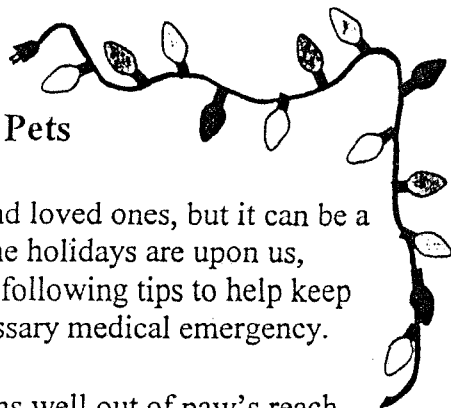


Holiday Safety Tips For Your Pets



The holidays are a wonderful time to celebrate with family and loved ones, but it can be a stressful and dangerous time for your family pet. Now that the holidays are upon us, Orange County Animal Care Services would like to offer the following tips to help keep your pet safe. Don't spoil the holiday season with an unnecessary medical emergency.

- Hang breakables, tinsel, and other tempting decorations well out of paw's reach. Tinsel, ribbon, and ornaments are especially dangerous to pets if chewed and swallowed.
- Place holiday plants out of pet's reach. Some seasonal plants can be poisonous, including mistletoe, holly berries, and poinsettias.
- Watch out for electrical cords. Pets, especially puppies, often try to chew them and may get badly burned, shocked or electrocuted. Make sure your strands of lights; loose wires and extension cords are out of reach.
- Metal ornament hooks can get caught in curious mouths. Use ribbon or yarn instead of hooks to hang your ornaments.
- A Christmas tree should stand on a flat, wide base. You may also want to anchor the tree with fishing line tied to a drapery rod, a ceiling or wall hook. Cats often see trees as excellent climbing posts. Whether your tree is live or artificial, both kinds of needles are indigestible.
- Cover your tree stand tightly with skirting. The water from the tree base can cause mouth sores, vomiting, diarrhea, and loss of appetite.
- Refrain from using edible ornaments on your tree. They can pose an irresistible temptation for some pets.
- Keep you pet away from holiday treats, especially chocolate. Theobomine and caffeine, active ingredients found in chocolate are toxins and can be fatal to some animals.
- Pets and candles just don't mix. Keep Menorahs and scented candles out of reach.
- If you plan to entertain, provide a "safe haven" for your pets to retreat for when they get overly excited and there is that possibility of escape.
- If you are going away for the holidays: make sure pet enclosures are secure, your pets are wearing proper identification, and arrangements have been made for their care.

While your pet is safe in a loving home, remember those less fortunate. Millions of pets, nationwide, will be homeless this holiday season. Our shelter animals appreciate toys, treats, and especially love and attention as much as yours. So visit your local shelter and bring your holiday cheer.

