



Hot Weather Pet Safety

A dog or cat's normal body temperature is between 101 and 102 degrees Fahrenheit. When they become overheated, such as during too strenuous exercise or while in a parked car, their body temperature increases rapidly.

A companion animal, like a child, can only withstand a higher body temperature for a short time. Once it reaches a critical point, irreparable brain damage or death can occur.

Never leave a dog or other animal in a parked car. Unlike humans, dogs do not perspire to cool their bodies down - they pant. When the air they breathe is overheated, their body temperature can rise quickly to a dangerous level. On an 85-degree day, even with the windows cracked, the temperature inside the car can reach 120 degrees in a matter of minutes, leaving the animal susceptible to heat stroke or death.

Bring companion animals inside. If they must be left outdoors for any length of time, adequate shade and a supply of fresh, cool water is essential. However, when temperatures and humidity soar, even these precautions may not be enough.

If your dog is experiencing rapid panting and lethargy and has been subjected to extreme temperatures, he may be suffering from heat exhaustion.

If your dog is overcome by heat, you can give immediate first aid by immersing him in cool water. If you are unable to immerse him, lay him on cool, shaded grass, pour cold water over him and call your veterinarian immediately.

Limit strenuous activity with your dog such as jogging or taking long walks to the early morning or evening hours. Make sure he has access to water before, during and after this activity.

Warm weather activities and gatherings can provide many opportunities for a companion animal to slip out a door or gate and become lost. All dogs and cats should wear a collar and ID tag at all times. A form of permanent identification such as a microchip is also recommended should the animal slip out of his collar.

To report an animal left outdoors without adequate shade and water or an animal left alone in a parked car, call your local police or animal control. In the cities of Detroit, Hamtramck or Highland Park, call the Michigan Humane Cruelty Investigation Hotline at (313) 872-3401.