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# July 4th PET SAFETY TIPS

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**DON'T FREAK OUT**  
Fireworks explosions are loud and frightening to pets. Keep them secured in a quiet room during the displays.



**TAKE A CHILL PILL**  
Some pets need help to ease the stress of fireworks. Talk to your vet about products and medications that can help.



**PARTY ANIMAL**  
BBQs and gatherings are fun for us, but pose problems for pets. Keep alcohol and foods out of paw's reach.



**STAY COOL**  
It can get hot outside and the festivities can be distracting. Make sure your pet has plenty of water and shade.



**MICROCHIP**  
More pets get lost on 7/4 than any other day of the year. Microchip your pet and avoid the stress of a lost pet.

The American Humane Association reports that July 5 is the busiest day of the year for animal shelters.



## Why?

In a 2005 press release the Indiana Proactive Animal Welfare, Inc. (PAW) stated that animal shelters the day after Fourth of July are "inundated with pets that panicked at the noise of firecrackers and fled into the night, winding up lost, injured or killed."

**Here are 10 tips on how to keep your pet from panicking this Fourth of July weekend and prevent your holiday celebration from turning into a tragedy.**

### **1. Exercise your dog before the fireworks start!**

Make time in your schedule to give your an extra long workout before the fireworks begin. Dogs that have been thoroughly exercised are calmer and easier to keep quiet. They will also sleep more deeply, and consequently, will be less likely to be disturbed by the noise outside.

Of course, if it's really hot outside, take precautions to ensure your dog doesn't get overheated.

### **2. Stay home with your dog.**

I understand that not everyone can stay at home on the 4th, but your dog's fear of fireworks can be exacerbated if you aren't there to provide reassurance that they are safe. This is especially important if you have a a new dog in the house as you won't know how it reacts to fireworks.

### **3. Keep Calm.**

Your dog reacts to your nonverbal cues. If you jump or tense up when you hear fireworks because you are anticipating your dog's fear, you may make its fear worse.

### **4. Drowned out the sound.**

Turn up the stereo or television and keep your windows closed during the fireworks. Something that can provide background noise, like a fan or air conditioner can help as well.

### **5. Respect your dog's fear.**

Allow your dog to hide if it feels more comfortable in its crate or under a bed. Don't pull it out or try to force it closer to the fireworks in an attempt to get him used to the sounds. Just let it stay where it's comfortable and provide reassurance that it's safe.

### **6. Provide a distraction.**

Break out your dog's favorite treats, play a game, or give it some extra cuddle time. You can occupy it for awhile by filling a KONG with peanut butter or another yummy treat and freezing it.

### **7. Try the Thundershirt.**



I've never tried a Thundershirt on my dogs, but some people swear by them. The pressure it provides has a calming effect on the nervous system.

### 8. Just say YES to drugs.

If you know that your dog will panic when the fireworks start, ask your vet if he/she can prescribe medication like Sileo, an FDA-approved gel for the treatment of canine noise aversion.

Some people recommend giving your dog half a Benadryl to keep it calm but I wouldn't try that unless you check with your vet first.

### 9. Be Prepared.

Make sure your dog is wearing ID tags with its name, your name, and your phone number. Get your dog microchipped if it doesn't have one. Buy your dog a license - if it runs off and is picked up by animal control, they will call to let you know they have your dog. And you won't have to pay a big fine to get your dog back. You can also get a digital ID tag from Issaquah-based PetHub.

### 10. Remove visual stimulation.

Keep your curtains closed or blinds. Removing visual stimulation can help calm dogs. I hope you find these tips helpful. Have a great holiday, and be sure to keep your dogs safe and calm!

**For More Information:**

<http://www.petmd.com/dog/slideshows/care/fourth-of-july-pet-safety-tips>

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The advertisement features a close-up profile of a cat's face with a yellow eye, set against a background of the American flag. The text is overlaid on the image, and there is a red paw print graphic in the bottom right corner.



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