

Barbecues. Warm weather. Fireworks. These annual traditions make the perfect 4th of July, but they can be problematic for your furry loved ones. Get some facts and tips for keeping your pups safe on Independence Day.

- Fireworks can cause dogs to run in fear. According to the Mercury News, July 4th and the day after are often very busy times for shelters and animal control officers.
- Check your gates and doors to ensure your dogs can't get out. Make sure your pet is wearing identification.
- Don't use insect repellents on your dogs that are meant for humans.
- Don't bring your dogs to a fireworks display with you. If they are crate trained, crate them if you leave. Covering the crate with a blanket sometimes helps soothe them. Calming music may also help.
- Consider talking to your veterinarian about a tranquilizer if you already know that your dog is extremely unnerved by fireworks.
- Don't expose your pups to the warm weather for too long. Their fur coats can cause them to overheat if they're outdoors on hot days. Provide them a cool place to relax inside.
- Keep things like chicken bones and corn cobs away from your dogs reach, and ensure they don't have access to garbage cans. Fluff Dog owner Michelle Wolff, who also worked as a veterinary technician for many years, says dogs consuming such food items results in a huge increase in emergency room visits every summer.
- Make sure your pets can't get close to flames or lighter fluid.