

Red Cross Hounds on Pet Safety With 'Dog Days'

Pet owners reminded to keep dogs cool during peak summer months.

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A new campaign launched by the American Red Cross highlights the importance of keeping canines cool during the hottest months of summer.

The "Dog Days of Summer" campaign promotes Red Cross pet safety trainings and programs. The goal of the program is to teach dog owners some new tricks about heat safety, pet first aid and CPR, and disaster evacuation plans.

Safety tips for dog owners include:

Heat Safety

Heat stroke or hyperthermia occur when an animal gets severely overheated and is most common in the summer months. Make sure pets have plenty of cool water and shade during hot weather. Never leave an animal in a parked car. Even with the windows cracked, dogs can quickly suffer heat stroke and even die.

Pet First Aid

According to the American Animal Hospital Association, one in four deceased pets could have been saved with the use of appropriate first aid procedures. American Red Cross Pet First Aid classes provide skills necessary to tend to unexpected emergencies until they can get their pet to a veterinarian. Many Red Cross chapters across the country offer classes with hands-on training in pet first aid procedures.

Disaster Planning

A Zogby International poll found that 61 percent of pet owners will not evacuate if they cannot bring their pets with them. Other than service animals for people with disabilities, American Red Cross disaster shelters cannot accept pets because of health and safety regulations. The Red Cross recommends pet owners contact family and friends and research pet-friendly hotels, motels, and animal shelters along their evacuation routes and keep a contact list in their disaster supplies kit.