

## Water Safety Tips for your Dog

Summer just wouldn't be summer without a visit to the lake, ocean or local watering hole. Whether you enjoy fishing, sailing, jet skiing, canoeing or simply swimming, the water promises a refreshing and fun-filled experience during the hot summer months.

Your dog may enjoy cooling off along with you. To assure that he remains safe, happy and healthy in and around the water, keep in mind the following suggestions:

- 1). Purchase a life jacket (pet flotation vest) for your dog. These are sold at most large pet product stores. Some dogs are natural swimmers; others are not and can quickly get into trouble in the water. The life vest may give him extra time by keeping him afloat if he actually needs to be rescued.
- 2). If your dog does not like the water, don't force him to go in with you.
- 3). Familiarize yourself with the lake or ocean to determine if there are sharp or jagged rocks that could hurt his paws or if there are strong undercurrents that can pull your dog out to high or dangerous waters. At a pond or lake, check to see if the banks have a gradual incline so that your dog can easily get out of the water.
- 4). Teach and reinforce basic obedience commands – especially “come”.
- 5). Keep a close eye on him, and don't let him too far in or away from you.
- 6). NEVER leave him unattended!
- 7). Always carry fresh drinking water for your dog, and teach him to drink out of a water bottle so that you don't need to carry a water bowl with you all the time. Drinking water from a stagnant pond or lake can cause many different kinds of ailments including parasites, Giardia, and bacteria.
- 8). Pond or lake water with algae, fertilizer/pesticide residue or parasites, if ingested can cause vomiting, diarrhea and make your dog very ill.
- 9). Don't let your dog swim for too long a period so that he becomes over fatigued.
- 10). Don't let your dog swim in water that is too cold; this could result in hypothermia.
- 11). Rinse and wipe your dog dry after swimming – make sure you dry his ears off to reduce the possibility of ear infection.
- 12). Keep in mind that the heat of the sun around a body of water can be intense. Watch your dog for signs of sunburn and heat stroke.

Let good old-fashioned common sense guide you in and around the water. Make sure you and your pet stay, cool, safe and refreshed in the water and wherever else you go this summer!