

## Fireworks, Fundraisers and Flying Fur!

With June underway, most people have already begun the eager countdown to the 1<sup>st</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> of July long weekend, depending on whether you live above or below the 49<sup>th</sup> parallel. And why not? It's the perfect opportunity to hit the road, visit friends and family, host an outdoor barbecue, meet your neighbors, catch some sun or swim in a lake, and of course, enjoy a sky lit up with fireworks.

But from an animal welfare perspective, the national summer holiday is one of the busiest and most frustrating times of year. According to 24PetWatch call center statistics, lost pet calls increased 69% during the 1<sup>st</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of July<sup>[1]</sup> festivities in 2011. The crowds, the outdoor activity, and all that celebratory noise lead to hundreds if not thousands of lost pets, accounting for the highest percentage of missing dogs all year.

Never mind the new places and faces, and changes in routine, when you understand how cats and dogs hear, it comes as no surprise that our pets are overwhelmed and fearful of our holiday revelries. For every one tone we can hear, cats can hear 10 distinct tones, meaning their range of pitch and ability to distinguish the precise direction from which a sound comes from far outstrips our own. While dogs may not have the same aural skills as cats, they can still perceive sounds twice as high as those we can detect and at a range ten times our own. Older pets can be even more sensitive to and stressed out by loud noises, especially the screeching, whistling, roaring noises created by fireworks.

During the holiday week, shelters and animal control facilities are filled to bursting with pets that have bolted and become lost following the deafening noise of fireworks. In the weeks leading up to the holiday long weekend, animal welfare organizations should be proactive in their messaging about the dangers of bringing dogs to events where fireworks are being held and how to keep pets safe, including housebound animals, during the holidays. Some key tips to share with your community include:

- When leaving pets home alone, keep doors and windows firmly closed;
- Properly crate-trained dogs often take comfort in their "den" and should be crated (with appropriate positive reinforcement);
- Keep pets sequestered in a quiet, low-activity room when entertaining;
- Never trust your guests! Even the most conscientious visitors can forget themselves and leave a door or window ajar long enough to let a pet escape.

There is also an excellent opportunity to host microchip clinic fundraisers in the weeks leading up to the long weekend. Encourage members of your community to safeguard their pets (both dogs *and* cats) with a permanent microchip ID, an external ID tag, and onsite registration of their information. With its connection to the PetPoint network and over 5.7 million registered cats and dogs, 24PetWatch Lost Pet Recovery provides world-class microchip protection and database services proven to help more lost pets get home and quickly.

Hosting a microchipping clinic with a July holiday discount is a great tie in to the education you can provide your community around this topic, and will help more pets stay out of your shelter and back in their homes. Help ensure the long weekend is a happy one for pet owners and their furry friends too!

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[1] Based on lost pet calls between June 30 and July 5 in 2011

### **Did you know?**

When you purchase 250 MiniChips, you'll receive a Universal ScanFlex AFX-100 microchip reader for FREE! That's a \$325 value.

For more information about how to host and market your own 4<sup>th</sup> of July microchip/MiniChip clinic, including promotional giveaways, contact [your Regional Director](#) or call 1.866.630.7387 ext. 650 today!

Sincerely,

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