

## **KEEP YOUR PETS SAFE**

South Florida is a busy city made of sunshine and good times. Not always is it that way with hurricanes, bad drivers, and rain on most national holidays. South Florida has its ups and downs. This is the same when it comes to your pets. This is a list of things you should know to keep your furry companions safe.

- Miami-Dade County has a leash law. This is big for safer traffic, less stray animals, and just a healthy habit.
- Hot days; keep water ready at all times for your pets if you have no air condition or if they live outside.
- Keep your dog away from chocolate, grapes, raisins, alcohol, tobacco products, and any prescription drugs you may have as these are all potentially hazardous to your furry companion.
- Do not leave your pets in a car unintended and with no air condition. The heat can rise swiftly and can be deadly.
- Florida canals have gators and snakes. Do not walk your dog by canals or river bends as they can be dangerous during hot seasons.
- Bufo Toads; These amphibians are not local to our ecosystem and very invasive. Highly poisonous to all animals that come into oral contact with it. Seek a veterinary immediately if your animal has bitten into one of these. They are often nocturnal and come out more often after heavy rains. Puppies are known to want to chase as they are still learning. Keep your pup on leash when in your back yard till they are trained not to chase animals.
- There are some plants that are dangerous for your pet. To list a few; Sago palms, Angel Trumpets, Oleander, Azaleas, and Red maples for horse owners. The University of Florida has comprised a well written website dedicated to toxic plants if you would like to find out more.
- Lawn stickers: Ever had a bunch of prickly balls stick to your socks and shoes as you cross through tall uncut grass? Well these little weeds can get stuck in the paws or even in the nose of your beloved pet. They can cause rashes or even infections if the area of the rash becomes infected. Try to keep your lawn up kept and stay away from unkempt lawns.
- Fleas and Mosquitoes: In the humid and damp lands of South Florida, fleas and mosquitoes flourish. Fleas love to hide in shrubbery and rocks. Look into products to put in your garden beds to deter fleas and are safe for pets. Mosquitoes love to lay eggs in still water. Change your pets outdoor water bowls every day. Keep your pets up-to-date on all their vaccinations and have a monthly flea and heart-worm preventative. Discuss with your vet what will work best for your pet.

South Florida is a fun and happy place to live. When the sun is out we want to enjoy our time with our loved ones and that means our pets. This knowledge can be helpful to you and your pets. Use it and have a wonderful Fall Season!

K. de Boehmler