

Firework safety leaflet

Firework Safety:

Consumer fireworks should conform to British Standards BS 7114. Fireworks fall into certain categories – adult fireworks are Cat 2 (Garden) and Cat 3 (Display), whereas Cat 4 can only be used by professionals with all year insurance and licenced storage.

Fireworks must not be set off or thrown in the street or other public places, this includes sparklers. If you wanted to know more about the law that applies to fireworks you can find it in the Fireworks Regulations 2004.

Fireworks must not be set off between 11pm and 7am, except for:

- Bonfire night when the cut off is midnight
- New year's eve
- Diwali which is celebrated on Sunday 30 October this year
- Chinese New Year, when the cut off for these events is 1am. This falls on Saturday 28 January 2017

There is a noise limit of 120dB on all consumer fireworks. Certain items are banned in the UK such as bangers, air bombs and jumping jacks.

If you do intend on either having a private firework display, or you are going to one, here is the Safe Fireworks Code:

- Plan your firework display to make it safe and enjoyable
- Keep fireworks in a closed box and use them one at a time
- Read and follow the instructions on each firework using a torch if necessary
- Light the firework at arm's length with a taper and stand well back
- Keep naked flames, including cigarettes, away from fireworks
- Never return to a firework once it has been lit
- Don't put fireworks in pockets and never throw them
- Direct any rocket fireworks well away from spectators
- Light sparklers one at a time and always wear gloves
- Have a bucket of water available to dispose of sparklers when they are finished

Our pets will get very scared around bonfire night because of the loud noises that fireworks make. Here are some top tips to help keep our pets safe:

- Make sure your dog or cat always has somewhere to hide if he or she wants to and has access to this place at all times. For example this could be under some furniture or in a cupboard
- During firework seasons, walk dogs during daylight hours and keep cats and dogs indoors when fireworks are likely to be set off
- At nightfall close windows and curtains and put on music to mask and muffle the sound of fireworks
- It's fine to comfort your pet if it helps them relax, or leave them alone unless you think they will harm themselves
- Never punish your pets when they're scared as this will only makes things worse in the long run
- Make sure your cat or dog is always kept in a safe and secure environment and can't escape if there's a sudden noise. Have your pet microchipped in case they do escape.
- If your pets live outside, partly cover cages, pens or aviaries to try to sound proof an area. Provide lots of extra bedding for your small pet to burrow in.

For dogs, planning ahead can help your dog cope with the firework season. Speak to your vet about calming remedies such as diffusers, or in some cases prescribed medication, which should ideally be used in conjunction with behavioural therapy.

Take some time to create a 'safe haven' which should be the quietest room in the house, and a place where the dog feels most in control, so it is important not to interfere with it when it is in this space.

Ensure there is lots of positive experiences in this space, so that in time it will learn that this place is not only safe but enjoyable. Use a variety of treats and toys which you can swap regularly so they do not get bored with them.

When fireworks finally happen your dog may choose to go to this space where it will be more able to cope, even if you are not home.

- Close any windows and black out the 'safe haven' to remove any extra problems caused by flashing lights
- Each evening before the fireworks begin, move your dog to the play area and provide toys and other things that they enjoy. Make sure that there are things for you to do too so that your dog isn't left alone
- Ignore the firework noises yourself. Play with a toy to see if your dog wants to join in, but don't force them to play
- If you know a dog that isn't scared by noises and which gets on well with your dog, then keeping the two together during the evenings may help your dog to realise that there's no need to be afraid.