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HALLOWEEN SAFETY TIPS

Halloween is fast approaching, and although this can be a fun time for the two legged members of the family it can sometimes be a frightening and potentially dangerous time for our four legged friends. You can make it a safe holiday for your Boxers and other animal companions by keeping these tips in mind:

- ◆ Do not leave your pets vulnerable to the "tricks" played on Halloween. No dog or cat should ever be kept outside. Keep them secure and out of harms way inside the house.
- ◆ Loud noises, the frequent ringing of the doorbell and excited children in costume can be very upsetting for both dogs and cats. It may be best to gate your dogs in the family room or place your cat in a bedroom and close the door. This will prevent them from running into the street or biting a stranger on the doorstep.
- ◆ All dogs and cats should have current ID tags. A pet tag will be your first line of defense in recovery of a lost pet.
- ◆ Trick-or-treat candies are not for dogs and cats: Chocolate is poisonous to dogs and tin foil or cellophane candy wrappers can be hazardous if swallowed. Keep candy out of your animals reach. Teach your children not to share their treats with their pets. If your pet ingests chocolate or other harmful treats take them to the veterinarian immediately.
- ◆ Be careful of dogs and cats around a lit pumpkin or candles: They may knock it over and cause a fire. They also run the risk of getting burned as well.
- ◆ Purchasing a costume for your dog or cat can be appealing. However your canine and feline friends may not agree. Don't dress your pets in costumes unless you know they love it.
- ◆ If you do dress up your dog or cat, supervise wear and make sure the costume isn't constricting, annoying, or unsafe. Be careful not to obstruct your pet's vision, and only leave the costume on for a short time.
- ◆ Try to resist the temptation of taking your pet trick-or-treating. They are better off left at home where they can be in a calmer atmosphere. When animals are stressed they may exhibit uncharacteristic reactive behavior that could injure people or animals. Better to be safe than sorry.