

Pet Do's and Don'ts

LOCAL ANIMAL PROFESSIONALS SHARE THEIR BIGGEST PET PEEVES by Lauren Messman

DO SPAY AND NEUTER YOUR PET

In addition to population control in a city with an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 feral cats, according to Greenhill Humane Society, spaying and neutering offers a variety of health benefits for both cats and dogs. Spaying and neutering cats helps reduce the spread of feline immunodeficiency virus, or "feline AIDS." Dr. Sandy Smalley of Edgewood Animal Clinic adds that spaying and neutering dogs early can reduce the likelihood of breast cancer in females and testicular cancer, prostate disease and dog-to-dog aggression in males.

Greenhill (green-hill.org) provides free spay and neuter surgeries for all feral, stray and free-roaming cats through its Trap Neuter Return program. The city of Eugene's Spay and Neuter Clinic provides low cost spay and neutering services, as well as vaccinations and flea control products, as does Willamette Animal Guild (wagwag.com), which will spay and neuter stray cats and tip their ears to show they have been fixed.

DON'T LEAVE YOUR PET IN A HOT CAR

It should be a no-brainer, but according to the American Veterinary Medical Association a car can reach 114 degrees in just 30 minutes in summer temperatures. An overheated pet can get brain damage or die in only 15 minutes, so if you see one, try to find its owner or call the police. Spend the hot summer days with your pet indoors or beat the heat outside in the shade. Provide lots of water.

DO USE AN IDENTIFICATION CHIP AND UPDATE ITS INFORMATION

Nametags fade and collars break, but microchips are forever. Sasha Elliott of Greenhill highly recommends using identification microchips. "It's the best way to be able to find your pet if they get lost," she says.

The non-surgical chip is about the size of a grain of rice and is implanted between the animal's shoulder blades. The chip can be scanned at veterinary offices, humane societies, police stations and animal control services. If your pet already has one, make sure you continue to update its information regularly to ensure you never lose your furry friend. One Swedish cat lost in Portland was recently reunited with its owner, thanks to a chip.

DO REPORT ABUSE OR NEGLECT

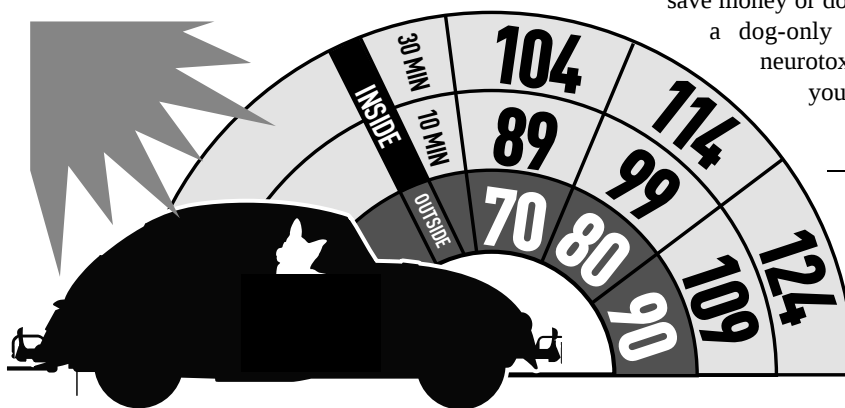
Elliott says, "It's just as important to report cases of

neglect as it is to report cases of cruelty." While signs of abuse may be more obvious, a pet being left outside for extended periods of time, exposed to extreme temperatures or ignored should not go unreported. If you see something, say something. Call Eugene Animal Services (687-4060) or Springfield Animal Control (726-3634) to help a pet in need.

DON'T OPT FOR CHEAP FLEA AND TICK MEDICATION

"Yes, they're cheap, but you could have bought them in the grocery store 10 years ago," Dr. Smalley says of less effective, low-cost flea and tick medication. She recommends sticking with brand-name products that are guaranteed by the company when purchased through a veterinarian rather than through the internet.

Even worse, Smalley says, "When people are trying to save money or don't read the label carefully, they will use a dog-only product on their cat and it causes neurotoxicity, seizures and even death." Place your pet's health before your pocketbook. 🐾



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