

Fall Pet Hazards

There is nothing like the start of fall, leaves changing, crisp breezes, pumpkin spiced coffee, and football games! Fall is a wonderful time for you to share with your pet but keep in mind there are some potential pet hazards you should be aware of.

1. Rodenticides

As the temperature falls, rodents seek shelter inside homes and businesses. Many people use rodenticides to rid their house of these unwanted guests. Rodenticides are highly toxic to pets and, if ingested, can be fatal. If there are no other viable alternatives and rodenticides must be used, enlist the help of an experienced exterminator whose knowledge will minimize wasted product, ensure safe product placement, and will inform you of the type, potency, and potential dangers to your pets.

2. Antifreeze

Many people choose Fall as the time of year to change their car's engine coolant. If you do, make sure to keep the liquid out of reach of pets, clean up spills, and consider switching to propylene glycol based coolants. Propylene glycol, although not completely nontoxic, is much safer than ethylene glycol. Antifreeze is sweet smelling and tasting- thus very enticing to pets. As little as one teaspoon in a cat or a tablespoon or two for dogs, depending on the size of animal, can be fatal. Signs of poisoning include acting drunk or uncoordinated, excessive thirst, and lethargy.

3. Mushrooms

While 99% of mushrooms are non-toxic, the 1% that are highly toxic can be life threatening. Toxic vs. non-toxic mushrooms are very hard to differentiate, the best prevention is keeping pets away from any area where mushrooms are growing!

4. Football Parties

There are a lot of upset stomachs during football season! Ingestion of table scraps can cause vomiting and diarrhea, or more seriously- pancreatitis. Corn on the cob, bones, skewers, and alcohol can also cause you pets to become seriously ill.

5. Mothballs

Mothballs typically contain either paradichlorobenzene or naphthalene. While the old fashioned mothballs (naphthalene) are often considered more toxic, both can be deadly. Symptoms of intoxication include vomiting, severe abdominal pain, tremors, and weakness. Kidney or liver failure and severe red blood cell anomalies can occur.

6. Compost Bins/ Piles

Piles of decaying organic matter and molding food products in your backyard compost pile have the potential to contain "tremorgenic mycotoxins," molds which cause tremors. Even ingesting small amounts can result in tremors or seizures within 30 minutes to several hours.

7. Halloween Hazards

- Candy: Keep your pet away from chocolate, sugar free candies containing xylitol, raisins, and candy wrappers
- Candles: Wax can cause serious burns on pet skin
- Costumes: It can be very fun to dress your pet up for the holiday. To be safe make sure the costume does not restrict your pet's movement or breathing and does not have any pieces they could easily chew off.
- Stress: Constant doorbell ringing may be stressful for even the most social pet. It is best to leave pets in a quiet room or crate until the commotion has settled. Always remember to keep identification tags or microchips up-to-date in the event that anxiety causes your pet to run away.

8. Thanksgiving

- Food: Fatty foods, onions, grapes, raisins, chocolate, xylitol, yeast, and bones are all common components of Thanksgiving fare. Consumption of any of these ingredients may cause serious problems for your pets!