</sup> pet life jacket Owner's Manual.

### **Critter's Inflatable, LLC**

- Phone: 410-987-9622
- EMAIL: [info@crittersinflatable.com](mailto:info@crittersinflatable.com)
- WEBSITE: <http://www.crittersinflatable.com>