

Press Release



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Humane Society Silicon Valley Urges Public to Keep Pets Indoors During Fourth of July Activities



Sassy stays calm indoors listening to music.

SANTA CLARA, Calif., June 19, 2008 – Fourth of July fireworks dazzle people, but the flashes of light and noise can frighten animals, causing them to become injured or to run away.

“Every year, we see a dramatic increase in the number of stray dogs and cats during the fourth of July holiday weekend,” said Beth Ward, vice president of animal care at Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV). “The frightening sights and sounds of fireworks can spook animals and they often do whatever it takes to escape from their confines.”

Ward offers the following suggestions to pet owners on how to create a happy yet safe Fourth of July for your pets:

- **Never leave pets outside and alone.** Even if your yard is fenced in, your pet may panic and escape; he or she may even become lost or injured while trying to find safety.
- **Try to be home on Independence Day.** If your pet is afraid of loud noises, keep him inside and turn on a TV or radio that masks the booms of fireworks. If you’ve experienced trouble in previous years with your pet being excessively frightened, consult your veterinarian for tranquilizers. Make sure you give your pet the medication before the noises start. If you can’t be at home, leave your pet inside in an area where he or she feels secure and at ease. Make sure all the windows and doors are securely locked, since some pets have been known to try to break through barriers in an effort to escape the frightening sights and sounds of fireworks.
- **Protect your possessions.** When scared, some animals may become destructive, so be sure to remove anything that can be damaged or might harm your pet if it was to be chewed.
- **Make sure your pet is wearing proper ID tags or is microchipped in the event that he becomes lost.** Humane Society Silicon Valley is open seven days a week to escort owners of lost pets through our kennels. If your pet is found wearing tags or has a microchip, the Humane Society will make every effort within a 10-day period to contact you to reclaim your pet. Strays without tags are held five days.
- **Bring cats indoors several hours before dark** or at a minimum, keep them in your garage.
- **Stay away from animals that are scared or traumatized by the noise** and keep your children away from them. If cornered, they are more likely to bite.

- **Do not take your pets with you to watch fireworks.** It's best to leave your dog safe at home with a pet sitter, relative or friend. Hiding under the bed or in a closet is a perfectly normal coping mechanism for your pet.
- **If you plan to go away for the holiday, choose the best option for your pet.** Consider traveling with your pet, choosing a professional sitter or finding a boarding kennel.

Humane Society Silicon Valley's Lost & Found Department is open Monday – Friday from 10:30 am – 7:30 p.m. and Saturday/Sunday from 10 am – 5:30 pm. The shelter will be closed on July 4, for reclaims and adoptions, but will accept incoming stray animals that will be available for reclaims on July 5. More information about what to do if your pet is lost can be found at: http://www.hssv.org/services_lost.html .

About Humane Society Silicon Valley

Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) is an independent, non-profit agency offering quality adoptions, medical care and education programs to enhance the human-animal bond. Established in 1929, HSSV has served Silicon Valley for 79 years and has adopted more than 500,000 animals into permanent, loving homes. HSSV is an "open door" shelter and accepts animals 24-hours a day, seven days a week. HSSV's medical center offers affordable spaying/neutering, vaccinations and microchips to the public. More information about HSSV can be found at www.hssv.org or call 408.727.3383.

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