

Summer Safety

A Few Preventative Measures Can Ensure Survival During the Dog Days of Summer

With the return of summer, dogs are spending more time outside. And by taking a few preventative measures, you and your pup can enjoy the season without much hassle.

After a long winter, leashes and collars are not necessarily in the best shape. With one pull of the leash, a dog could snap its leash or collar and run away. To avoid such a situation, replace frayed or worn equipment as soon as possible.

As the temperature increases, pets feel the heat, too. Outdoor shelters can provide refuge from extreme temperatures. If you have the space on your balcony or in your garden, add a doghouse; if you don't, give your dog an outdoor bed.

The best means of keeping pets cool in the summer, however, is to always have fresh drinking water on hand. If you are taking a walk or going to the park, carry a portable water container. Most styles easily fit in a knapsack or purse and can even clip onto a belt.



Keeping Cool: City dog enjoys a splash of relief

"Maintaining a regular flea and tick program is a necessity in the summer months, but in many cases, depending on the climate, [it's a good thing to do] all year round," says Jill Richardson, a doctor of veterinary medicine with the Hartz Mountain Corporation. Whether owners purchase products from veterinary practices, pet stores or supermarkets, putting your dog on a flea and tick program is essential because parasites can not only harm your pooch but can affect your home and your health.

It is also important for owners to keep their dogs well groomed in the summer. Liz Rock of Grooming Unlimited in Huntington, N.Y.,



discourages clients from shaving their dog's fur in the warmer weather. "The dog hair offers protection from the sun. As an alternative, I suggest they clip their dog's hair shorter than its regular style and continue with their four-to-six-week grooming appointments."

For those who don't have access to a groomer, purchase gentle, soothing and cleansing shampoos, because dogs that prefer to cool off in ponds or pools need a quick bath to prevent skin problems. Regular brushing also prevents matting and removes leaves, dirt and other debris from a dog's coat.

According to the Travel Industry Association, approximately 29 million Americans travel with their pets. Among adults traveling with pets, dogs are the most common animal brought on road trips. Nearly eight in 10 travelers take a trip with their dog in an automobile, truck or recreational vehicle.

When traveling with your pet, observe all transport restrictions. Purchase all the necessary car accessories or airline-approved bags, and don't leave home without a up-to-date pet-friendly travel guide.

And it never hurts to be prepared for emergencies. Warmer weather means owners spend more time outdoors with their dogs on the streets and in the parks. Always be aware of the presence of glass, chicken bones, antifreeze and rat poison where dogs are frolicking. Purchase first-aid kits and related subject-matter books, and consider taking an American Red Cross pet first-aid course at a location near you. ■

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