Before you head to the beach or the park to enjoy the warm weather, we’d like to remind you to look out for the health and wellbeing of your furry and feathered companions. Like us, our pets feel the heat and often with a lower tolerance than us. Unlike us, they cannot remove a layer or two when mercury rises!

**Did you know?**

- The temperature inside a car can reach over 50 °C after only five minutes, causing heat stress which can lead to death in just six minutes.
- Dogs cool down by panting and only have sweat glands on their feet.
- Cats groom themselves frequently to dampen their coats and cool down.
- Rabbits, guinea pigs and birds find it hard to cool down, and are highly susceptible to heat stress.

**WHAT IS HEAT STRESS AND HEATSTROKE?**

Heat stress is a very serious condition caused by a significant elevation in body temperature that can escalate quickly into heatstroke and can lead to death. Pets are not efficient at releasing heat and tend to heat up faster than we do. Therefore, it is crucial we maintain vigilance, know the key signs of heat stress and what to do in the event of an emergency.

**SEVEN SIGNS OF HEAT STRESS AND HEATSTROKE**

Knowing the signs of heat stress is crucial for early diagnosis and treatment.

1. excessive salivating
2. weakness
3. lethargy
4. shaking
5. dry nose and gums
6. whining
7. constant panting

Extreme cases of heat stress include: dark purple coloured tongue, vomiting, seizures leading to death.

**WHAT TO DO IN THE EVENT OF HEAT STRESS**

If your pet is showing any of these signs it is important you seek immediate veterinary advice. It is also advised you move your pet into the shade, wrap them in a damp towel and direct a fan towards them. **Do not** give them a cold bath or shower as it is important they are cooled down in a controlled manner.

**PETS IN VEHICLES**

**Never** leave your pet unattended in a vehicle. Within only six minutes, your pet can suffer severe heat stress which can lead to death. Even on overcast days and with windows and/or doors open, the temperature in a vehicle can quickly rise to a dangerous level.

**If you find a pet left in a hot car please call the police on 000.**
Since our official opening in 1913, we have been a voice for animals without owners caring for thousands of cats and dogs each year. Pioneers for fair animal laws, we continue to work on the front line to reduce the number of lost, abandoned and stray cats and dogs.

We rely on public support to run services and programs, including: proactive adoption, foster care, behaviour rehabilitation, low cost desexing and microchipping, and the promotion of better pet ownership through education.