



Holiday Safety Tips for Pet Owners

By Kerry Ward

The holidays are a fun time of year for most people, but they present seasonal hazards and stresses to our pets. These can be minimized with a little extra attention to details. So what potential dangers are lurking among the holiday festivities?

Beware of poisonous plants

Poinsettia leaves are actually much less toxic than we've been led to believe but they are still capable of upsetting your pet's stomach if eaten in quantity. Holly is very dangerous if consumed as the prickly spines can pierce an animal's digestive tract. Real mistletoe is also quite toxic to both cats and dogs. If you have a real tree it's important to keep the fallen needles swept up as pine needles are long and sharp and can pierce a pet's digestive tract if swallowed.

Choose decorations wisely

Make sure all your tree decorations are unbreakable. Bright and sparkly glass balls are an irresistible temptation for kitties and if they break can result in cut mouths and paws. Avoid the use of edible decorations like iced cookies or strands of popcorn or cranberries. These are far too tempting to pets and if ingested the string can become tangled around your pet's intestines creating a veterinary emergency. Never add those plastic strands of silver tinsel to the tree if you have a cat or small dog. Cats especially just love to slurp them up. Usually they exit the body naturally and you just have a tinsel-pooping kitty but sometimes the strands can get tangled around the intestines. Lit candles should be placed where your pet cannot get to them. Aside from singed whiskers and fur they can knock the candles over and start a fire. Avoid light strings on the lower part of the tree where pets can easily reach and chew on them. Tape all electrical cords to the floor or walls with duct tape or encase cords in plastic tubing, like the tubing used for fish tanks, to prevent your pet from chewing on cords. Chewed light cords will destroy your lights and could cause an electrical fire or electrocute the chewing pet.

Secure the Christmas Tree

Try to situate the tree in an out of the way corner that can be blocked off so your pet cannot reach it. This works better with dogs than cats. Nothing is truly out of reach for a determined cat! Therefore it is best to anchor the tree to the ceiling with twine or fishing line to prevent the whole tree from being toppled over by a climbing cat. If you have a real tree do not allow your pet to drink the tree water as trees exude sap that can upset your pet's stomach. Also do not add aspirin or anything else to the tree water to keep the tree fresh in case your pet does manage to drink the water.

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Gift Wrap

Wrapping paper and empty gift bags are fine for your pet to play in but keep ribbons, especially curling ribbon away from cats. Curling ribbon has very sharp edges and if your cat swallows some it can cut their digestive tract or get tangled up in there and cause problems.

Limit the Treats

Avoid giving pets an excess of treats over the holidays. It's tempting to want to spoil them and let them indulge but they will likely end up with upset tummies if overfed, especially foods they do not normally consume. Never allow your pet to eat anything that contains dark chocolate or cocoa as these contain theobromide which can damage your pet's liver. Do not give cooked poultry bones to your pet as they can splinter in their mouth or intestines.

Holiday Travel

If you plan to travel with your pet book well in advance and check airline policies. Some airlines no longer fly pets at all, others do not fly pets below a certain temperature and most airlines allow only one pet in the cabin per flight, so check and book early to avoid disappointment. If travelling by car with your pet make sure to secure your pet in an appropriate carrier or restraint to avoid a cat underneath the brake pedal or a dog leaping into your field of view while driving. If your pet will be staying at home while you travel make sure to book the kennel or pet sitter well in advance as the holidays are the busy season.

Avoid Stressing Your Pet

Parties and get-togethers are enjoyable for most people but can be very stressful for our four-legged companions, especially those used to a quiet home. Make sure your pet has access to a quiet area where they can go to get away from visitors and relax. Keep your pets away from doors to the outside that may be opening frequently in order to avoid escapes.

Fun Things to do with Your Pet During the Holidays

By Kerry Ward

Now that you've taken care of all the things to keep your pet safe what can you do with your pet to have some fun?

- Give your pet a good grooming to get them looking their best for holiday photos
- Get out your camera and get some shots of your pet against the holiday decorations. Use the good ones for next year's holiday card.
- Take your pet to Pet Pics with Santa for a unique memento
- Bake some dog cookies or cat treats
- Make your pet a new toy or bed. Go to www.instructables.com/id/DIY-cat-tent/ for directions of how to make a cat tent from an old T-shirt and a wire clothes hanger.
- Take your dog for a nice long walk outdoors
- Spend some quality lap time with your cat while watching holiday movies

There are no ordinary cats - Colette

Volunteer Profile – Caitlin Parr

What do you do at PVHS?

I help to run dogs, often working with another volunteer and running play sessions. This is pretty wonderful because it allows the dogs to really run and get as much exercise as possible. They are very adorable when they play! I am also one of the volunteers who help to assess the behaviour of new dogs when they arrive at PVHS and I help work on their manners. I'm a member of the fundraising committee too, helping to organize and volunteering at various fundraising and community events.

Why did you decide to get involved with PVHS?

I decided to get involved with PVHS shortly after I moved to Morden. I was looking to build myself a community that shared similar interests and given my history working with rescues I thought PVHS would be a good fit. It was a good decision!

What is your dog training philosophy?

I believe that building positive, consistent relationships with dogs helps them to be happy, well-adjusted and well behaved. When I'm working with dogs, I aim to make our time together fun and productive so that training time is something they look forward to and learning new things is a game.

What training behaviours do you think are the most important to help make a dog more adoptable?

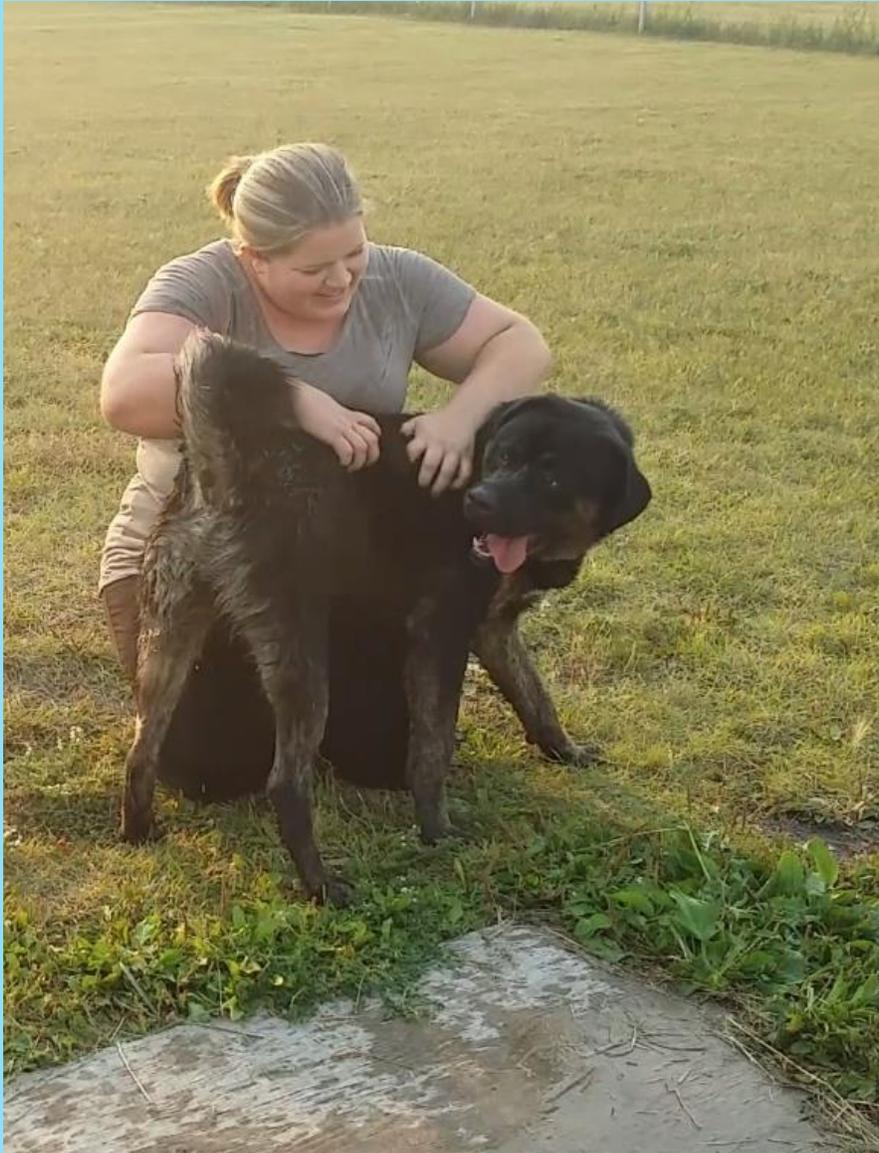
Behaviours that help adopters see the potential in their future pet are generally the basics. A solid sit goes a long way. It's hard to get into trouble when you're sitting down! Knowing a dog can sit, lie down, or wait patiently for a leash to be hooked up lets adopters see where a new dog could fit comfortably into their daily routine.

Which of our dogs is your current favourite and why?

It's always hard to pick a favourite; they all have a lot of personality and charm. Currently I am a huge fan of Molly Jo. She has been a regular participant in our play groups and does well with large, rowdy, rambunctious dogs. She wrestles and chases and is a great communicator. When play time is over, she loves to cuddle and definitely thinks she is a 70 pound lap dog. If you open your arms up and call her she comes running and jumps into your lap. It's hard to resist her square, floppy ears and goofy attitude. She is so much fun!

What makes you keep coming back?

Working with dogs, no matter how goofy or calm, is relaxing and fun. I enjoy feeling that I'm making their day a little bit better; it's rewarding. I like the people at PVHS and working with them too. It's just generally a nice place to be.



Caitlin with former shelter dog Moca in the exercise yard at PVHS

If you think dogs can't count, try putting three dog biscuits in your pocket and then give him only two of them.

Phil Pastoret

Featured Pets



BooBoo is a 1 ½ year old neutered male. He began life as a barn kitten and he's still a little bit shy although he loves to be petted once he gets comfortable with you. He actually enjoys rough-housing and does not play gently with

his toys. He does not like to be picked up but he loves to play with you. BooBoo loves other cats. We also have his mom and several siblings if you're looking for multiples. He'd do well as an indoor/outdoor cat or could go to a heated barn or shop.



Meet BooBoo's mom **Cookie**. She's about 2 years old. She's a timid kitty who enjoys being petted gently once she gets to know you. She's great with other cats and she loves going outside. Cookie would do best in an indoor/outdoor home or she could go to heated barn or shop.



Billy Bob is 1 ¼ yrs old. He's a little shy at first but pretty easygoing once he gets to know you. He loves other cats and he likes to play with his toys. He has very soft plushy fur, perfect for running your fingers through on a cold winter day. He'd do well in any

type of home where he is loved.



Lexi is a lab/shepherd mix who is about 5 years young. She's a sweet girl, a little on the shy side, who would do well in a quieter home. She does well on the leash and loves going for walks. She can also be quite goofy and likes to toss her toys around out in the yard while playing. Lexi is fine with kids but does not do well with cats.

See all our available pets at
www.pvhsociety.ca

Happy Tails

After adopting our dog (Sam) from the Pembina Valley Humane Society, I went back to the shelter to purchase an ID tag for him. While in the process of making his tag, I took notice of a cat roaming about the shelter. I asked the volunteer why the cat was not kennelled or contained. She told me she has been here since opening day and has the run of the place. How long has she been here, I asked? About 3 years she said. Why doesn't anyone adopt her? I think it's because her ears were frozen off. She told me Penny had been dropped off in a box in front of the door in -35 temperature all night until someone came to the shelter the next morning. She nearly froze to death and was so tiny she still needed to be bottle fed. Lucky for her, a loving volunteer took Penny under her wing and nursed her back to health. She's been here ever since. I thought to myself, she's destined to be a lifer. Nobody seemed to want her. Talking it over with my wife, we decided to adopt Penny and give her a good home. We had just put one of our cats down the week before. She has been a wonderful addition to our pet family and great company. So the moral of the story is, don't judge a book by its cover. As to the PVHS, keep up the good work.

Richard, Rose, Penny, Sam and our little Sunshine girl ILZA whom we lost Aug 11th, 2016



Upcoming Events

*3rd Annual Thaw Your Paws
"Staycation" Social*

Sat. Feb. 4th 2017

Morden Legion

Tickets on sale in January

Cats are connoisseurs of comfort.

James Herriot

Shelter Wish List

- *Clumping cat litter*
- *Vileda UltraMax mop heads*
- *Wand toys for cats*
- *Cat treats*
- *Dog treats*
- *Rawhides*
- *Dish soap*
- *Laundry detergent*
- *Bleach*
- *Bounce drier sheets*



We would like to thank our sponsor Nutrisource for donating all the dry food for the dogs and cats in our care.

We would also like to thank Dr. Gina Bowen for providing excellent ongoing veterinary care for our animals.

Shelter Hours

Tues/Sat	12-5
Wed/Thurs/Fri	6-9
Sun/Mon/holidays	closed

Come visit our animals before Christmas and help stuff their Christmas stockings with treats and toys!

Contact Us At

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*If there are no dogs in Heaven,
then when I die I want to go
where they went.
Will Rogers*

If you have adopted a pet from us we'd love to share your Happy Tails adoption stories and photos in future issues. You can send them to us at pvhs@live.ca.