

NOISE STORMS & FIREWORKS HOW TO HELP YOUR PET AND BE PREPARED



We are entering a time period where Fireworks and storms are around, and these can cause moderate to severe stress for your pet. As many as 50% of pets may experience noise anxieties at some stage.

Dogs are particularly prone to having panic attacks or anxieties triggered by loud noises. Some breeds, such as herding dogs, are more likely to have noise phobias. Dogs with a noise phobia may not only fear fireworks; they may also react fearfully to other sudden loud noises, such as thunderstorms. This does not mean that a cat may not be fearful or anxious - be aware of their reactions.



How do I determine if my pet is stressed?

Your dog may demonstrate obvious signs of fear and anxiety in a variety of ways, such as running or pacing around the house, trembling, barking, whining, soiling, scratching at the door or destroying furniture for example. Sadly, in extreme cases, dogs have even jumped out of windows and been badly injured. Other dogs may instead show more subtle signs of their distress, such as yawning, licking their lips or drooling. Cats will often hide away or meow profusely.



MILD ANXIETY

OTC calming medication may help. Ask at the dispensary for advice at least 2 weeks prior.



MODERATE ANXIETY

SEVERE ANXIETY

Sedative or scheduled anti-anxiety medication with veterinary supervision - make an appointment with vet as soon as possible - minimum of 2 weeks prior.

OUR GUIDE TO HELP MANAGE STRESSFUL NOISE SITUATIONS:

Full tummy:

If your pet is fed and has a full tummy before fireworks start this may help them to settle. Favourite foods or treats can also be a good distraction.

Bring them inside before dark:

Prevent your pet from becoming lost or injured by keeping it indoors during a firework display or storm. If you must take your dog outdoors after the fireworks begin, keep it on a leash. Never leave a fearful pet outdoors and alone.

Reduce noise:

You can reduce the noise by softly playing calming music or turning on the television. This may help cancel out loud noises.

Create a safe and secure environment:

Create safe comfortable spaces indoors for your pet where they will feel secure. Settle them in a secure area with their favourite blanket, bed or toys. Closing the curtains may also help to dampen loud noises and to block flashes of light. Fearful dogs can be destructive, so be sure to remove any items that they may destroy or injure themselves on.

Take them for a walk:

Tired dogs are sleepy dogs, which means they're less likely to be fearful. Tire out your dog by taking them for a good walk or playing a game of Frisbee or fetch during the day before the fireworks are set to begin.

Be prepared and organised:

Advance preparation is the best course of action. If your pet is not usually stressed but you are concerned about their reaction to fireworks - our staff will be able to help and guide you with appropriate over the counter calming medications. Most of these medications should be given from at least two weeks before an event to have maximum effect.

If your pet's phobias are severe, you may need to book an appointment and consult your veterinarian well in advance, for a sedative or scheduled anti-anxiety medication (Keep in mind that sedatives and anti-anxiety medications should be administered only under a veterinarian's supervision). For the longer term, your veterinarian can also recommend a qualified animal behaviourist to design a program to desensitise your pet to loud noises.

Offer reassurance:

Reassure and comfort your anxious pet but keep them settled and try not to fuss them too much. If they hide away in a safe place, where they feel comfortable, then it is best not to disturb them.



WHAT TO DO WHEN THE UNTHINKABLE HAPPENS:

If the unthinkable happens and what to do if they flee in terror:

If your pet is not yet microchipped, do it now so you have a better chance to recover them. If your pet is microchipped, check that the details are correct. In addition to a microchip, make sure your pet always wears a collar and tag with your current contact information so it can be easily identified and returned to you.



**“1 in 3 pets
will get lost
in their lifetime.
Without identification
90%
won’t return home”**

Reach out to your local animal shelter and veterinarians for their help. You can hand out flyers in your neighbourhood to encourage more people to keep an eye out for your dog. With the advent of WhatsApp groups, it makes it is easy to share information about your lost pet on a neighbourhood or street group.

If you happen to find a scared and lost stray, please take them to your nearest veterinarian or shelter so they can check if the pet is microchipped.