

Summer Tips

Last weekend presented heat levels that were dangerous to pets and people. This is the season we all love on Cape Ann, however, it does present some potential hazards that can be avoided with appropriate care and awareness. This week I will present information about some dangers that require special attention during the summer months. They include lawn care products, summer plants, the dangers of heat, housing and travel.

Many Pesticides and lawn care products are potentially toxic to pets. Be sure to store these items where pets have no access to them. After treating lawns and outside areas, restrict pets from these areas until exposure danger has passed. Remember that many types of summer foliage (among them hydrangea, wisteria, delphinium, foxglove, privet hedge, and monkshood) can be toxic to pets as well, so do your best to prevent your pets from "dining out."

Soaring temperatures are no more comfortable for dogs and cats than they are for people. Heat prostration is a common cause of summer illness that can, and does, kill many beloved pets each year. If your pet spends a substantial part of its day outside, be sure that you provide a cool, shady spot for it to escape the hot summer sun and plenty of cool, clean water. A sheltered area must also be available so that the pet can escape summer storms. Be sure that areas in which pets are housed are secure and that pets cannot run into busy streets, fall into deep window wells, or become trapped within or under lawn equipment. Some of the worst summer tragedies involve pets that are left in vehicles in the sun with the windows partially or completely rolled up. Temperatures inside a car rapidly climb to more than 100 F and can cause death sometimes in as little

as 10 minutes! If you need to leave your pet in a car for any period of time, please do the pet and yourself a favor and leave the pet at home. When traveling with your pet, call ahead to make sure the pet will be welcome at any hotels or homes where you intend to stay. Travel from state to state usually requires a health certificate for each pet, which has been signed by a veterinarian. Travel outside of the country often requires that the pet be quarantined for a specified period of time, so be sure to check restrictions in the country to which you will be traveling. Remember that sometimes the best solution for everyone is to make arrangements for someone to watch the pet in your home, or to bring the pet to a boarding facility designed to provide it with the special care it needs.