



## Leaving your pet in a parked car can be a deadly mistake !

- Never leave your pet unattended in a parked car for any amount of time.
- On a warm day, the temperature in a parked car can reach 120° F in a matter of minutes, even with the car windows partially open.

- Your pet can quickly suffer brain damage or die from heatstroke or suffocation when trapped in high temperatures.
- Be alert for the signs of heat stress: heavy panting, glazed eyes, a rapid pulse, unsteadiness, staggering gait, vomiting, or a deep red or purple tongue.

If your pet becomes overheated, you must lower his/her body temperature immediately:

1. Move your pet into the shade and apply cool (not cold) water all over his/her body to gradually lower body temperature.
2. Apply ice packs or cold towels to your pet's head, neck and chest only.
3. Let your pet drink small amounts of cool water or lick ice cubes.
4. Take your pet to a veterinarian right away - it could save your pet's life.

### Things you should know:

Thousands of pets are stolen each year from unattended cars.

Leaving the car running with air conditioning seems like a great idea, but your pet could knock your car into gear, creating a dangerous situation or your car could be stolen. A running vehicle, even if locked, can be an irresistible temptation to car thieves.

Taking your pet for a ride may seem like fun, but many pets prefer to spend time with you in the comfort and safety of your home. Explore activities that you and your pet can share at home and avoid taking risks by leaving your pet in the car.

If you must take your pet on a car trip, do so safely: cats should ride in cat carriers, and dogs should be secured in dog harnesses. Traveling with loose animals in your car is a potential for disaster. In an accident, your pet can easily be ejected from the vehicle. The distraction of a pet moving around can even be the cause of a serious accident.

Animal Services Officers or Sheriff's Deputies are authorized to remove any animal left in an unattended vehicle which is exhibiting signs of heat stress by using the amount of force necessary to remove the animal, and shall not be liable for any damages reasonably related to the removal.

If you see an animal in a car exhibiting any signs of heat stress, call your local animal control or sheriff's department immediately!

### **Hernando County Animal Services**

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