

# THE HEAT IS ON!



INTERMOUNTAIN  
PET HOSPITAL

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When summer rolls around, you don't want to stay indoors. You want to get out and enjoy the clear skies and the bright sun, especially a long winter. You also want to get your dogs out, maybe take them for a walk or break out the balls and Frisbees and head to the park.

It's not wrong to feel this way—we love the summertime too! However, we know the dark side to all that sun far too well. The Treasure Valley can crank out some serious heat, which can cause fatal health problems for your dog. Not only that, it can lead to legal troubles for you.

We'll run through everything you need to know about protecting your pooches during the summer:

- You'll learn how the heat can affect your dog
- You'll learn what can happen to your dogs and you if you're not careful.
- You'll learn how to keep your dogs safe and still have fun.

## HOW HEAT AFFECTS YOUR DOG

Ever notice how dogs tend to pant more when it gets hotter? That's not from excitement.

Unlike humans, dogs can't and don't sweat. Their bodies cool down in two ways: By panting and by giving off heat through the pads of their feet. This makes canines especially vulnerable to heat-related illnesses. This is especially true for dogs that have short faces, also known as brachycephalic dogs (Pugs, Bulldogs, Boston Terriers, etc.)

The normal body temperature of dogs is between 100° and 102.5°. They can handle anything hotter than that only for a short time. If dogs stay in the heat for too long, it starts damaging their bodies.





# How long does it take for a car to get hot?

When dogs' body temperatures rises beyond their normal range, their cooling mechanisms kick in:

- They start panting and drooling
- Their blood vessels dilate, which makes their hearts work harder to pump blood to them
- Blood starts pooling in their organs and their blood pressure drops

Your dogs' organs start getting damaged when blood pools in them:

- Blood clots can form
- Organs start suffering thermal damage
- Dogs can begin showing symptoms like severe vomiting and bloody diarrhea

If a dog's body reaches a temperature of 109°, it leads to:

- Irreversible brain damage
- Possible seizures
- Coma
- Death

Outside Temp (fahrenheit)	Inside a Care Temp (fahrenheit)	
	After 10 min	After 30 min
70°	89°	104°
75°	94°	109°
80°	99°	114°
85°	104°	119°
90°	109°	124°
95°	114°	129°



## DOGS IN HOT CARS = LEGAL HOT WATER

Not only are there physical effects of leaving your dog out in the heat, but there could also be legal ramifications.

Many people are aware that leaving a child in a hot car has serious legal consequences, but did you know that this is also the case with pets?

According to Kristine Schellhaas with the Idaho Humane Society, leaving a dog in a hot car and seeing that the dog is in distress, can lead to a misdemeanor, 6-months in jail and a \$300 fine.

Even if it is 70 degrees outside, it could be over 100 degrees in your car if there is no airflow. Leaving your windows down for the dog may not be enough if there is no wind.



According to Lewiston Animal Control Officer Doug Willey, Summertime is a common time for citations of animal abuse. If they receive complaints about dog's left in cars (windows rolled down or not), they investigate it. If the results of their investigation prove somebody should be cited, then they are cited under the animal cruelty code, and again, that is a misdemeanor.

Under Idaho State Law (as of 2017), if you're found guilty of a second violation within 10 years, you can get up to nine years in jail and a \$200-\$7,000 fine.

The more violations you rack up, the worse the punishment gets.

## KNOW THE WARNING SIGNS

With these dire consequences in mind, it's important to know the warning signs of rising temperatures and heatstroke in dogs. They include:

- Panting (the more rapidly they pant, the more seriously you should take it)
- Bright red tongue
- Red or pale gums





- Thick, sticky saliva
- Depression
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea



If your dog shows any of these signs, you need to cool them down as quickly as possible.

## HOW TO KEEP YOUR DOGS SAFE

When taking your dog out during the summer, the first thing you should always do is give them water to drink. And don't be stingy with the water—the more they drink, the safer they'll be from the heat.

Once dogs start showing signs of heatstroke, you're past the point of just giving them water. Get your pet someplace cool immediately. After you do, start lowering their temperature by wetting them with cool water (use lukewarm water with small dogs) and waving a fan over them.

DON'T use COLD water. If you cool your dog too quickly, their temperature can drop too low. This can cause their blood vessels to constrict and lead to life-threatening medical conditions.

Check your dog's rectal temperature every five minutes until it reaches 103°. Once it does, dry them off so they won't cool down any further.



Even if your dog seems to be recovering, take them to your veterinarian as soon as possible. They may have damage that isn't immediately noticeable.

## HOW YOUR VET CAN HELP

Your vet can get your dog's body temperature back down to a safe range if you haven't done so already. After they do that, they can make sure that your dog is adequately hydrated by giving them fluids and oxygen.

Your vet should also monitor your dog for internal problems like respiratory distress, kidney failure and heart abnormalities. They might also take blood samples to monitor clotting time. They can recommend treatments based on the results of monitoring and tests.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SEE DOGS IN DISTRESS

While you're out and about this summer, you may see a dog in a car showing symptoms of heatstroke. If you do, you should:

- Call the police or the local animal control agency right away.
- The Ada County dispatch number is (208)343-3166. West Valley Humane Society is (208) 455-5924.
- Give as much information as you can to the dispatcher: Make and model of the car, what address the car is located, license plate number, and what distress signs you see the dog(s) exhibiting.
- Leave your name and number of with the

responding officers so they'll know whom to contact if they need more information.

- Go to nearby businesses and ask managers to make an announcement regarding the incident in an attempt to locate the owner.

## STAY SAFE AND HAVE FUN

You and your dog can have lots of fun this summer. You just need to take a few precautions.

Always bear in mind how the heat can affect your dog and how to ensure their safety. If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to give IPH a call. We want to do all we can to help man's (and woman's) best friend stay healthy and happy in the summertime.

