

Help Cats Keep Their Cool

ASPCA offers tips to keep pets safe as weather warms up.

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Warm weather is on the way, so remember to keep your cat out of the heat and make sure she's got plenty of water. With summer's hot weather approaching, pet owners are urged to keep their cats and dogs safe from the heat.

The warmer months are a good time for social gatherings that include pets; however, it's important to note the hidden and not-so-hidden dangers that can harm animals, according to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Some tips to keep pets safe this summer, from the ASPCA's Animal Health Services:

Pets have it made in the shade. Pets dehydrate quickly, so give them plenty of water when it's hot. Also, make sure pets have a shady place to get out of the sun, and keep them indoors when it's extremely hot.

A pest-free pet is a happy pet. Commonly used flea and tick products, rodenticides (mouse and rat baits), and lawn and garden insecticides can harm cats and dogs if ingested, so keep them out of reach. While there are flea products that can be used safely on pets, products labeled as "dog only" containing permethrin can be deadly to cats. Be sure to read directions on these products carefully.

Water safety is pet-friendly. Do not leave pets unsupervised near a pool — not all dogs swim well. Introduce pets to water gradually and make sure pets wear flotation devices while on boats. Try not to let dogs drink pool water, which contains chlorine and other chemicals that could cause stomach upset.

Look out for "high-rise syndrome." During warmer months, the ASPCA sees an increase in injured animals as a result of 'high-rise syndrome,' which occurs when pets fall out of windows or doors and are seriously or fatally injured. To prevent this, pet owners should keep unscreened windows or doors closed at home and make sure adjustable screens are secured.

Be aware of heated situations. When taking the dog outdoors or in the company of other animals, always keep an eye on those around you. With more people and their dogs enjoying the warm weather, tempers may flare over territory, so it's important to make sure dogs are safe and secure around strangers and other animals.

Fireworks. Never use fireworks around pets. Exposure to lit fireworks can result in severe burns or trauma to curious pets and unused fireworks can be hazardous, too. Many types of fireworks contain potentially toxic substances such as copper, chlorates, arsenic and other heavy metals.