Hot Weather Poses Significant Risks to Pets

Santa Barbara County Animal Services wants to remind animal owners to help your pet beat the heat this time of year. Heat can cause serious health issues for animals and even death. There are several activities you should avoid and signs to look out for to help keep your pet safe during these higher temperatures.

Never leave your pet in a vehicle, even with the windows cracked. “The greenhouse effect can quickly become lethal for your pet. Avoid tragedy and leave your animals at home when hot weather strikes” says Jan Glick, Animal Services Director. The temperature inside a car will rise and can quickly cause your pet to become overheated and possibly die.

Active animals are more susceptible to heat exhaustion. Try to keep the activities and places you take your pets to a minimum while the outside temperatures are high. Avoid rigorous activities like running or hiking with your pet. If your pet is going to be outdoors, make sure that there is plenty of cool shade. Bring pets indoors periodically so they can escape the heat and cool down. Give your pets plenty of cool water in a container that they cannot spill.

If your pet is active in the heat there are many signs that he/she may be suffering from heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Things to be aware of are: high body temperature, heavy panting, rapid pulse, lethargy, darkening of the tongue, unsteadiness, vomiting, and/or glazed eyes. If you notice any of these signs on your pet you must lower their body temperature immediately. Get your pet into a cool or shady area. Apply cool water to their whole body. Apply ice packs or cold towels to your pets head, neck and chest. Let your pet drink small amounts of cool water. Most importantly, get your pet to the veterinarian right away.

If you notice an animal in distress please contact your local Animal Services Shelter; Santa Barbara at 681-5285, Santa Maria at 934-6119, Lompoc at 737-7755, or Santa Barbara City Animal Control at 963-1513. Be aware of the effects of high heat and keep your pets cool all year long.

###