

Thunder, Heat, and Hairy Situations: Spring & Summer Pet Preparedness

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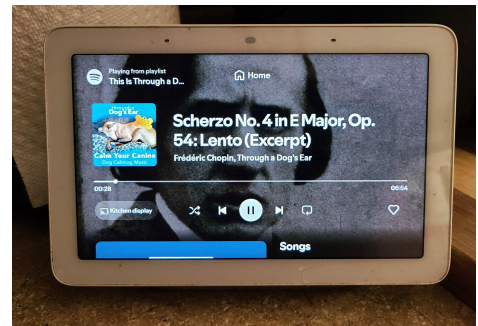
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Spring and Summer present ever changing weather patterns. This brings beautiful flowers but also emerging parasites and threatening storms. Situations that we may not anticipate other times of the year can prove to be a big challenge. Let's define our Spring/Summer tips to make sure you are thinking ahead and prepared to take care of your pet in unexpected circumstances.

Storm Safety

Unfortunately the changes in temperature bring variable weather patterns. Severe storms create challenges that if prepared, can be mitigated. Many pets have storm anxiety. Make sure to have appropriate calming medications prescribed by your veterinarian stocked with easy access. Most commonly used are Trazodone and Gabapentin. These medications take time to have their desired effect. So keep track of the weather and dose your pet ahead of time for best results. Establish multiple safe places in your home so they can seek comfort when needed. Additional modalities that can be implemented include thunder shirts, calming pheromones, and calming music. "Through a dog's ear" which can be played using Spotify, Apple Music, Amazon Music, and [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3333333333). This music contains psychoacoustics that are clinically proven to reduce anxiety in your dog. Utilizing music streaming platforms you can also counter condition your pet to storm sounds.



Severe weather situations that warrant sheltering in place are inherently scary. Cats are safest in their carrier with you but for many that "box" is even more frightful. Do you have trouble getting your cat into a carrier? Solve this problem ahead of time by desensitizing them to it. Pro Tip: Keep your cat's carrier out all the time, not only when preparing for a veterinary visit. Carrier anxiety can be reduced by having it out all the time with the door open and or the top off. When it is part of the decor, approaching it becomes no big deal. To boost the relationship with the carrier, start feeding your cat out of it every day! Over time, they will happily run to their carrier to receive their meal.



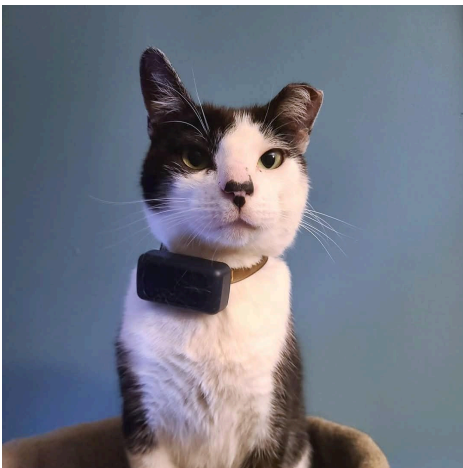
Power Outages:

Normal power outage prep is easy to accomplish. Flashlights, extra batteries, clean water, food, and a charged cell phone are the first things that may come to mind. For individuals with pets on life sustaining medications requiring specific temperatures such as insulin, the loss of refrigeration is detrimental. What happens to a medication when not temperature controlled? It

becomes less effective or inactive causing it to not be able to regulate your pet's health condition. The last thing any pet parent needs in the middle of inclement weather or a power outage is a trip to the ER because your pet experiences a medical crisis. Having multiple ice packs already frozen and a cooler on standby ensures you are prepared to continue your pet's medication regime. Power outages may also pose a problem in pets with heat sensitivities. Having a battery powered fan can help your pet stay cool.



Microchips, Tags, and Tracking Devices



Implanted microchips are the most popular way to permanently identify your pet. They are safe and extremely effective at returning lost pets back to their registered owner. Do you have your pet's microchip registered with your current contact information? Now is the time to update any changes. Make sure to have your pet's chip number verified at each veterinary appointment. During an emergency or severe weather, pets can be unpredictable and run away disoriented. When found, a microchip with appropriate contact information will get them home safely. Having a harness or collar with an identification tag is still pertinent. Make sure to include a reliable phone number so you can be reached when they are found. Tracking devices are a newer option. Attached to your pet's collar for daily use, this is one of the quickest ways to find your pet if they are lost. Options

include those with GPS tracking and or cell tower connection so you are able to see where your pet is located in real time. Be diligent when researching companion animal tracking devices. Technology is ever evolving. Choose an established manufacturer such as [Halo](#), [Tractive](#), and [Fi](#) as they have a more reliable and extensive set of support services. [Tractive](#) has both dog and cat tractor options. Keep in mind the caveat to collars is that they can come off of your pet during an emergency situation.

Fleas, Ticks, and Mosquitoes: The Unwanted Guests of Summer

Warmer weather ushers in many parasites that can spread disease to you and your pet. Even if you are a person who appreciates insects, you don't want these in your home. Make sure you are giving your pet their flea, tick, and heartworm medications as prescribed by their veterinarian. We recommend both dogs and cats (even indoor only) to be on prevention year round. The fleas and ticks are blood thirsty and desperate after emerging. Tick borne diseases are on the rise across the United States. The weather is warming up and mosquitoes are spreading heartworm disease which is fatal for dogs and cats. An easy, safe, and



effective solution is prescription prevention from your veterinarian. Keep these parasites out of your home.

Pet Emergency Kit: What You Should Always Have Ready

Having a stocked pet emergency kit is something you will be thankful for in times of need. As presented earlier, it should include clean bottled water, food, basic first aid materials, and a supply of daily medications. Depending on the weather severity in your area, three to seven days may be warranted. Access to a copy of medical records is important. Did you know you can have a digital copy of your pet's medical records on your phone by [downloading our app](#)? For cat owners, make sure to have a bag of litter and an extra litter box. Items for pet waste disposal are often overlooked for both dogs and cats. Leashes, harnesses, portable carriers/crates, as well as some comfort items for your pet such as toys, chews, treats, and blankets are good to have too.

A Little Prep Goes A Long Way

Having a plan in place makes emergency situations a little less stressful. Establishing where your pets will go, who is in charge of what, and having your supplies on hand will provide stability when an inconvenient circumstance could turn into a disaster. If you have questions or concerns about pet preparedness, reach out to any of our three locations to have your questions answered. Also, check out our [Pet Preparedness Checklist](#) to guide you as you gather everything you need to take care of your loved ones.

