

# Ontario SPCA urges pet owners to take precautions during heat warnings

By **Sam Odrowski**

With a heat warning issued for parts of the province, the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society recently issued a statement reminding pet parents to take precautions to help keep their animals safe.

Extreme heat can pose serious health risks, including heat exhaustion and heatstroke, and animals rely on us to help protect them from dangerous temperatures.

"One of the most dangerous places for an animal during hot weather is inside a parked vehicle," reads the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society's statement.

"Temperatures inside a vehicle can quickly climb, putting animals at risk of heatstroke within minutes. Even on mild days, in the shade, or with the windows down, a parked vehicle can quickly become deadly for an animal. The safest option is to leave pets at home where they can stay cool and comfortable."

As part of its No Hot Pets campaign, the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society is asking parents of pets and animal enthusiasts to take its "No Hot Pets" pledge. The pledge promises to never to leave an animal unattended in a parked vehicle.

"Hot weather can also be hazardous for animals outdoors. Make sure pets have access to fresh water, shade and a cool place to rest. Avoid strenuous exercise during the hottest parts of the day and be mindful that pavement and sand can become hot enough to burn paws. Consider walking dogs early in the morning or later in the evening when temperatures are cooler. Animals left outdoors without access to shade and fresh water are also at risk during periods of extreme heat," reads the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society's statement.

Dr. Joey Tang, medical director of the Ontario SPCA and Humane Society, said pet owners should take simple steps to protect animals during extreme heat.

"Hot weather can become dangerous for animals very quickly. By taking a few simple precautions, pet parents can help keep their animals safe, comfortable and cool during periods of extreme heat," he noted.

Watch pets closely for signs of heat-related illness, including excessive panting, drooling, weakness, vomiting and difficulty breathing.

Puppies, senior animals, brachycephalic breeds and those with underlying health conditions are especially vulnerable to extreme heat.

If heatstroke is suspected, move the animal to a cool area and seek immediate veterinary care.

If you're worried about the safety of an animal, call the Government of Ontario's Provincial Animal Welfare Services team at 1-833-9ANIMAL (1-833-926-4625) or contact your local police. In an emergency, call 911.

For more information about keeping animals safe during hot weather, or to take the No Hot Pets pledge, visit [nohotpets.ca](http://nohotpets.ca)