

July 4th Pet Safety



Costa Mesa Fire & Rescue proudly shares this important list to help prepare pets for the Fourth of July holiday.

The [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#) (ASPCA) has listed ways you can prevent your holiday celebration from turning into a tragedy. Here are 10 tips on how to keep your pet from panicking this Fourth of July holiday.

10. Keep your Pet Indoors at All Times!

It may seem obvious, but even if your pet is used to being outside, the resulting panic caused by fireworks or other loud noises may make them break their restraint or jump a fence in a terrified attempt to find safety.

9. Don't Put Insect Repellent on Your Pet that isn't Specifically for Pet Use

The same tip applies to applying "people" sunscreen on your pet. What isn't toxic to humans can be toxic to animals. The ASPCA lists the poisonous effects of sunscreen on your pet as, "...drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive thirst and *lethargy*." DEET, a common *insecticide*, may cause neurological issues.

8. Alcoholic Drinks Poison Pets

If your pet drinks alcohol, they can become dangerously intoxicated, go into a coma, or in severe cases, die from respiratory failure. Yes, even beer is toxic; fermented hops and ethanol are poisonous to dogs and cats.

7. Going to a Fireworks Display? Leave Your Pet at Home

The safest place for your pet is at home, not in a crowded, unfamiliar and noisy place. The combination of too many people and loud fireworks will make your beloved pet freak out and desperately seek shelter. Locking them in the car is also not an option; your pet may suffer [brain damage](#) and [heat stroke](#).

6. Have Your Pet Properly Identified

If your pet manages to break loose and become lost, without proper identification it will be that much harder to get them back. Consider fitting your pet with microchip identification, ID tags with their name and your phone number, or both. It is also a good idea to have a recent picture of your pets in case you have to put up signs.

5. Keep Your Pet Away from Glow Jewelry

It might look cute, but your pet could chew up and swallow the plastic adornments. The ASPCA states that while not highly toxic, “excessive drooling and *gastrointestinal* irritation could still result from ingestions, and intestinal blockage could occur from swallowing large pieces of the plastic containers.”

4. NEVER Use Fireworks Around Pets

While lit fireworks can pose a danger to curious pets and potentially result in severe burns and/or trauma to the face and paws, even unused fireworks can be hazardous. Some fireworks contain potentially toxic substances such as arsenic, potassium nitrate, and other heavy metals.

3. Don't Give Your Pet “Table Food”

If you are having a backyard barbeque, you may be tempted to slip some snacks to your pet. But like beer and chocolate, there are other festive foods that could harm your pet. Onions, coffee, avocado, grapes & raisins, salt and yeast dough are all possible hazards for dogs and cats.

2. Lighter Fluid and Matches Are Harmful to Pets.

The ASPCA lists chlorates as a harmful chemical substance found in some matches that, if ingested, can cause your pet difficulty in breathing, damage blood cells or even cause kidney disease. If exposed to lighter fluid, your pet may sustain skin irritation on contact, respiratory problems if inhaled, and gastric problems if ingested.

1. Citronella Insect Control Products Harm Pets, Too.

Oils, candles, insect coils and other citronella-based repellants are irritating toxins to pets, according to the ASPCA. The result of inhalation can cause severe respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia, and ingestion can harm your pet's nervous system.

The safest and best bet for celebrating this Fourth of July with your pets is to exclude them from holiday festivities, at least this time around.

Instead, find a safe, secure spot in the home for your pets while you go out and enjoy the loud bangs, bright lights and spectator fun. Your pets will appreciate the quiet a lot more than you'll enjoy the noise.

Contact your pet care professional for a plan to meet your pet's physical and emotional needs.