

Our pets are members of our families and we all want to include them in whatever we do, wherever we go and that includes boating! Take the time to make sure everyone takes proper precautions this summer (and always!) to ensure boating safely with their furry friends!!

While pet-related boating injuries and fatalities are not currently tracked, in 2013 the Coast Guard counted 4,062 accidents that involved 560 human deaths, 2,620 human injuries, and approximately \$39 million dollars of damage to property as a result of recreational boating accidents.



Federal law requires recreational boaters to have a sound-producing device like a bell or air horn, flares, fire extinguisher, and enough life jackets for every person on-board including at least one throw-able flotation device. The Coast Guard also recommends for people to have a VHF-FM marine radio, an Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB), a dewatering device and a first aid kit.

In addition to those general safety requirements and suggestions, we recommend these basic precautions when boating with pets:

- Heat stroke and heat exhaustion are life-threatening to both people and pets. Make sure everyone, including your pets, has access to a shaded area on the vessel to get out of the sun so they do not overheat.
- Pets need access to ample fresh drinking water when on a boat to keep their body temperature in the normal range.
- Use sunscreen on both people and pets. Pets can get sunburned as well; use pet-safe sunscreen on pets. This is especially true when you have the groomer give your pet a 'summer cut' and their skin is exposed.
- Give your pets a break by pulling them into your lap or giving them a secure spot to lie down. Being on board can be tiring, especially for older pets, due to the movement of the boat. Your pet may become fatigued and, therefore, susceptible to injury due to the constant movement and balancing they have to do. Dog friendly ramps and steps are available.
- If your pet has trouble swimming, consider purchasing a life jacket or other pet-safe flotation device.
- If your pet is going to go swimming, ensure there is an easy access point for him or her to get on and off the boat to prevent fatigue or injuries. And always stay close to your pet while in the water.
- Make sure engines are not engaged while people or pets are in the water.
- Be cautious around fishing equipment. Fishing hooks can cause pain while colorful (floating) balls can be tempting to 'chase' and can get tangled up for both pets and kids.



## Marketing Tips for your Clinic:

- List Pet Safety Tips on your website, social media or in your newsletter.
- Partner with a local boat dealer and offer flyers (branded with your clinic name) to give out to customers in exchange for giving out the dealership brochures in your clinic.



( Sample Sign )

Offer specials such as:

- Retail items such as life preservers, pet-friendly sun screen, (beach) towels, and floating toys for the
  - Micro-chips (in case pets get lost);
  - Vaccines (travel special)
  - Boarding and grooming (shampoo specials)
  - Flea and Tick or Heartworm preventative specials
  - Animal Behavioral training and medication specials
  - Offer CPR classes for Pets and People (partner with the Red Cross). Offer laminated (waterproof) cards for the boat with your clinic name and CPR tips in case of emergency.

**Most importantly, make sure people and their pets celebrate this summer weekend and every day on the water safely! If there is a pet emergency, please seek veterinary attention as soon as possible!! Have a Safe Pet Friendly Summer!**



Have a wonderful pet-friendly summer.

