

4th of July Tips to Keep Your Dog Safe

Being safe and taking steps to protect your dog will ensure you have a great holiday.

Posted: July 4, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

The July 4th holiday is upon us. As many American dog owners have the day off to celebrate life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, they surely will want to spend part of this day with their pooch and include him in the merriment. While that can be a nice idea, Lorriane Corriveau, a wellness veterinarian at Purdue University's School of Veterinary Medicine in Indiana, says that dog owners need to use common sense when letting Fido join in the festivities.

"Some dogs love to chase those spinning and swirling objects on the ground," she says, which can cause burns and other injuries. "Others are traumatized by loud noises. Owners can help with tricks that can be as simple as putting cotton in their pet's ears to muffle the sound."

Corriveau offers the following tips to ease the stress on your dog during this particularly "explosive" holiday: Don't leave your dog alone outdoors on the 4th of July, as he may escape and runaway to avoid the loud noises. Don't take your dog to fireworks shows. Instead, take him on a picnic earlier in the day to celebrate. To distract your dog, turn on the radio or TV for some background noise. Explain to your children and neighborhood kids that sparklers and firecrackers can be quite frightening for a dog. Fear of noises can get worse as a dog ages. A veterinarian can advise you about giving your dog a mild sedative or tranquilizer to calm his fears if he is extremely stressed. Be sure to pick up leftover sparklers and other sharp objects after the festivities are done so your dog won't risk being injured by them later on.