



City of Los Angeles Animal Services



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HEAT ALERT: Southern California will see a heat up through the weekend, as temperatures are predicted to climb to 100 degrees or more.

Keep Your Pets Safe in Extreme Heat

Los Angeles, September 23, 2016 - When it is hot for you, it is even hotter for your furry friend. Dogs and cats do not sweat through their skin. They cool themselves by panting or rapid breathing, which means animals must work extra hard to stay cool.

Too much heat can be extremely dangerous or even fatal for them. If your best friend has a shorter nose, like Persian cats and Bulldogs, they are more susceptible to heatstroke than breeds with longer noses.

If your dog or cat begins very rapid, noisy breathing, has trouble swallowing, and looks very distressed, they could be having a heatstroke. Heatstroke is an emergency. Get the animal out of the heat. Apply cold, wet towels to the back of the head. Place cold packs wrapped in towels or plain wet towels between the back legs and on the belly. Cool off your pet and then take them to the veterinarian immediately.

The best plan is to keep your dog and cat protected from the hot weather. Here are some pet safety reminders:

- **Give your pet extra water**
Always make sure that your dog or cat has plenty of fresh water to drink. A bucket that holds a gallon or more of water will stay cool longer than water in a shallow pan. Some dogs consider ice cubes a treat, and you can add a few to the water bowl.
- **Offer your dog a wading pool**
Dogs who love the water, enjoy walking through or even lying in a child's pool with cool water.
- **Never leave your pet alone inside a car**
If your pet cannot go inside at every stop with you, they are safer at home on hot days. Car interiors heat very quickly, even with the windows open. If it is 90 degrees out, temperatures can top 160 degrees faster than you can walk around the block. In fact, it's against the law to leave an animal in a vehicle if doing so endangers the health or well-being of the animal.
- **Walk your dog in the morning or evening**
The intense heat of the afternoon can overwhelm you and your dog. Early morning and evening walks when it's typically cooler outside will be more comfortable for you both.
- **Avoid hot ground surfaces**
While walking your dog outdoors, pay particular attention to the pavement, sidewalks or sand. Check the temperature with your hand, if it's too hot to touch then it's too hot for your dog's paws.
- **Don't leave your pet outdoors for a long time**
If your dog has to be left outdoors for awhile, make sure they have plenty of access to shade such as trees, a covered patio or cool spot under the porch. Dark coated pets absorb heat. Lighter coated pets, especially white ones, are at higher risk for skin cancer and they are more susceptible to sunburn.

- **Care for your pet's coat**

Longer coated dogs and cats who are brushed regularly have natural insulation from the heat. However, if the coat has gotten matted, a clip will make your buddy much more comfortable. Remember, newly clipped animals can be sunburned.

Companion animals want to be with you. They will be safer and cooler inside with you, where they can spend their time doing what they do best: *being your best friend*.

Los Angeles Department of Animal Services is one of the largest municipal shelter systems in the United States with six shelters serving approximately 60,000 animals annually and responding to 20,000 emergency calls involving an animal or person in danger. LA Animal Services promotes and protects the health, safety and welfare of animals and people.

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