

Hot weather tips to keep pets safe this summer

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With the temperatures starting to rise this week, [Greenhill Humane Society](#) wants to remind pet owners of the importance of keeping their pets safe this summer. When it comes to furry family members, please remember:

Leave pets at home when running errands. Leaving your animal in a parked car, even for just a few minutes, can easily cause heat stroke or brain damage. A car's interior temperature can increase in minutes, even with the windows slightly open. Dogs are especially vulnerable to heat stress because they do not sweat in the way that humans do; they release body heat by panting.

Keep pets inside during the heat of the day; do not leave them outside unattended.

Make sure pets have access to water bowls full of cool, fresh water.

When pets are outside, be sure there are shaded areas for them to rest in. It's a good idea to invest in a misting hose or kiddie pool for a cool place for your pets to play. Make sure your pets are properly secured and, when outside, have collars, updated tags, and are microchipped.

Limit or skip on exercise at the dog park during the heat of the day.

Always test the pavement or sand with your hand before stepping out (too hot to touch is too hot for your pet). Walk early in the morning or late at night when it's cooler, carry water, and take frequent breaks in shady spots. If you suspect your pet's paws have been burned, contact your veterinarian immediately. Dogs should not ride in uncovered pickup truck beds. The hot metal truck bed can burn your pet's paw pads.

Oregon's "Good Samaritan" law (dogs/kids in hot cars) states the following:

Anyone – not just law enforcement – may enter a motor vehicle, "by force or otherwise," to remove an unattended child or domestic animal without fear of criminal or civil liability, as long as certain requirements are met. To fulfill these requirements, a person must:

Determine that the motor vehicle is locked or there is no reasonable method for the child or animal to exit without assistance;

Have a reasonable belief that the animal or child is in imminent danger of suffering harm;

Notify law enforcement or emergency services either before or soon after entering the vehicle;

Use only the minimum force necessary to enter the vehicle; and

Stay with the animal or child until law enforcement, emergency services, or the owner or operator of the vehicle arrives.

It is best to always contact law enforcement before taking action.

Many electric vehicles have "dog modes" or may appear not to be running. These vehicles may seem to be off, but can have a climate-controlled inside with air conditioning on for the animal.

Heatstroke symptoms can include restlessness, excessive thirst, heavy panting, lethargy, lack of appetite, dark tongue, vomiting, and lack of coordination. If your animal is overcome by heat exhaustion, consult your veterinarian right away.

"We always want our furry companions to be comfortable, and with warmer weather on the horizon, keeping them cool and safe should be top of mind," said Kelly Fleischmann, Greenhill's Community Engagement Manager. "Your pets can still tag along on all your summer adventures; just ensure you're taking proper steps to keep them safe. It's a good idea to limit walks during the heat of the day and keep pets home when running errands. If it's too hot for you, then it's too hot for your furry friend. We all want to enjoy the summer safely, and your pet will thank you for keeping their best interest in mind."

The full text of Oregon's "Good Samaritan" law can be found under ORS 30.813.

To learn more about Greenhill or tips on keeping your pet safe in hot weather, visit www.green-hill.org.

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About Greenhill Humane Society

Greenhill Humane Society has been caring for animals in Lane County since 1944. It is a private, non-profit organization that relies on charitable donations. Greenhill is located at 88530 Green Hill Road in Eugene. *We envision a world in which all animals are treated with compassion and respect.* In 2024, Greenhill assisted 5,942 animals through our life-saving programs. Greenhill dogs, cats, and rabbits are spayed or neutered prior to adoption, receive recommended vaccinations, and are microchipped. To learn more visit www.greenhill.org and follow on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#), and [TikTok](#).