

# February is Responsible PET GUARDIAN MONTH

Sharing your life with a pet is a privilege.  
The benefits of being a pet guardian come with real responsibilities.

-  Avoid impulsive decisions when selecting a pet.
-  Select a pet that's suited to your home and lifestyle.
-  Keep only the type and number of pets for which you can provide appropriate food, water, shelter, health care and companionship.
-  Commit to the relationship for the life of your pet(s).
-  Recognize that pet ownership requires an investment of time and money.
-  Make sure your pet receives preventive health care (vaccinations, parasite control, etc.), as well as care for any illnesses or injuries.
-  Provide appropriate exercise and mental stimulation.
-  Clean up after your pet.
-  Provide a smoke-free home and outdoor play space for your pet.
-  Limit your pet's reproduction through Spay/Neuter or containment.
-  Adopt, don't shop. Every breed can be found at a rescue or shelter.
-  Don't allow your pet to stray or become feral.
-  Properly socialize and train your pet for their benefit - and yours.
-  Obey all local ordinances, including licensing, leash requirements and noise control.
-  Make sure your pet is properly identified (i.e., tags, microchips, or tattoos) and keep its registration up-to date.
-  Prepare for an emergency or disaster, including assembling an evacuation kit.
-  Make alternate arrangements if you can no longer provide care for your pet.
-  Recognize any decline in your pet's quality of life and make timely decisions in consultation with a veterinarian.

