



Press Release
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Keep Your Pets Safe This Holiday Weekend

The fourth of July is an exciting weekend for many, but it can also be a stressful and dangerous weekend for our pets. Fireworks often frighten pets and that fear can cause your dog or cat to panic and try to escape the confines of your yard or house. Even a pet miles away from fireworks can feel the vibrations and hear the noises from such explosions. It's common to see missing pet signs pop up in neighborhoods the following day. Far too many animals end up in animal care facilities or worse yet being hit by a car each year, but taking precautions is the key to keeping your pet safe.

Here are 6 tips to make it a safe fourth of July for you and your pet:

1. Make sure your pet gets plenty of exercise earlier in the day.
2. Keep your pet inside during fireworks, preferably with human companionship. Resist the urge to take them to fireworks displays and do not leave your pet in the car as overheating and dehydration can happen in just minutes.
3. Your pets should have a properly fitting collar with current ID tags. If you are on vacation, make sure you have a temporary tag with your local contact information.
4. Provide a safe place inside your home where your pet can retreat when scared. Some animals can become destructive when frightened so be sure to remove any items your pet could destroy or anything that could be harmful to your pet.
5. Windows and curtains should be kept closed and familiar ambient noises should be used to sooth your pet like a TV, radio or fan at normal volume.
6. If your pet behaves nervously by pacing, whining or crying, distract her by playing with her or doing something she enjoys. Don't stroke, pet or reassure her by saying, "Don't worry, it's okay." This may actually reinforce her nervousness or fright.

If your pet does stray away from home, it's important that you visit area animal control shelters as soon as possible. You can find the address and phone numbers of local shelters in the front section of the "white pages" telephone book. At each shelter, provide a detailed description and photo of your pet. These steps will greatly increase your chances of finding your animal friend.

If you find a lost pet, please take the animal to your nearest animal control shelter. Place a "found" ad in your local newspaper and post notices around your neighborhood.

For more information please contact Suncoast Humane Society at (941) 474-7884 or visit them on the web at www.humane.org.