

Pet Care Tips For The Dog Days of Summer

(NAPSA)—Whether enjoying the lazy days of summer or fun in the summer sun, everyone is outdoors more, even dogs and cats.

“During the hot summer months, pets need help keeping cool,” said Gary Batey, Vice President, Division Merchandising Manager—Pets for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Batey offers these simple tips so pets will have a happy, healthy summer.

- **Never leave pets in a locked car.**

Even on a moderate day, overhead sun on a parked car can quickly push the temperature to dangerous levels. In these conditions, your pet can quickly become uncomfortable, even seriously ill.

- **Check the water bowl often.**

All pets need continual supplies of fresh water, especially in the summer heat. Make sure the water bowls can't tip over and refresh the water bowls often.

- **Avoid midday walks on hot blacktop.**

When going for a walk, remember that dogs don't wear shoes. Dogs' paws are sensitive and burn easily on hot surfaces. Also, exertion and intense exercise should be avoided during the middle part of the day and reserved for the early morning and late afternoon.

- **Provide a shady refuge.**

When outside, animals must always have a shady and sheltered place to rest. An outdoor dog house or kennel should be well ventilated and located in the shade. Allowing a dog access to a child's shallow wading pool, filled with an appropriate amount of clean water, can keep it cool during the heat of the day.

- **Watch for symptoms of heat stroke.**

Unlike humans, dogs and cats don't cool themselves by sweat-



ing. Instead, they pant. However, panting is not as efficient as sweating and makes it more difficult to cope with summer heat.

The first symptoms of heatstroke are laborious panting; drooling; warm, dry skin; an anxious attitude; and a bright red tongue and gums. Immediate emergency care is required for an animal suffering from heatstroke. The animal should be cooled down by being placed in a tub of cool water or wrapped in cool damp cloths and taken to a veterinary hospital.

Certain animals are particularly sensitive to heatstroke. For example, young, old and overweight animals; animals with shortened muzzles like bulldogs, pugs, and Persian cats; animals with heart or respiratory problems; and animals with thick, heavy coats can overheat quickly.

Follow these tips and keep veterinarian phone numbers on hand for a safe summer season.

Visit a Wal-Mart for summer pet supplies like non-tip bowls, water dispensers that hold liters of water, galvanized waterers that maintain a constant supply of fresh water and dog houses.