

Pet Safety Days Kick Off Summer

Message to pet owners is to keep cats safe in vehicles.

By Soraya Gutierrez

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The Pet Safety Days campaign aims to educate pet owners about pet safety restraints. For vacationing pet owners looking to avoid flight delays and pet travel fees at the airport this summer, many families will bring their children and their cats and dogs to destinations accessible by car. That makes it a good time of year to educate animal owners about the importance of pet safety restraints in cars, according to organizers of the Pet Safety Days campaign.

The pet safety program Bark Buckle UP announced that it partnered with Volvo Cars in launching a campaign to educate pet owners nationwide about summer travel safety. The Pet Safety Days campaign will teach cat and dog owners how to properly secure their animals and travel safely this summer.

"Few people understand how dangerous traveling with an unrestrained pet can be," said Daniel Johnston, spokesman for Volvo Cars of North America. "That's why Volvo has partnered with Bark Buckle UP to support Pet Safety Days and provide the tools travelers need to keep all family members safe."

Through September, select Volvo retailers across the United States and Canada will host Pet Safety Days for the general public and their animals. At the safety events, pet owners can learn about safety products and get tips for traveling safely with cats and dogs.

Christina Selter, Bark Buckle UP founder, will visit select Pet Safety Days to answer questions, give advice and demonstrations on how to keep pets safe while driving.

"In the event of an accident, an unrestrained pet can escape and be hit by another vehicle, cause another collision, or attack emergency crews trying to reach an injured party," Selter said. "It only takes a few minutes to safeguard your pet, and by properly securing your pet, you are protecting yourself, your passengers and your pet from injury, not to mention protecting other drivers and strangers trying to help."

The company said that when driving 35 mph, a 60-pound unrestrained dog can cause an impact of 2,700 pounds, slamming into a car seat, windshield or passenger. Pet restraints in moving vehicles now are required in many states and provinces since they offer many advantages — they help protect pets in the event of a collision; keep pets from running loose and distracting the driver; and prevent pets from escaping through an open window or door.

"Less than 2 percent of American pet parents restrain their pets while traveling," Selter said. "Our goal, together with Volvo, is to educate people to ensure that pet safety, before and after an accident occurs, becomes a top priority."

To bring pet safety to the forefront and educate pet owners about traveling safely with pets, the Pet Safety Days campaign coincides with Bring Your Pet to Work Day on June 20 and Auto Safety Month in June.