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# News Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Ensure pet safety by keeping tabs on summer weather

MURPHY (June 20, 2016) The sticky discomfort of being outdoors on a day with a triple-digit temperatures or similar heat index can become fatal for pets left outdoors or in a sweltering car.

“Dogs, cats and other four-legged creatures do not wear shoes,” says Murphy Animal Shelter Supervisor Kim Parker. “They can’t protect their paw pads from the searing heat of a sidewalk or street. Imagine walking on that same surface barefooted. If it’s too hot for you, it’s too hot for them.”

Parker and the Animal Shelter staff see first-hand the effects of carelessness on the part of pet owners. For example, pets left in parked cars while the owner runs errands can result in permanent organ damage or even death for a pet. Even with windows slightly open, the temperature inside a parked car can reach deadly levels.

In addition to the ambient temperature, animals’ bodies are unable to deal with high humidity. Animals pant to evaporate moisture from their lungs, removing heat from their internal organs. If the humidity is too high, they cannot cool themselves, leading to organ shutdown.

“Owners need to take care when exercising their pet in high temperature and high humidity situations,” said Parker. “Always adjust the intensity and duration of exercise with the temperature in mind.” On very hot days, exercise should be limited to early morning or evening hours. Pets with white-colored ears are more susceptible to skin cancer, and short-nosed pets typically have difficulty breathing in the heat. Owners should always carry water to keep dogs from dehydrating.

When pets are outside, owners should make sure there is protection from heat and sun and plenty of fresh, cool water. Trees and tarps are ideal because they don’t obstruct air flow. A doghouse, on the other hand, does not provide relief from heat—in fact, it makes it worse.

“Extreme temperatures can cause heatstroke, just like in humans,” she added. “Look for signs such as heavy panting, glazed eyes, a rapid heartbeat, difficulty breathing, excessive thirst, lethargy, fever, dizziness, lack of coordination, profuse salivation, vomiting, a deep red or purple tongue, seizure, and unconsciousness.”

If a pet shows any of these signs, it should be moved into the shade or an air-conditioned area. Cold towels can be placed on its head, neck, and chest. Allow it to drink small amounts of cool, not cold, water. It should be taken directly to a veterinarian or animal hospital.

Long-haired breeds often do well with a summer cut, leaving enough hair or fur to protect the skin from sunburn, while allowing for external comfort. Owners should check with qualified groomers. “Pets need us to watch for them,” said Parker. “They depend on us for food, water and a safe environment. A few simple, common-sense steps should be enough to maintain their health during the summer months.”

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**ABOUT MURPHY** -- Murphy is a fast-growing community located in Collin County. The population is approximately 18,020, generally characterized as highly educated with a median household income above the state average. With more than 70 percent of the land developed, the community is dominated by single-family residences. City planners strive to preserve a country feel while exhibiting an aggressive economic development stance. Money Magazine has dubbed Murphy as the 27<sup>th</sup> Best Place to Live in America for small cities, and D Magazine placed Murphy as the fifth best suburb in the 2014 list, where it has consistently ranked in the top 10.