

News Release

Jefferson Parish, Louisiana

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Our **SLV** Is:

"Provide the services,
leadership, and vision to
improve the quality of life
in Jefferson Parish."

Steve J. Theriot
Parish President

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2010

JEFFERSON PARISH REMINDS CITIZENS OF THE DANGERS OF LEAVING A PET IN THE HEAT

Because of the extreme heat during the past few weeks, the Jefferson Parish Animal Shelter has been responding to complaints of pets being left in vehicles unattended. The Humane Society of the United States, the nation's largest animal protection organization, reminds local pet owners to protect their animal companions in this heat.

Never leave your pets in a parked car. On a warm day, temperatures inside a vehicle can rise rapidly to dangerous levels. On an 85 degree day, for example, the temperature inside a car with the windows opened slightly can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes. After 30 minutes, the temperature will reach 120 degrees. Your pet may suffer irreversible organ damage or die. If you see an animal in distress in a parked car, contact the nearest animal shelter or police.

Shade and water are a must. Anytime your pet is outside, make sure he or she has protection from heat and sun (a doghouse does not provide relief from heat) and plenty of fresh, cool water. Heat stroke can be fatal for pets as well as people.

Limit exercise on hot days. Take care when exercising your pet. Adjust intensity and duration of exercise in accordance with the temperature. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours, and be especially careful with pets with white-colored ears, who are more susceptible to skin cancer, and short-nosed pets who, because of their short noses, can have difficulty breathing. Asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws, so walk your dog on the grass if possible.

Recognize the signs of heatstroke. In case of an emergency, it's important to be able to identify the symptoms of heat stress caused by exposure to extreme temperatures. When in doubt, contact your veterinarian immediately. Some signs of heatstroke are heavy panting, glazed eyes, a rapid heartbeat, restlessness, excessive thirst, lethargy, fever, dizziness, lack of coordination, profuse salivation, vomiting, a deep red or purple tongue, and unconsciousness. If the animal shows symptoms of heatstroke, take steps immediately to gradually lower her body temperature and take her to a veterinarian as soon as possible.

For more information, contact Tessa Corthell, Interim Director of the Jefferson Parish Animal Shelter at 504-736-6111.

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