

ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE of BOSTON



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Why Fireworks and Furry Friends Don't Mix

Fireworks and July 4th go hand-in-hand; however, they can cause stress and anxiety for our pets. The Animal Rescue League of Boston (ARL) reminds the public that the July 4th holiday tends to see an increase in the number of lost pets, and to take steps to keep pets safe this holiday weekend.

- Large gatherings at the home, fireworks displays etc..

Why Fireworks Are So Stressful for Dogs

Many dogs already struggle during thunderstorms, and while both storms and fireworks are loud, there's a key difference:

Dogs can sense an approaching storm through changes in barometric pressure. Fireworks, on the other hand, are sudden, unpredictable, and startling.

"When storms happen, the barometric pressure will tell them that it's coming; not with fireworks—and it's so detrimental," says Laney Nee, ARL's Shelter Behavior and Enrichment Manager.

Fireworks can lead to anxiety and long-term behavioral issues in pets. Common signs of distress include:

- Shaking or trembling
- Drooling
- Barking or howling
- Pacing or restlessness

- Hiding or trying to escape
- Loss of bladder or bowel control

“Dogs only communicate through their voices, mouths, paws, and body language,” Nee explains. “When they’re exhibiting signs of fear and we interact with them, there’s a risk they could redirect that fear into aggressive behavior.”

The loud blasts and flashing lights can also cause pets to panic and run off. Shelters across the country often see a spike in lost pet reports around July 4th.

How to Keep Your Pet Safe

Here are some ways to protect your furry friends this holiday:

1. **ID First:** Make sure your pet is wearing a collar with up-to-date ID tags. If they’re microchipped, confirm your contact info is current—just in case they get lost.
2. **Create a Safe Space:** Set them up in a quiet room with their favorite toys. Turn on a TV, soft music, or a white noise machine to help mask outside noises.
3. **Reduce Light Exposure:** If your pet is sensitive to the bright flashes, place them in a room without windows. Keep in mind: frightened animals may bolt when a door opens, so take precautions.
4. **Consult Your Vet:** If your pet suffers from extreme anxiety, talk to your veterinarian about possible medications or calming supplements.

ARL's FREE Pet Behavior Helpline

ARL’s [Pet Behavior Helpline](#) is a FREE service, and can answer basic behavioral questions about your pet, such as excessive barking, crate training, house soiling, or if you are looking for ways to stave off your pet’s boredom.

If you have questions, please call the Pet Behavior Helpline at (617) 226-5666 or via email behaviorhelpline@arl-boston.org, and an ARL representative will get back to you within 48 hours.

ABOUT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF BOSTON:

Pets are family. This belief is at the heart of everything we do at the Animal Rescue League of Boston. ARL is the first female-founded animal welfare organization in Massachusetts and is proud to carry on a legacy of kindness and compassion, helping more than 20,000 animals annually since 1899. Recognized for innovative, award-winning programs that go beyond sheltering, ARL addresses the root causes of the issues facing animals and the people who love them. By partnering with communities, ARL helps animals heal and thrive, keeps pets and people together, and protects animals from harm. Because there is no government funding for this important work, animals must rely on people like you to get the care they need, when they need it most, 365 days a year. For more information, visit arl-boston.org and follow ARL on [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#).

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