

MEDIA RELEASE

23 December 2008

**Promoting
Responsible
Dog
Ownership**



Hot Summer Days Dangerous for Dogs at Home

As summer heats up throughout Australia, dog owners are warned take extra precautions to ensure that their pets don't suffer the harmful effects of over-heating and heatstroke while they are at home during the working week. Over-exposure to hot weather and direct sunlight can raise a dog's body temperature to the point where he or she can become lethargic, dehydrated, or in extreme cases, suffer from deadly heatstroke.

"A car can get to 45 degrees in just two minutes during a typical summer's day. We all know dogs can die in hot cars, but we often don't think of our homes heating up while we are at work. There's little dogs can do themselves to cool off in a hot house," warns **Dogs NSW** spokesperson and veterinarian **Dr Peter Higgins**.

As dogs do not sweat, they can only perspire by panting and are therefore more susceptible to a sharp rise in body temperature during hot days. Direct sunlight filling the room or area of the house where your dog stays can cause an hot environment that you would not be at home to rectify. Houses with poor insulation and small rooms are also more likely to heat up to unacceptable temperatures quickly.

"Exhaustion and heatstroke are all too common occurrences for all breeds of dogs staying at home during the day. Heatstroke is especially dangerous, and if not treated quickly, can go from panting and agitation to excessive drooling, to frothing at the mouth, unconsciousness, and even death" advises Dr Higgins.

Preparing a cool environment for your dog to rest in while owners are at work ensures their comfort, and more importantly, their safety. **Dogs NSW** urges taking the following preventative steps this summer:

- Provide cool water that won't be in direct sunlight throughout the day
- Remove insulating bedding from your dog's crate or bed, such as blankets or pillows.
- Groom your dog regularly to remove excess hair which insulates dogs and traps body heat.
- Keep a fan or air conditioning on if the area is likely to heat up during the day, or pull blinds or curtains over areas where direct sunlight enters.

"Taking a few simple and logical steps each day prevents overheating easily. We need to do the thinking for our dogs and set up a space that will keep them healthy and happy. As dog owners, they rely on us for their wellbeing" says Dr Higgins.

"If you think your dog is showing the early warning signs of heatstroke, get it into a cool location and provide it with small drinks of cool water. NEVER immerse it in a cold water bath – this can kill a dog within minutes. If they don't show signs of improving within a few minutes, contacting your vet right away is crucial. Taking these few precautions will ensure they too can enjoy the 'dog days of summer,'" advises Dr Higgins.

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For further information or interviews, please contact:

Tomas Ganderton
Media Liaison
042 515 0069
tomasganderton@dogsnsw.org.au

DOGS NSW is located at:

The Bill Spilstead Complex for Canine Affairs,
44 Luddenham Road,
Erskine Park,
NSW 2759