

Keep Your Pet Safe on the Fourth of July

Fourth of July fireworks can frighten pets, and that fear can cause a dog or cat to panic and try to escape the confines of a yard or even the house.

To help protect pets during the July 4 holiday, SPCA Cincinnati advises:

- Keep your pet indoors on the Fourth of July in a quiet and isolated room with covered windows, such as a bathroom or basement where there are no windows, to help your pet feel safe and secure.
- Turn on a fan, radio or TV to muffle the sound of fireworks. These devices provide familiar indoor sounds and may help soothe your pet if he must be alone on this noisy holiday.
- Don't bring your pet to a fireworks display.

If you know from past experience that your pet will suffer from severe anxiety caused by the loud noise of fireworks, you may consider talking with your vet several days in advance about giving your pet a mild tranquilizer.

If your pet behaves nervously by pacing, whining or crying, distract your pet by playing with him or doing something he enjoys. Don't stroke, pet or reassure him by saying, "don't worry. It's okay." This may actually reinforce your pet's anxious behavior.

Make sure your pet always wears an appropriately fitted collar. You should be able to slip no more than two fingers beneath your dog's collar and your cat should be wearing a stretch or safety breakaway collar and an I.D. tag with your current phone number and address. Your pet should also be wearing a current license/rabies tag. You may want to talk with your veterinarian about also providing your pet with a microchip identification implant in case your pet loses his collar and tags.