



City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Services



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Holiday Hazards for Your Pets

LA Animal Services offers safety tips

Los Angeles, December 20, 2016 - The holiday season is a joyous time of year when everyone is decorating, cooking and coming together to celebrate and create memories with their family including their furry family members. With all the hustle and bustle during this time of year, we can easily forget about the potential dangers that may come along with all the festivities. LA Animal Services wants you to keep the following hazards in mind to keep your best buddy safe during the holidays.

1. Beware of décor

Our beloved pets often see holiday décor as something to play with or eat that can be very dangerous to them. Tinsel, if consumed, can cause intestinal blockage and breakable ornaments and other glass decorations can cause injuries. Put tinsel and fragile decorations up high and out of reach from your pet. Be careful of electric lights and wires that can cause burns if the cords are chewed.

If you put up a Christmas tree consider tying it down to a door frame so your pet doesn't tip it over. If the tree is real, keep the water covered and inaccessible. Tree water may contain fertilizer and other harmful chemicals.

2. Flowers and festive plants

You probably worry over poinsettias making your pets sick, the truth is that these festive plants only cause mild to moderate gastrointestinal irritation. However, there are other seasonal foliage that you should be more wary of such as amaryllis, holly, lilies and mistletoe that can be dangerous and even poisonous to pets who decide to eat them.

3. Holiday feasts

We have a tendency to include our pets in our holiday meals, which often results in overindulgence. Even when we don't purposely include them, the agile and creative dog or cat can capture a special treat from the kitchen counter, trash or even the dining room table.

Dogs and cats suffer very serious and sometimes fatal consequences from turkey or chicken bones, too much rich and fatty foods, yeast dough, chocolate and just plain overeating. Instead of giving your companion animal leftovers, stop by a pet food store and purchase some new dog biscuits or cat treats.

4. Keep away from noisemakers

While celebrating, it is easy to forget that loud noises and celebratory poppers or noisemakers can scare your furry friend. Even if your pet doesn't seem obviously upset by noisemakers and fireworks, they can still cause harm to pets if burned or if they accidentally ingest them. Try creating a safe place in your home where your pet can have some quiet space if needed.

5. Plan ahead

If you are not going to be home or in the room with your pet, unplug decorations and take out the trash to make sure your pet doesn't sneak any food scraps. If your pet is not acting like himself or herself, consult your veterinarian and make sure you know how to get to your 24/7 emergency veterinary clinic before there's an emergency.

Always make sure your pet has up-to-date identification. If for any reason your pet escapes during the holiday chaos, a collar with a current license and/or ID tag on them and a microchip that's registered with your contact information, will help reunite you with your companion animal.

By keeping these precautions in mind, the holiday season can be enjoyable and safe instead of stressful for you and your two and four-legged family members.

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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