



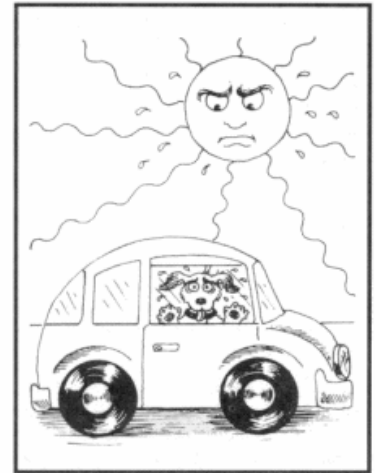
Graham Fire & Rescue

PETS, CARS AND HEAT

A good day of sunshine may be disastrous for a pet left in the car or at home without the adequate comforts of shade and water.

Animals this time of year are overcome by heat exhaustion. Despite repeated warnings, many pet owners continue to leave their dogs and cats in closed, parked cars each summer. For the suffering animal, the result is sometimes heatstroke, a form of heat prostration that can kill even the largest dog in just a few minutes.

Heat prostration can often occur on moderately warm days, but the problem is always worst during late July and August. Cooler morning temperatures may prompt pet owners to take their animals with them on that morning trip to the grocery and while they're inside, the thermometer is rapidly rising. Dogs and cats respond to heat differently than humans do. The time it takes to run just a few errands can mean the difference between life and death for the trapped animal.



For most pets, temperatures above 100 degrees can quickly be fatal. The early signs of trouble are panting, and a warm, dry skin. Within minutes, the animal may have a blue tongue and gums, a staring expression and a high temperature. Vomiting sometimes occurs, followed by collapse and, soon after, death. All of this may happen within 10 minutes.

On a hot summer day, the inside of a vehicle heats very quickly. On an 85-degree day, for example, the temperature inside your vehicle with the windows slightly opened will reach 102 degrees in 10 minutes. In 30 minutes it will go up to 120 degrees, on warmer days, even higher.

During these warm days, be sure to always provide plenty of shade, food and water for your pet whether they're at home or away from home.

If your pet is exposed to high temperatures:

- ✓ Be alert for the signs of heat stress—heavy panting, glazed eyes, a rapid pulse, unsteadiness, a staggering gait, vomiting, or a deep red or purple tongue.
- ✓ If your pet becomes overheated, you must lower his body temperature immediately. Move your pet into the shade and apply cool (not cold) water all over her body to gradually lower

her body temperature. Apply ice packs or cold towels to your pet's head, neck, and chest only.

- ✓ Let your pet drink small amounts of cool water or lick ice cubes.
- ✓ Take your pet to a veterinarian right away—it could save your pet's life.
- ✓ If you see an animal in a car exhibiting any signs of heat stress, call your local animal care and control agency or police department immediately!