



"Your Local  
Health Department"  
**June 14, 2018**

## Branch - Hillsdale - St. Joseph Community Health Agency

570 N. Marshall Road  
Coldwater, MI 49036  
(517) 279-9561  
Fax (517) 278-2923

20 Care Drive  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
(517) 437-7395  
Fax (517) 437-0166

1110 Hill Street  
Three Rivers, MI 49093  
(269) 273-2161  
Fax (269) 273-2452

[www.bhsj.org](http://www.bhsj.org)

**Contact: Rebecca Burns, Health Officer**

**517-279-9561, ext. 0148#**

**Yvonne Atwood, Personal Health Director**

**517-279-9561, ext. 0143#**

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### Summer Safety For Our Four-legged Friends

**Coldwater, MI.** Pets can be like family to most people. Whether you have a cuddly kitten or a rowdy puppy, the heat of summer is just starting and we have to do our best to keep them cool. The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency offers some tips to keep your furry friends safe from the heat and other potential dangers of summer.

1. **Never leave your pet in the car.** Even if windows are cracked, the interior temp can rise by 19°F in as little as 7 minutes. On a hot day, this can be deadly.
2. **Keep it cool indoors.** Turn on the AC in your home, especially if you'll be out of the house for several hours. If it's too warm for you, it's too warm for your pet. If your pet shows signs of heat stress—heavy panting, dry or bright red gums, thick drool, vomiting, diarrhea, or wobbly legs—don't place them in ice cold water, which can put them into shock. Instead, move him or her to a cool place, drape a damp towel over their body, rewet the cloth frequently, and get them to the vet as soon as you possibly can. A dog's normal temperature is between 100° and 103°F, so once she hits 104°F, she's in dangerous territory (106°F or higher can be fatal).
3. **Don't share your scraps.** Barbecue scraps and fatty leftovers can give your pet pancreatitis, causing severe abdominal pain or death. Corn on the cob and peach pits are also a huge no-no because they can lodge in a dog's intestines. But always make sure that when they are outside with you that they have access to cool, fresh water.

4. **Lock up the plant food.** Rose and garden plant food containing insecticides can contain potentially fatal compounds. If your dog tries to eat a bag of it (or soil that's been treated with it), he could suffer diarrhea, profuse vomiting, shock, seizures, and even death.
5. **Keep them away from fireworks.** A threat to curious dogs that might try to eat them, fireworks are made with chemicals like potassium nitrate and parts (like a fuse) that could get stuck in the stomach. If eaten, fireworks can cause vomiting, bloody diarrhea, seizures, and shallow breathing. Keep yours out of reach and clear your yard of debris after you set off your display. Also, keep your pet indoors during the display. Many dogs get scared and nervous from the loud booms and could run away from home.

Summer is a great time to be outdoors spending time with friends and family, and we want our pets to enjoy it as well. Stay conscious of your pets needs by following these tips for a safe summer for all.

**Branch County**  
570 N. Marshall Rd.  
Coldwater, MI 49036  
(517) 279-9561

**Hillsdale County**  
20 Care Drive  
Hillsdale, MI 49242  
(517) 437-7395

**Three Rivers**  
1110 Hill St.  
Three Rivers, MI 49093  
(269) 273-2161

#####