



Des Moines County Humane Society  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BURLINGTON, Iowa - It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. Decorated trees and lights brighten up neighborhoods and houses. It is a special time of year for children and adults alike. But what about pets?

Your four-legged companions can join in on the holiday festivities, but be sure to make it a safe time for your pets as well.

Here are some tips to keep in mind this season so everyone – both two-legged and four-legged beings alike – can have a happy, safe holiday.

1. Securely anchor your tree so it doesn't tip and fall, causing possible injury to your pet. This also prevents the tree water from spilling. Stagnant tree water is a breeding ground for bacteria and your pet could end up with nausea or diarrhea should he drink it.
2. Cats love the sparkly, light-catching tinsel that's easy to bat around and put in their mouths. Swallowing tinsel can lead to an obstructed digestive tract, vomiting and dehydration. Brighten your boughs with something other than tinsel.
3. Keep your pets away from your holiday table and unattended plates of food. Be sure to secure lids on garbage cans so leftovers do not tempt them.
4. Be careful which plants you use to decorate your home. Holly can cause pets to suffer nausea, vomiting and diarrhea. Mistletoe can cause gastrointestinal upset and cardiovascular problems. Many varieties of lilies can cause kidney failure in cats. Opt for artificial decorations or pet-friendly bouquets.

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5. Don't leave lighted candles unattended. Pets may burn themselves or cause a fire if they knock the candles over.
6. Keep wires, batteries, and glass or plastic ornaments out of paws' reach.
7. Give your pet his own quiet space to retreat to, complete with fresh water and a place to snuggle. Even pets need some down time during the hectic holidays!

For more information on how to keep your furry companion safe this holiday season, contact Des Moines County Humane Society board member Susan Denk at 319-671-0147.

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