

Top 10 pet health tips for the holidays

Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, New Year's Eve and Kwanzaa – no matter what you're celebrating, pet owners need to remember to keep their pets safe and healthy for the holidays.

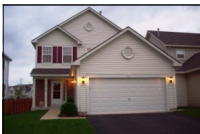
"Veterinarians often see an uptick in the number of problematic calls during the holiday season," explains Dr. Larry R. Corry, AVMA president. "Whether it's an exposure to chocolate or fatty foods or pets upset due to unexpected guests or costumed visitors late at night, the holidays can present problems for pets. The AVMA urges all pet owners to include the health and safety of their pets in any plans for the holidays."

Here are the AVMA's top 10 pet tips for holiday safety:


1. Be wary of holiday decorations; pets often consume them. "The animal raids the Christmas tree, for example, and this can be unhealthy for the pet and very upsetting for the pet owners," explains Corry. "If they consume enough tinsel or other decorations, it can cause a blockage that requires surgery."
2. Flowers are another common holiday feature that can result in an emergency visit. Poinsettias, Amaryllis and mistletoe are on the list of common holiday plants that can be dangerous and even poisonous to house pets who decide to eat them, Corry says.
3. Just like people, some pets are better at dealing with houseguests than others. If you know your pet has a problem with visitors, work with your veterinarian for solutions. For severe problems, your veterinarian may recommend medications or even boarding the animal.
4. Don't let your pet climb the Christmas tree. If the tree falls over, your pet could be injured. Consider tying the tree to the ceiling or a door-frame using fishing line.
5. Cover Christmas tree water to keep animals from drinking it. The sap from live Christmas trees can make your pet sick.
6. Many people believe that people food makes good treats for their pets, but this isn't the case. Many common ingredients in a holiday feast – like onions, garlic, chocolate and artificial sweeteners – are poisonous to pets. And dogs that consume an excessive amount of fatty foods, by cleaning a turkey carcass pulled from the trash, for example, can develop a life-threatening condition called pancreatitis.
7. Whether they are Halloween candies or Christmas chocolate, keep sweets out of your pet's reach, particularly while you're out. A pet that consumes chocolates while you're away at work, for example, might be too sick for your veterinarian to save by the time you get home.
8. Unplug decorations while you're not around. Cats and dogs are often tempted to chew electrical cords.
9. Keep any gift that includes human food out of a pet's reach. With their sensitive sense of smell, dogs and cats can find those wrapped treats and open them when you're not around.
10. Candles are a common part of many holiday celebrations. Make sure that you keep lit candles out of a pet's reach, because the animal could light themselves, or your home, on fire.

The AVMA offers a great deal of information on its Web site, www.avma.org, including a free brochure on common household hazards and a free video about common household poisons.
Source: <http://helloelizabethtownftknox.com>


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Happenings in Somerfield

November 2009

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Fireplace Tips for DoItYourselfers

When you cozy up next to a crackling fire on a cold winter day, you probably don't realize that your fireplace is one of the most inefficient heat sources you can possibly use. It literally sends your energy dollars right up the chimney along with volumes of warm air. A roaring fire can exhaust as much as 24,000 cubic feet of air per hour to the outside, which must be replaced by cold air coming into the house from the outside. Your heating system must warm up this air, which is then exhausted through your chimney. If you use your conventional fireplace while your central heating system is on, these tips can help reduce energy losses.

Fireplace Tips

- * If you never use your fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue.
- * Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is going. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a 48-inch window wide open during the winter; it allows warm air to go right up the chimney.
- * When you use the fireplace, reduce heat loss by opening dampers in the bottom of the firebox (if provided) or open the nearest window slightly – approximately 1 inch – and close doors leading into the room. Lower the thermostat setting to between 50° and 55°F.
- * Install tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room.
- * Check the seal on the flue damper and make it as snug as possible.
- Add caulking around the fireplace hearth. * Use grates made of C-shaped metal tubes to draw cool room air into the fireplace and circulate warm air back into the room.

Neighborhood Real Estate:

Homes currently active on the market in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Bath	Price
♥ 1470 Somerfield	4	McKinley	2.1	\$319,900
792 Glenside Cr.	4	Durham	2.1	PC - \$294,000
731 Sapphire	4	Savannah	2.1	\$235,000
759 Dalton Lane	3	Brentwood	2.1	\$275,000
1589 Glenside	4	Durham	2.1	\$292,900
♥ 1482 Glenside Dr.	4	Durham	2.1	SS \$264,900
1409 Somerfield	4	McKinley	3.1	TEMP - SS- \$309,900
♥ 1433 Sage Dr.	4	Williamsburg	2.1	\$294,920
♥ 748 Dalton Lane	4	Monticello w/ Morning Room	3.1	PC - \$400,000
♥ 1401 Glenside Dr.	4	Ravinia	2.1	PC - \$339,900
1425 Schoenherr Ave.	4	Ravinia	2.1	\$349,900
1404 Waterside Dr	4	Morgan	2.1	PC - \$369,900
♥ 1412 Waterside Dr.	4	Monticello	3.1	\$409,000

Homes that are currently under contract in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Baths	Price
3 Scarlet Ct.	3	Brentwood	2.2	SS- \$219,000

Homes that have sold in the last month in your Neighborhood with the MLS are:

Address	Bedrooms	Model	Baths	Price
1461 Waterside Dr,	3	Brentwood	2.1	Call for Price
1512 Schoenherr Ave.	4	Durham	2.1	Call for Price

♥ Are My Listings

PC = Price Change, BOM = Back on Market, NEW = New Listing on market, SS = Short Sale, BO =Bank Owned, TEMP = OFF Market Temporally

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Tax Credit Extension a Positive Step Toward Sustained Real Estate Recovery, Say Realtors

The National Association of Realtors® today commended the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives for passing a bill that includes an extension and expansion of the current home buyer tax credit as an important step in ensuring a real estate and economic recovery.

"Realtors® appreciate the swift action by Congress to extend the home buyer tax credit and expand it to some current homeowners," said NAR President Charles McMillan, a broker with Coldwell Banker Residential Real Estate in Dallas-Fort Worth. "As the leading advocate of housing and real estate issues, we urge President Obama to sign this legislation into law quickly to keep the momentum going in the fragile recovery of the nation's housing market."

McMillan praised the efforts of several senators to put the recovery above politics. They are Sen. Johnny Isakson, (R-Ga.); Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.); Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.); Sen. Chris Dodd (D-Conn.), chairman of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee; and Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-Conn.), chairman of the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee.

NAR economists estimate that the current tax credit has contributed approximately \$22 billion to the general economy, and approximately 2 million people will take advantage of the tax credit this year.

"The substantial rise in home sales we've seen over the past few months proves that the tax credit is working and is being used by buyers who were waiting for the right opportunity to get into the market," McMillan said. "This important incentive is helping to stabilize the housing market, stimulate the economy and create new jobs in communities all across our great nation. Extending and expanding the home buyer tax credit will enable even more families to take advantage of current low interest rates and affordable prices to invest in their future through homeownership."

The bill would extend the present \$8,000 tax credit for first-time home buyers through April 30, 2010. Current homeowners are eligible for a \$6,500 tax credit through April 30, 2010, provided they have lived in the home they are selling, or have sold, as principal residence for five consecutive years in the past eight years. If potential home buyers have a binding contract on or before that date, they will have until July 1 to close the transaction.

Income limits for eligible home buyers are expanded to \$125,000 for single buyers and \$225,000 for couples. The purchase price of the home cannot exceed \$800,000. To help guard against fraud, buyers are required to attach documentation of purchase to their tax return.

Detailed information about provisions in the tax credit legislation is available on Realtor.org.

The National Association of Realtors®, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1.2 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries

Source: <http://www.realestaterama.com>