

July 4th Pet Safety Tips

July 4th is a grand, celebratory time of year. However, often our pets are very anxious because of the abnormal routines and noises. Below is a list of ways to help improve your pets comfort during this time of year.

- If possible, desensitize your pet to loud noises before the festivities of Independence Day begin. This may take weeks to months. Please call for recommendations on how to do this.
- Crowds at festivities and the sounds of fireworks displays can be overwhelming to your pet. DO NOT take your pet to fireworks displays!! They may be injured or injure themselves or someone else in an attempt to escape.
- Never let off fireworks near your pet. If ignited to close to your pet, fireworks can cause very painful burns to the body, face, nose and mouth in addition to the psychological trauma they are sure to produce. In addition, fireworks may be toxic if ingested. Please seek emergency care if your pet is injured or ingests fireworks.



(photo1)

- Never leave your pet outside in the yard either loose, kenneled, or tethered. They will have no place to go and the combination of restraint and noise will traumatize them even more. Dogs left loose are more likely to escape when fearful.
- Make sure all of your pets wear an appropriate fitting collar with proper identification attached. Since collars and name tags may fall off or break, microchipping your pet is highly recommended to permanently identify your pet. Please call if interested in permanent identification.
- Walk your dog at least 1 hour before the sun sets to prevent exposure to the fireworks. Take an extra-long walk to use up extra energy if possible.
- Keep your pets inside the house, garage, or basement on the night of the 4th. Make sure there is nothing of value in the room your pet might accidentally break in their moments of panic. Unplug floor and table lamps and remove any other hazards from the room.

- Feed & water your pet a few hours before confining them to the house/kennel.
- Provide kennels or other “safe zones” for you pets to hide. Cover the kennels with blankets to dampen the noise/flashing. Do not confine your pet to a kennel unless they are used to being kenneled on a regular basis and view it as a “safe zone”.
- Turn on the TV or radio to help drown out the noise of the fireworks to minimize your pest’ exposure to the noise. Keep the volume at a normal level; turning it up too loud may only increase your pets’ anxiety.
- Make sure all doors and windows are securely shut and locked.
- Leave some lights on in your house to reduce the flashes and light affecting your pet.



(Photo2)

- Petting or reassuring your pet by cuddling and saying “it’s okay” or “don’t be afraid” can actually reinforce nervousness and fear. Instead ignore the behavior and redirect her attention with chew toys or by playing with or doing something else enjoyable.

- Never punish your pet for its reaction to fireworks or other loud noises.
- Once you are sure the fireworks are over, check your pet for signs of stress. If your pet shows signs of stress it is probably better to keep them in for the night and let them out in the morning when the stress has subsided.
- Before letting your pet outside, check the yard to make sure there are not used fireworks or other hazards for your pet.

Signs of stress in cats include running away and hiding, inappropriate urination or defecation, cowering, trembling/shaking, panting, vocalizing and refusing to eat.

Signs of stress in dogs include pacing, panting, inappropriate barking, vomiting, diarrhea, trembling/shaking, hiding, chewing, digging, abnormal clinging behavior, refusal to eat.

If you have any concerns regarding your pet’s behavior, please call us at (319) 351-6848.

Resources:

Diane L. Black, LVT – Fireworks and Pets: A Bad Combination. www.allcreatures24hr.com/content/fireworks-and-pets-bad-combination
www.dogtipper.com – photo 1
casapyro.com – photo 2