

Dedicated professionals and volunteers caring for the many stray and unwanted dogs and cats of Fulton County.



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Halloween and your Pets

Believe it or not, your pet too can get the heebie-jeebies on the most ghoulish night of the year. The Humane Society of the United States would like to remind pet owners that humans aren't the only ones susceptible to frightening activity on Halloween. Unusual activity such as constant doorbells, knocking and shouting can be very frightening to an animal. The best place for pets on this occasion is a safe, quiet spot, well out of the way of the activities, says The HSUS.

"It is important to think of Halloween from your pet's perspective," said Stephanie Shain, director of outreach for the Companion Animal Section of The Humane Society of the United States. "A constant stream of strangers at the door, some 'creatures' they've never seen before or just a sharp increase in activity can be agitating or frightening. For their comfort and safety, the most considerate thing you can do for your own pet is keep them away from the evening's activities."

To help people keep pets safe and happy on Halloween, The HSUS recommends taking the following precautions:

Keep pets safely inside; away from trick-or-treaters and other Halloween activities.

Cats – black ones in particular – often fall victim to pranksters. Keep cats safely indoors. Visit: humanesociety.org/safecats for more information.

Make certain that all pets are wearing collars with ID tags. Frequently open doors provide perfect opportunities for escape, despite an owner's best efforts.

Decorations should be kept away from pets. Candle flames can potentially set fire to a pet's fur. Dangling decorations should be kept in high places to avoid pet entanglement, choking and other potentially life-threatening hazards.

The only costume most pets want to wear is their own furry birthday suit. Costumes and masks can increase their risk of injury by causing them to feel confined and restricting movement. If trick-or-treating is the name of your game – leave the family dog at home. Dogs can be difficult to control amidst all the commotion. A lost pet or dog bite will quickly end your Halloween fun. Use fake cobwebs sparingly outdoors on your trees and bushes. These may adversely affect both pets and wildlife. Small birds are especially vulnerable and can easily become entangled in the webbing.

Wild animals should be avoided to keep everyone safe. Nocturnal critters such as raccoons, opossums, and foxes wake up and venture out for food, and Halloween night is no exception. The best advice is to keep a safe distance between you and any animal you do not know, including cats and dogs. Bats, a wild neighbor with a bad rap and a classic Halloween staple are, in reality, both interesting and beneficial creatures. Ironically, most bats, especially those in colder climates, have already found a nice cool, dark place to hibernate for the winter by Halloween night.

Trick or Treat Candies Are Not for Pets—Chocolate is poisonous to a lot of animals. Even the wrappers, such as tin foil and plastic, are dangerous and can get stuck in your pet's digestive system, making them ill. Instead, treat your dog or cat to a Pet Friendly Halloween Snack. (See Below!)

Pet Friendly Halloween Treats

Bark 'O Lanterns

(dog treats)

1 cup oat flour

1 cup brown rice flour

1 cup pumpkin (canned or fresh)

2 Tablespoons molasses (regular or blackstrap)

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 egg

Preheat oven to 350°.

Combine all ingredients together and mix until a dough forms. Roll out on a lightly floured surface to 1/4" thickness. Use a pumpkin-shaped cookie cutter (or a knife) to cut into shapes. Then, use a knife to cut out eyes and a mouth (and a nose if you can fit it). Place on an ungreased cookie sheet (they can be rather close together as they don't grow much while cooking). Bake 20-25 minutes. Transfer and let cool completely on a wire rack. Store the cookies in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Gobble-ups

(cat treats)

1 cup cooked turkey or chicken 1/2 cup beef or chicken broth

1 tablespoon margarine

1 cup whole wheat flour

Preheat oven to 350°. Combine turkey, broth and margarine. Add flour to make a soft dough. Add additional flour, 1 tablespoon at a time if dough is too sticky. Roll out dough and cut with cookie cutter, or break off pieces and form into interesting shapes. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes on ungreased cookie sheets. Makes about 30 treats. Store the cookies in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Using the tips above, we can all work together to keep our beloved pets and wild neighbors safe this Halloween