

Holidays Disrupt Pets Routine

Dog training company offers tips on helping dogs handle hectic holiday festivities.

The holiday season introduces our pets to a great deal of chaos, at least from their perspective, says Liam Crowe, master dog therapist and chief operating officer of Bark Busters, a dog training company. Unfortunately for dogs, the festivities present a host of new stimuli sights, sounds and smells that can disrupt their routines and potentially present dangerous circumstances. Responsible dog owners should take steps to ensure that their dogs enjoy the holidays, too.

Bark Busters says it recommends the following safety and care tips for dog owners during the holidays:

Don't let dogs drink water from the base of the Christmas tree. The water may contain chemicals that help the tree last longer, which can cause severe indigestion in dogs.

To avoid potential disasters, hang non-breakable ornaments near the bottom of the tree.

Train your dog not to go near electrical cords that light the tree and other decorations that could be harmful if chewed on or digested.

Use tinsel sparingly or not at all, since dogs may ingest it, causing it to twist in the intestines and cause serious problems.

Don't give your dog rich foods. They can trigger life-threatening illnesses in the intestines and pancreas of a dog.

To prevent choking incidences, do not give your dog cooked bones.

Keep chocolate away from dogs. If a dog consumes chocolate, it could lead to vomiting, diarrhea and even death.

Keep holiday plants away from your dog. Many holiday plants are toxic to dogs.

Never leave a dog alone with small children. A dogs routine drastically changes during the holidays, and it might display uncharacteristically unruly or aggressive behavior.

Give a new toy to your dog when guests arrive to keep him occupied.

Walk you dog before guests arrive. It will likely lead to him taking a nap once guests arrive.

Holidays can result in dogs uncharacteristically toileting in the house. Do not get too distracted to remember to frequently let your dog out for bathroom breaks.



Posted: Dec. 28, 2005, 3p.m. EST