



For Immediate Release

Contact: Kathy Wahlers

Pet Poison Helpline

952-852-9503

kwahlers@safetycall.com

Twitter: @petpoisonhelp

Safe Pet Considerations for your 4th of July

Pet Poison Helpline offers tips for keeping pets safe during this time of celebration

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. (June 30, 2010) – When celebrating with family and friends this 4th of July, remember that fireworks can be hazardous to your pets. Dr. Justine Lee, DVM, DACVECC, and the associate director of Veterinary Services at the [Pet Poison Helpline](http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com) wants pet owners to be aware of the potential dangers of fireworks. “Pets are curious and will get into trouble if left unattended around fireworks,” said Lee.

How Fireworks Can Harm Your Pet:

- Most fireworks are toxic to pets. They contain hazardous chemicals such as potassium nitrate, which is an oxidizing agent. They can also contain charcoal or sulfur and coloring agents, which are potentially dangerous heavy metals.
- When ingested, pets can develop gastrointestinal issues like vomiting, a painful abdomen, and bloody diarrhea. The severity of pet health issues resulting from ingestion will depend on the type of fireworks and the amount that was ingested.
- Pets ingesting large amounts can suffer tremors or seizures, along with acute kidney failure, bone marrow changes, shallow breathing and jaundice, which is yellowing of the skin.
- Exposure to lit fireworks can result in burns to the nose, face, lips, or inside of the mouth, as well as eye irritation and conjunctivitis.
- Noise factors: In addition to the poisonous hazards associated with fireworks, many pets are frightened by the loud noises they make. Fireworks can cause anxiety to those pets that are noise-shy. Dr. Lee states, “If your pets are gun-shy, thunderstorm phobic or noise-shy, consider talking to your veterinarian about anti-anxiety drugs or sedatives that can help them relax during fireworks.”

Simply keeping your pets out of the reach of fireworks will prevent them from being poisoned this 4th of July. Keep pets a safe distance away by securing them on a leash or in the house during firework displays. If your pet ingests fireworks this 4th of July and is suffering, do not induce vomiting. Immediately seek help by calling your veterinarian, emergency veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline at **800-213-6680**.

About the Pet Poison Helpline

Pet Poison Helpline is a service available 24 hours, seven days a week for pet owners, veterinarians and veterinary technicians that require assistance treating a potentially poisoned pet. Staff can provide treatment advice for poisoning cases of all species, including dogs, cats, birds, small mammals, large animals and exotic species. As the most cost-effective option for animal poison control care, Pet Poison Helpline’s fee of \$35 per incident includes follow-up consultation for the duration of the poison case. Pet Poison Helpline is available in North America by calling **800-213-6680**. Additional information can be found online at www.petpoisonhelpline.com.

Note to media contacts: Veterinarians from the Pet Poison Helpline are available for interviews. Please contact Kathy Wahlers at 952-852-9503, or Dr. Justine Lee at 952-853-1923.

###