



## NEWS RELEASE

### ACT NOW TO KEEP PETS SAFE FOR THE 4TH OF JULY

**CHICAGO, ILL., June 27, 2013...** The veterinarians at Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center ([www.ChicagoPetEmergency.com](http://www.ChicagoPetEmergency.com)) remind pet owners to take steps now to protect their pets over the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. Booming fireworks, barbecues and lots of activity can present significant danger to pets. In fact, the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday is one of the busiest times of the year at Chicago's oldest and largest veterinary emergency hospital.

Although most pets are not directly exposed to fireworks, the loud noises fireworks produce can result in stress and anxiety for pets. Pet owners are encouraged to visit their veterinarian in advance of the holiday to develop a plan for keeping pets safe and calm during the July 4 celebrations. If necessary, a veterinarian may prescribe medication to help ease the pet's stress.

Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center offers tips to help pet owners protect their cats and dogs over the holiday and throughout the summer.

- **Leashes:** Keep your pet on a leash when outdoors. An unleashed pet can be hit by a car, bitten by another animal, or otherwise be a danger to themselves and others.
- **Balconies, decks and windows:** Balconies, decks and open windows are dangerous to pets. Both cats and dogs are known to jump or fall off balconies and decks and through open windows. Fireworks can cause even usually

calm pets to jump. When on a balcony or deck, pets should be on a harness leash held by a responsible adult.

- **Food:** Pets that get into human food during cookouts can suffer serious health problems as a result. Corn cobs and bones can get lodged in a pet's intestine and require surgery to remove. High fat foods such as hot dogs, hamburgers and sausages often cause stomach upset and can lead to pancreatitis, a serious health problem for dogs. Many foods, including chocolate, sugar-free gum, avocados, grapes and onions, can be poisonous to pets. It's best to always keep pets on their usual diet.
- **Sunscreen and bug spray:** Sunscreen and bug spray should never be used on pets unless the item is specifically approved for use on animals. Bug sprays are particularly problematic because they often contain DEET, a product that can cause neurological damage to pets. Pet owners should check with their veterinarian to learn how to protect pets from fleas, ticks and other pests.
- **Heatstroke:** Heat stroke can lead to kidney failure, brain damage, and in severe cases, death. Keep pets cool when temperatures rise and make certain they always have plenty of cool, fresh drinking water. Leaving pets in an unattended vehicle is especially dangerous on warm days because car temperatures can increase dramatically in just a few minutes.

"We encourage pet owners to pay special attention to their pet's activities at this time of the year. Many of the emergencies we treat could have been prevented had pet owners been a bit more vigilant than usual," said Dr. Jerry Klein, Supervising Veterinarian of Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center. "If your pet should encounter a problem over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July holiday, we are available to help. We never close."

**Media Availability:** Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center will make every effort to provide credentialed members of the media access to a staff veterinarian for

interviews and to our facility. To arrange an interview or to shoot footage at the facility, please contact Virginia Mann, 312-420-3344 or [Virginia@VirginiaMann.com](mailto:Virginia@VirginiaMann.com)

### **About Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center**

Chicago's oldest and largest pet emergency facility, the Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center provides advanced emergency, critical and specialty care for cats and dogs. Each year the center treats more than 11,000 cats and dogs in its emergency room and thousands more are cared for by veterinary specialists. Staffed by a highly-trained team and equipped with the latest technology, Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center is always open -- 24 hours, every day of the year.

In addition to emergency veterinarians and staff, Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center offers board-certified veterinarians who specialize in cardiology, dentistry, dermatology, diagnostic imaging, internal medicine, neurology, oncology, ophthalmology and surgery. This state-of-the-art facility includes ultrasound and MRI equipment, specialized surgical suites, a blood bank, specialized oxygen cages, heart monitors and more. Chicago Veterinary Emergency & Specialty Center has been providing emergency care for cats and dogs since 1978.

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