



Calvert County News

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Residents Advised to Keep Pets Safe During Sweltering Temperatures

PRINCE FREDERICK, Md. – July 17, 2020 – The National Weather Service has forecasted high temperatures with a heat index value exceeding 95 degrees, Sunday, July 19, through Wednesday, July 22. The Calvert County Department of Public Safety, Division of Animal Control, has issued an animal safety alert due to excessive heat and advises citizens to take steps to keep their pets safe when temperatures are soaring.

In addition to providing appropriate protection from the weather, animals must be provided with shelter, water, space and access to shade. The following requirements are also in effect for the duration of the heat advisory:

- Dogs with short snouts (brachiocephalic), such as boxers, Shih-Tzus and pugs, and long hair winter breeds, such as huskies, malamutes, and St. Bernards, should have outside time limited to less than 30 minutes at a time to prevent overheating.
- Animals kept outdoors should be monitored at all times and brought into a temperature-controlled environment if they begin to show signs of distress such as vomiting, diarrhea, excessive drooling, dizziness, disorientation or heavy panting.

Any time a pet is outside, owners must ensure it has protection from heat and sun and plenty of fresh, cold water. During heat waves, add ice to water when possible. Pet owners can also follow these additional tips provided by the Humane Society of the United States:

- Provide pets tree shade or shade with tarps because they don't obstruct air flow. A doghouse does not provide relief from heat; in fact, it makes it worse.
- Never leave your pets in a parked car – not even for a minute, even with the car and air conditioning running. On a warm day, temperatures inside a vehicle can

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rise rapidly to dangerous levels. On an 85-degree day, for example, the temperature inside a car with the windows opened slightly can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes. After 30 minutes, the temperature will reach 120 degrees.

- Watch the humidity. Animals pant to evaporate moisture from their lungs, which takes heat away from their body. If the humidity is too high, they are unable to cool themselves and their temperature can skyrocket to dangerous levels.
- Limit exercise on hot days. Adjust intensity and duration of exercise in accordance with the temperature. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours. Be especially careful with pets with white-colored ears, who are more susceptible to skin cancer, and short-nosed pets, who typically have difficulty breathing.
- Avoid walking dogs on asphalt and concrete. The surfaces get very hot and can burn your pet's paws. Walk your dog on the grass if possible, as being close to the ground can heat their body quickly. Always carry water with you to keep your dog from dehydrating and keep walks to a minimum.
- Giving your dog a lightweight summer haircut can help prevent overheating, but never shave to the skin. Dogs need one inch of protection to avoid getting sunburned.
- Do not rely on a fan. Pets respond differently to heat than humans do. (Dogs, for instance, sweat primarily through their feet.) Fans do not cool off pets as effectively as they do people.
- Cool your pet inside. Keep your pet from overheating indoors or out with a cooling body wrap, vest or mat. Soak these products in cool water and they'll stay cool (but usually dry) for up to three days. A cool soaking bath is also a good idea for dogs that don't find baths stressful.
- Provide access to fresh water, whether your pets are inside or out with you.

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