



**For Immediate Release**

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## **SUMMER PET SAFETY TIPS**

**Wainscott, NY May 25, 2010** Summer in the Hamptons means long days of fun outdoors in the sun. The season is highly anticipated and **The Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons, Inc.** wants to remind the public that the summer months can be very dangerous for your pet. Keep the following tips in mind while enjoying your pet this summer.

### **Don't Leave Your Pet in the Car**

On a hot summer day, the inside of a car heats up very quickly. On an 85 degree day, the temperature inside your car – with the windows slightly open –will reach 102 degrees in just 10 minutes. In 30 minutes it will go up to 120 degrees. On warmer days, it will go even higher. “Even the healthiest of pets will suffer from heat exhaustion” says ARF veterinarian Dr. Sarah Alward. Signs to watch out for are excessive panting, difficulty breathing, lethargy, drooling, diarrhea and vomiting. If you believe your dog has heat stroke, call your vet immediately and begin to cool down your dog with cold water. ARF suggests getting them wet with a garden hose, or in a swimming pool, cool tub or shower. Make sure they get out of the sun and into the shade or someplace that has air conditioning.

It is also very dangerous to drive with your dog in the back of a pick-up truck. Your dog could be injured by flying debris or if you need to stop suddenly, or swerve, your dog can be thrown out of the cab. Also keep in mind cars tend to overheat more often in the summer and leak antifreeze, which is poisonous to pets. Ethylene glycol is the main ingredient in most antifreeze and has an inviting sweet smell and taste to animals. Propylene glycol is a safer alternative and has a bitter smell to animals.

### **Dogs on the Beach**

Be courteous while on the beach. Keep your dog under control and make sure you pick up after them. Make sure you check with your town or village for specific rules and regulations during the summer season. If you plan to spend time on the water with your pet, make sure they wear a life preserver to protect them if caught in a strong current. Also keep in mind if your pet has shorthair, white fur or pink skin, they may need sunscreen, but make sure to check that your brand is safe for animals.

### **Plants & Fertilizers**

Fertilizers and garden products can cause problems for outdoor cats and dogs resulting in stomach upset and even gastrointestinal obstruction. April Gonzales of April Gonzales Garden Design, Inc. in Southampton recommends using organic lawn fertilizers and Eco-exempt sprays for ticks, which is made from wintergreen and rosemary. She advises you to “keep your pets indoors and away from treated areas for a minimum of 24 hours or until the irrigation goes off, as they can track things in on their fur and feet.” Also ARF reminds you that certain plants are harmful to pets. Be cautious with azaleas, rhododendron, oleander, and chrysanthemums. And make sure to keep your cats away from lilies, they are toxic to them. Also avoid using cocoa hull mulch in the garden.

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### **Food & Celebrations**

Grapes, raisins, avocado, onions, garlic, chives and alcohol are harmful to your pet. These foods taste great to us but can cause health hazards to your pet. Grapes and raisins could cause kidney failure while avocado and alcohol may cause vomiting and diarrhea. Onion, garlic and chives can cause gastrointestinal irritation and could lead to red blood cell damage. Also keep in mind that 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks can cause stress and anxiety for your dog. More dogs run away from home during 4<sup>th</sup> of July fireworks than any other day of the year.

### **Flea, Tick & Heartworm Prevention**

Make sure your pet is properly protected this summer. Ticks are quite prevalent on the East End and if your pet spends time outdoors you should check them often. Also consult your veterinarian to see what preventative products they recommend.

The mission of the **Animal Rescue Fund of the Hamptons, Inc.** is to provide for the health and welfare of the dogs and cats on the South Fork of Long Island through shelter, adoption services, medical care, spay and neutering programs, community outreach and humane education.

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