

HOLIDAYS: KEEPING YOUR PETS SAFE ON THE NOISIEST HOLIDAYS

July 4th and New Year's Eve are responsible for more lost and runaway dogs and cats than any other holiday! Dogs' and cats' hearing is far more acute than that of humans. They can perceive sounds that are twice as high or low in pitch as those humans can detect. The loud, booming noises of firecrackers, horns, bright flashes of light and the smell of sulfur and gunpowder is very frightening to dogs and cats.

What is Fearful Behavior?

- Your dog or cat may panic and try to escape from the safety of his own back yard or house; through windows, doors and fences.
- Your pet may pace nervously, whine, howl, become destructive and even urinate or defecate in the house. He may hide under furniture or beds or in closets.

What You Can Do

- Make sure your dog or cat is wearing current ID and that his collar fits. You should be able to slip no more than two fingers beneath your dog's collar. Your cat should be wearing a safety or stretch collar.
- If your dog or cat becomes nervous or anxious, put him in a room where there are no windows; a closet or bathroom may be a good place.
- Turn on a radio or television to help mask the noise.
- Play an indoor game with your pet. This is a good time to practice obedience.

What NOT to Do

- Do not take your pets with you to any outdoor activity where there will be a fireworks display.
- Do not make him "face his fear"; this can lead to aggression toward you or others.
- Don't punish your dog for being afraid. Punishment will only make him more fearful.
- Never punish your dog after the fact for destruction or house soiling caused by anxiety or fear. Animals don't understand punishment after the fact, even if it's only seconds later. This kind of destruction or house soiling is the result of panic, not misbehavior.
- Do not try to console or hold him; this only reinforces his fears and may lead to increased fear.
- Never give your dog any over-the-counter or prescription medications without first consulting your veterinarian.

For more information, please visit azhumane.org.

