



Paw Prints

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Columnist

Heat can be deadly for dogs

The dog days of summer are approaching and when the mercury rises, your furry friends are at risk for heatstroke or death when their pet parents make the mistake of leaving them in a parked car.

Every year across the nation, thousands of pets fall victim to or die from hot-weather-related conditions due to the ignorance or poor judgment by a pet parent.

Leaving your pet in a parked car can be a deadly mistake. Did you know that the temperature inside a car can reach 120 degrees in a few minutes?

Even partially open windows won't protect your furry friend from heatstroke!

Parked cars are death-traps for dogs.

While people can identify signs of exhaustion or stress, it can be harder to determine when pets are distressed.

According to Oregon Humane Society, excessive thirst, heavy panting, lethargy, drooling, vomiting and an internal temperature of 104 degrees are all signs of heat stress.

How can you prevent your dog from suffering in a hot car?

Don't take your pets with you to run errands. Rover may enjoy a car ride, but leaving him in the car while you go into the store for even 10 minutes on a warm day could turn deadly! No animal deserves to suffer trapped in the sweltering heat of a big metal oven on wheels with no way to save himself

The good news is that you might soon be able to save an animal that is trapped in hot car without facing legal repercussions.

The Oregon Senate passed a bill (House Bill 2732) last Wednesday that exempts people from criminal or civil liability if they break into a car to rescue a pet or a child. In other words, Oregonians who see an animal or child overheating in a hot car will soon be able to take action without fear of legal consequences.

Senator Peter Courtney, a Salem Democrat, said the bill came about with the help

of a Girl Scout troop from Southwest Oregon. He said this year alone, there have been several incidents where children or dogs have been left in overheated cars.

The bill allows the use of reasonable force to enter a vehicle. Anyone who does break into a car is required to remain at the scene until law enforcement arrives.

The bill is now on its way to Governor Kate Brown's desk for signing.

The Humane Society of Central Oregon has posters available for businesses and windshield flyers that educate folks on the dangers of leaving pets in cars. The educational flyers list the warning signs of a pet suffering from heat exhaustion or stroke.

Another summertime heat threat for your furry friend is hot pavement.

When walking Rover, keep in mind that if it feels hot enough to fry an egg outside, it probably is. When the air temperature is 86 degrees, the asphalt can reach a sizzling 135 degrees – more than hot enough to cook an egg in five minutes!

And it can do the same to your dog's sensitive footpads.

And on an 87-degree day, asphalt temperatures can reach 140 degrees, hot enough to cause burns, permanent damage, and scarring after just one minute of

contact. Hot sidewalks, pavement, and parking lots can also reflect heat onto dogs' bodies, increasing their risk of deadly heatstroke.

You wouldn't put your dog in a frying pan, so please don't make him walk on hot pavement. Always test the pavement with your hand before going out with Rover.

Heatstroke or exhaustion can occur very quickly for your pooch as he only has the ability to sweat through the pads of his feet. And the way your dog expels heat is through panting.

It makes sense to walk early in the morning or late in the evening when it's cooler. Remember to carry water and take frequent breaks.

It's up to you as a responsible pet parent to watch for heat stress and dehydration in your dog, know when it's time to take a break, to give him a drink, and to rest in the shade for a while.

Your furry friend doesn't

realize that he will overheat while playing fetch in the park on a hot day; he won't know when he is overheated until it is too late. Get creative and find innovative ways to cool Fido down. Find a spot in the shade and set up a kiddie pool or lay down a wet towel for your dog to lie on.

Dogs cool from the bottom up. So, make sure to spray the paws and stomach, not just the top of Rover. That's why a wet towel does more good on the bottom of your dog than when laid on top of him.

Many people in Central Oregon don't have air-conditioning due to the cool summer nights, but with warmer temperatures in the summer you will have to watch for signs of heatstroke indoors, also.

To keep your furry friend from overheating indoors, try a cooling body wrap vest or mat, such as Keep Cool Mat. You can also give Rover doggie popsicles using peanut butter, berries, or watermelon.



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100% of the proceeds go to Furry Friends Foundation.

"Pets Just Wanna Have Fun" quilt was designed, appliqued, and quilted by Valerie Fercho-Tillery. The original design and incredible detail make this a spectacular quilt!

The quilt is currently on display at The Nugget office, 442 E. Main Ave. Bring your pup by for a dog cookie and have a look!

Tickets may be purchased at The Nugget office or online at our website www.furryfriendsfoundation.org.



Tickets are \$1 each, six for \$5 or go for it, 25 for \$20.



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"Pets Just Wanna Have Fun" - by Valerie Fercho-Tillery (45.5"w x 57.5"h)