

## Holiday Safety Tips

You've decked the halls, wrapped packages and shopped till you dropped. But have you done everything to protect your puppy from potential holiday hazards? To make sure the holidays are happy and safe for your puppy, follow these simple tips.

- Keep your puppy from toppling the tree by securing the tree to a wall or ceiling with sturdy fishing line.
- Make tree water, which can harbor dangerous bacteria and chemicals, a no-drinking zone by covering the tree stand reservoir with a tree skirt or aluminum foil.
- Pick up pine needles, which can injure your puppy's intestines if ingested, and tape down electrical cords.
- Skip the tinsel on the tree. This time honored holiday decoration has long been a no-no for puppies. If swallowed, tinsel can cause choking or intestinal blockages and tears.
- Keep your puppy away from wrapping supplies since eating ribbon, bows, paper and cellophane can lead to intestinal blockages and choking.
- Before placing a wrapped gift under the tree, ask the gift giver if the package contains food. Keep in mind it may contain dangerous food tempting to a puppy.
- After opening gifts, set aside small items or stow them away. Small toy pieces and balls can cause choking and intestinal blockages.
- Many holiday foods can cause illnesses ranging from vomiting and diarrhea to pancreatitis. Even a well-mannered puppy can be tempted by all the holiday treats placed conveniently for guests on coffee tables or serving trays at the level of a puppy's nose. Some guests may be tempted to slip a treat to your puppy, so ask guests to refrain from feeding your puppy. Placing your puppy in a crate, located in a quiet room, during party time may be a viable alternative.
- Play it safe and keep candles out of paw's and tail's reach.
- Some of the most popular living symbols of the holidays are toxic to puppies and can cause symptoms from gastrointestinal irritation to diarrhea to cardiac problems, even death. Plants to avoid include Christmas cactus, holly, lilies, mistletoe, poinsettia, hemlock and ivy. Keep these plants out of reach and immediately pick up fallen leaves, stems and berries.
- Be sure to close and secure doors and gates after guests arrive or leave.
- Busy and erratic schedules, steady streams of guests and changes to your home, like rearranging furniture to accommodate a tree, can stress out even the mellowest puppy. Limit stress by maintaining regular exercise and feeding schedules. Provide a quiet place for a crate where the puppy can get away from all the activity.