

Fireworks, Thunderstorms and Parties

How can I protect my dog?

Loud noises and bursts of light are frightening to dogs because they are threatening. Many dogs will go to extreme lengths to escape from what they think is going to hurt them.

In trying to escape or feel safe, dogs can injure themselves by trying to climb fences, or squeeze into tight corners. In addition, dogs on the roads are a danger to traffic and to themselves.

What should I do if I know parties, thunderstorms or fireworks are going to occur?

Before the event:

- Ensure that the dog can't escape and that it is secured indoors, in a shed or within a fenced property
- Ensure your dog has a current identification disc, registration disc or microchip so that it may be returned home quickly, if it escapes.

During the event:

- As much as possible, reassure your dog that it is safe
- let your dog be near you - his owner is his greatest security
- familiar noises, such as a radio or television may help
- allow them hiding spots - for example under the bed or behind the lounge suite
- If none of the above is possible, consider the use of boarding kennels or sending your dog to a friend's home, away from the noise.

In extreme cases:

- veterinarians can prescribe sedatives for dogs that over-react to such events
- dogs can be desensitized to such events. Playing a tape recorder of the noise quietly to the dog during happy events, such as eating or playing times, may provide the opportunity for the dog to become accustomed to it.

What should I do if I am the organiser of such an event?

1. Be responsible - let neighbouring properties (up to several blocks away) know about the event so that they have an opportunity to make arrangements for their dogs as required.
2. Also let residents know the expected duration of the event (e.g. fireworks for five minutes at midnight or a party from 8.00 pm until 2.00 am).
3. Consider enclosing a copy of this information sheet when you inform the neighbours of your own event.