

### **HOLIDAY TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON.**

Christmas and other holidays can be fun for the whole family - pets included. However, there are some common hazards that may threaten your pet's well-being.

Before decorating and celebrating, make sure that your home is pet-friendly.  
Decorate with care

 Secure Christmas trees to a wall or ceiling hook with sturdy fishing line. This will help prevent the tree from toppling over should your pet jump on it or accidentally knock it over.

 Select ornaments with your pet in mind.

 Don't hang glass ornaments in reach of your pet, use garland, rather than tinsel, which can cause intestinal obstructions if ingested.

 Be sure to retrieve any ornament hooks AND OR TINSEL that drops on the floor.  
Replace metal ornament hooks with tightly knotted fabric 1/4 inch ribbons, light-weight twine or yarn to slip easily over the branches of the tree.

 If you have a cat that is tempted to play with the ornaments on your tree, decorate the bottom third of the tree with non-breakable, plastic or wooden ornaments.

 Tape down electrical cords and keep tree lights out of reach.

 Unplug the lights when you're not home to supervise your pet.

Please note:

Holiday lights are moderate to lethal toxicity, depending on the amount of fluid (methylene chloride) inhaled or ingested.

Keep your pets away from them.

Artificial snow and snow flock also has low toxicity - dry particles are inert; however, toxicity from inhalation can occur if sprayed directly in the mouth.

 Lit candles should be kept out of any pet's reach at all times.

Never leave lighted candles unattended and be sure they are securely anchored so they won't be dislodged by the swat of a paw or tail.

Better yet, only use candles with domes or cylinders that enclose the flame

You can secure holidays decorations and candle holders by sticking up a little piece of double sided 3M tape.

 Pine sap mixed with water can create bacteria making a poisonous drink for your pet causing vomiting and diarrhea.

DO NOT add preservatives or aspirin additives to it.

HPR advises to invest on in a tree stand with a cover that will keep your pet out.

We also recommend Scat Mats to keep your pet away from the Christmas trees and Fireplaces.

 The smell of a live or artificial tree may cause your pet to urine-mark it. It helps to bring the tree into an isolated indoor room for a day or so, so that it smells more like "home."

 Holiday food is one of the biggest reason for emergency vet visits during the holiday season.

Rich, fatty foods can cause stomach upset, or even predispose pets to life-threatening pancreatitis or bloating.

Poultry bones can splinter and get stuck in a pet's mouth, obstruct his throat, or perforate his intestines.

Most pet owners don't know that such foods as chocolate, macadamia nuts, raisins and grapes, coffee, alcoholic beverages and even bread dough can be fatal if ingested in ty by a dog or a cat.

Be careful not to leave these foods on coffee tables in reach of pets and be sure that trash can lids

are well-secured.

 Warn family members and guests not to feed holiday foods to your pets. Instead, have a supply of your pets' favorite treats on hand.

 Choose plants carefully

The poinsettia, though typically thought of as poisonous to pets, is fairly low in toxicity, but can cause digestive upset and irritation to a pet's mouth and stomach.

Holly berries, on the other hand, are extremely toxic when ingested.

Just a few berries will cause vomiting and diarrhea.

Mistletoe also causes digestive system upset as well as irregular heartbeats and possibly cardiac shock.

Plants like the hibiscus and those in the lily family, which are not toxic to people, may also be harmful to pets, causing digestive system problems and even renal failure.

If you must have these plants in your holiday décor, choose artificial ones to protect your pets. And don't forget to check gift floral arrangements for sprays of dangerous plants.

 Other holiday hazards.

Children's toys can present a poisoning or choking hazard. Be sure small toy pieces, plastic model cement, crayons and paints are put away or out of reach when not in use.

Wrapping paper, ribbon, and tape also represent potential dangers. Remove them as soon as possible.

Liquid potpourris, fireplace colors and salts, Styrofoam, tinsel, angel hair and other tree decorations can also be toxic if ingested, cause skin or eye irritation, or cause intestinal obstructions.

If you suspect that your pet has ingested something poisonous, seek medical attention immediately.

 Plastic bags can suffocate your pets, DO NOT let them play in them or with them.

 Prevent your pet from scaping.

Holiday guests coming and going, the front door will be opening and closing more than usual.

Be sure your pets have collars with identification tags - and wear them at all times - in case of an escape.

If your pet is not microchip, this will be a good time to get him/her microchipped.

HPR offers microchipping for \$ 40.00

Please contact us if you are interested in microchipping your pet @:

[HPRESQ@aol.com](mailto:HPRESQ@aol.com)

IF your pet scapes by accident, resist the urge to chase as it will turn it into a game. Instead, encourage him to come back to you by enticing him with a favorite treat.

 Educate your guests.

If guests do not have pets, they may not know about cautions that seem like common sense to you.

Make sure that they know how your pets should be handled, and what needs to be kept out of reach.

It will only take one well-meaning relative to feed your dog dark chocolate to cause a trip to the veterinary emergency room.

 Make sure your pet has "down time.

" Even though many pets are highly social, they may become nervous with all the activity and guests around the holidays. Move your pet's bed into a quiet part of the house and make sure that he or she has access to it.

If you are having a party please keep your pets in a quiet room away until your guests are gone.

 Special needs pets and pets with seizures.

If you have a special need pet it is best to keep stress levels at a minimum at all times.

**IF YOUR PET SUFFERS FROM SEIZURES PLEASE KEEP IN MIND THAT BLINKLING CHRISTMAS LIGHTS CAN TRIGGER A SEIZURE,**

**DECORATING YOUR TREE WITH STEADY LIGHTS IS BEST FOR YOUR PET. KEEP THE PET AS QUIET AS POSSIBLE AND TALK TO YOUR VET REGARDING MEDICATION TO KEEP**

## YOUR PET RELAXED DURING THE HOLIDAYS.

 Holiday costumes for your pets may be cute at get-togethers or in family photos, but pet owners should be aware of costumes which have rubber bands to keep them securely in place on the pet. If rubber bands are accidentally left on the pet after the fun of dressing up is over, the pet could chew off and swallow them, causing choking and/or intestinal injuries.

 If you are planning to take your pet with you when visiting friends and relatives during the holidays, be sure to contact them in advance to find out if your pet is welcome. It might be best for you and your pet to board your pet or hire a reputable pet sitter as it all may be too stressful for your pet, especially cats that they do not take change very well. If you do board your pets for the Holidays please be sure that your pet is up to date on vaccines and that the pet has been vaccinated at least 2 weeks before boarding your pet.

 Please do not give any animal as a Christmas gift.

 DO GIVE a gift of sponsorship at a no-kill shelter. There are many needy animals needing care. One such organization is HPR RESCUE INC.

Keep the holiday season fun and safe for anyone - whether they have two or four legs!



Happy Holidays

Celene Albano  
HPR Rescue CEO