

Fire department helps out with smoke alarms

On Saturday, January 24, the Sisters-Camp Sherman Rural Fire Protection District (RFPD) conducted a door-to-door smoke alarm and fire-safety information day in the southwest area of Sisters. Thirty smoke alarms were installed, and 14 batteries replaced, free of charge. Eight homes visited did not have any working smoke alarms. Fire safety material was provided for almost 100 homes. Funding for the project was provided by the Oregon State Fire Marshal's Office.

Smoke alarms were checked for proper placement, age, and function. It is recommended that smoke alarms are installed on each floor of a residence, in the areas leading to bedrooms, and in each bedroom. Manufacturers recommend replacing smoke alarms every 10 years to ensure proper function. If an alarm is older than 10 years, it may still function, but is less reliable than a new alarm. The oldest alarm found was manufactured in 1983.

If an alarm was connected to the home wiring, it was checked for age and battery maintenance. The program did not provide wired alarms, but the battery was changed if it had not been in the last year. If the alarm did not work, a battery-operated alarm was provided for use until a new wired alarm was installed by the homeowner.

The most recent statistics the State Fire Marshal's Office indicate that in 2013 there were 3,780 structure fires in Oregon, which resulted in 33 civilian deaths and 179 injuries. Heating and cooking were the leading causes of fires. Of the fires reported, smoke alarms were present in 85 percent of the residential structures, but only 52 percent actually operated. Of the 48 percent that failed to operate, 50 percent either did not have a battery, or they had not been properly maintained and were no longer working.

The Sisters-Camp Sherman RFPD has more free smoke alarms available. If you would like your smoke alarms checked, or feel that you need them replaced, contact the fire district at 541-549-0771.



Paw Prints

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What should you feed your dog?

Dogs have had 15,000 years to evolve from being primarily meat-eaters into omnivores capable of digesting both animal and plant nutrients. When it comes to nutrition, dogs are a lot like people. They can live healthy lives while eating a variety of food. Meats, vegetables, and grains, all can be a part of your dog's diet.

If you want to get technical, dogs actually belong to a category of meat-eaters called "facultative carnivores," which is so close in functional behavior to the omnivore category that it is hardly distinguishable.

People are very passionate when it comes to the subject of what they feed their dogs, and with good reason. A good, nutritional diet can contribute to a long and healthy life and psychological well-being for our furry friends. So what is the best food to feed domesticated dogs?

It is hard to sort out the

truth from marketing.

Grain-free dog foods are currently very popular. But are they really healthier for your dog than other types of dog foods? A grain-free or meat-based dog food naturally contains fewer carbohydrates than grain-based foods. Some grain-free dog foods replace the grain with other types of starch like potato, sweet potato, tapioca, or green peas. The benefit of a grain-free dog food is that they mimic a dog's natural ancestral diet, and they tend to be considered hypoallergenic, which is good for dogs that have food allergies.

The most common grains are wheat, rice, oats, corn, barley, millet, oatmeal, and quinoa. All grains are a good source of carbohydrates, which provide the body with energy. Some pets do better on diets with quality grains because of their high fiber content. Fiber in the diet is good for the overall gastrointestinal health of your pooch and may help some dogs keep their weight down. However, too much fiber in your pooch's diet can interfere with the digestion of other important nutrients in the food and result in loose stools.

Recognize that each dog is different, just like humans.

It comes down to one important concept; nutritionally, the most important aspect of a dog food is whether the food provides complete and balanced nutrition for your furry friend. And this is true regardless of whether the food contains grains or not.



PHOTO BY JODI SCHNEIDER MCNAMEE

Ten-year-old Autumn eats a high-quality canned dog food that is especially made for mature dogs.

Deciding between wet and dry food for your pooch can also be tough. Dry kibble is easier to store and serve. Wet often contains fewer grains and more protein.

Wet food is roughly 70 to 80 percent water and contains more protein, which can be beneficial for some dogs. Since it also contains more moisture, it is good for hydration and the urinary tract, and many dogs find it more palatable.

Dry food is only about 10 percent water and is easy to store and measure out. It benefits your dog's teeth and gums, helps ensure firm stools and is lower in cost per serving.

If you have a dog with special issues, it is best to consult your veterinarian for food recommendations. Dogs, like people, react differently to different diets.

Some need mostly protein, some need lots of carbohydrates, so some benefit most from dry kibble and some from canned food.

Whether dry or canned, check the label to make sure that it is a nutritious diet for Fido. In some ways, the labels on the food you eat and the food your dog eats aren't so different.

One thing to look for is the Association of American Feed Control Official (AAFCO) seal of approval that will tell you that the food is nutritionally complete and balanced.

To really choose the best food takes some research or requires finding someone knowledgeable who you trust to advise what is right for your dog. Typically your vet or a trained nutritionist is the best resource to help you make decisions for your dog.



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