



Municipality of Princeton

Monument Hall
One Monument Drive
Princeton, NJ 08540

Princeton Health Department
Telephone 609-497-7608
Fax: 609-924-7627
Website: <http://www.princetonnj.gov/health>

NATHAN BARSON
Animal Control Officer
Animal Cruelty Investigator

Summer heat safety tips for pet owners

The dog days of summer can be especially dangerous for dogs. Please keep the following safety tips in mind and be aware of the signs of heatstroke in animals so that you can quickly identify and treat the life threatening condition. It is always a good idea to consult your veterinarian and have an emergency plan in place for power outages and high heat.

- 1. Never leave your pets unattended in a car:** On an 85-degree day the temperature inside a car even with the windows opened slightly can reach deadly levels within 15 minutes. After 30 minutes, the temperature can exceed 120 degrees.
- 2. Be mindful of Humidity:** Many animals such as dogs use panting as their primary way to get rid of body heat by evaporating hot moisture from their lungs. If the humidity is too high the moisture can't evaporate and the dog will overheat. A fan is not adequate for cooling dogs because dogs do not sweat throughout their bodies like humans do.
- 3. Shade and water:** Any time your pet is outside be sure he or she has adequate protection from sunlight and has access to clean cool water. A dog house can build heat and should not be the only form of shade, instead dogs should be able to take shade under trees and bushes. Ice can be added to water to keep it cool for many hours.
- 4. Limit exercise:** Exercise is a critical component to health even in pets, however in the hot summer days the intensity and duration of the exercise should be limited. Exercise can also be restricted to early morning or evening hours.
- 5. Protect Your Dog's Feet from Getting Burned on Hot Pavement:** be mindful of hot surfaces -asphalt and metal and walk your dog on the cool side of the street or in the grass.

HEATSTROKE IS AN EMERGENCY

Animals that are very old, very young, or overweight, or have heart or respiratory conditions are at increased risk for heatstroke. Some signs of heatstroke are heavy panting and lethargy, difficulty breathing, disorientation, excessive thirst, glazed eyes, rapid heartbeat, dizziness, lack of coordination, unusual salivation, vomiting, a deep red or purple tongue, seizures, and unconsciousness.

If you suspect heatstroke, move your pet into an air-conditioned area or the shade. Let them drink small amounts of cold water or lick ice cubes. Apply ice packs or cold towels to the neck and chest or run cool water over them (extremely cold water should be avoided). Contact a Veterinarian immediately.