



**Virginia Animal Control Association  
450 TV Drive  
Fredericksburg, VA 22408**

### **Position Statement on Summer Care for Pets**

The Virginia Animal Control Association (VACA) urges pet owners to take extra precautions during the summer months. Access to shelter from the heat and sun is vitally important to keeping animals safe on hot summer days. Virginia law requires the provision of adequate shelter for companion animals. Under the law, adequate shelter includes protection from “the adverse effects of heat or cold.”

Don't leave your pets in a hot car. Pets left in hot vehicles are at risk for heat exhaustion or heat stroke. It only takes about 10 minutes on an 85-degree day for the inside of your car to reach 102 degrees – even when the windows have been left open an inch or two. Within 30 minutes, a car's interior can reach 120 degrees. When the temperature is a pleasant 70 degrees, the inside of your car may be as much as 20 degrees hotter than the air outside. Shade offers little protection on a hot day and moves with the sun.

It is against the law to leave a pet unattended in a parked vehicle in a manner that endangers the health or safety of the animal. An animal cruelty conviction could result in a jail sentence and/or a fine.

Additional considerations:

- If you have an outside pet, move the animal to a shaded area. VACA encourages you to bring the animal indoors during excessively hot days.
- Check outside water sources frequently as animals will need to stay hydrated.
- Appropriate grooming will help your pet be more comfortable during the summer.
- VACA recommends protection from the extreme heat for agricultural animals

If you suspect animal neglect or cruelty, please call your local animal control agency as soon as possible. In the event of an emergency, please call 911.

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*Providing a united voice for Animal Care and Control Professionals throughout Virginia!*

[www.vacaonline.net](http://www.vacaonline.net)