

Wilmette Pet Center

"the place for people who love pets"

Summer is finally here and the weather is getting (and staying) warm! With the change in weather comes some new considerations for our furred and feathered companions.

Summer time is a great time to do a double check all of your pet's equipment; check leashes, collars, and harnesses for tears and weak spots. Make sure all ID and vaccination tags are present and in good shape. Check cords and cables, making sure there are no tears or frayed spots. Check heat lamps for cracks in the ceramic bases, and make sure any switches and timers work. It's a good time to take apart your aquarium filter and clean it out to keep it working; those with undergravel filters can take the tank apart and clean them out. Check cages and pens for loose metal ends and replace to prevent injuries.

Dogs – A lot of people will have their dog groomed as the weather warms. It really helps keep the hair down, as it removes that winter coat that is falling out. Adding enzymes and fiber to their diet will help reduce shedding. It's important to not shave your dog, thinking they'll be even cooler. Their fur protects them from the sun's rays, and removing this protection can lead to burns and other problems.

Keep your dog cool with frozen treats. These are a healthy and fun ways to both keep your dog occupied with an appropriate chew and help cool them down. Offer treats outside or on easy to clean floors; check our article for frozen treat ideas [here](#).



There's a lot of loud, scary noises at this time of year. The volatile atmosphere is ripe for thunderstorms, and the Fourth of July is rapidly approaching. These loud noises can be very stressful for some dogs. They hide and cower, which stress us out to. One of the best things you can do is help him relax; as alpha, the calmer and more relaxed you are, the more safe they feel.



Thundershirts are a huge help for dogs with anxiety; this drug free simple and safe solution uses pressure to relieve anxiety. Read more about it on their site [here](#). They are also a great solution for cats, too! Also highly effective are our Herbsmith supplements. These Chinese herbal remedies bring balance back to your animal to help relieve stress and anxiety; read more about them [here](#).

When dogs are outside, keep an eye on the temperature, and give them cool, shady shelter when needed. Provide plenty of fresh water for them so they stay hydrated.

Fleas and ticks are, unfortunately, a part of summer here in Chicago. There's no need for them to inspire dread, though. Check out our full article on the best ways to control fleas and ticks [here](#).

Birds – A lot of people love to take their birds outside for some fresh air and sunshine. And since this is the time of year a lot of our birds have molted their feathers, make sure their wings are trimmed. Many an owner gets a surprise when Polly suddenly takes off! This procedure is harmless to the bird and, in addition to preventing them from taking sudden flight, can help keep your bird sweet.



Looking good, showing off his new trim.

Also make sure that your bird's cage is out of direct sunshine.

While they love the light, if they can't escape from it and cool down, it can lead to overheating and health problems.

Small animals – A lot of people also like to take their rabbit or guinea pig outside for a walk. This is a



Taking an evening constitutional

great way to get your pet some exercise, but take some precautions. When using a harness, it's important to get your pet used to it *inside the house first*. You don't want them to escape their new harness the first time you take them outside. Put the harness on them for 15 minutes at a time, once or twice a day, to get them used to it. Over a week, give them more time in the harness, until they walk and move naturally with it on. Spend a day or two with the leash attached, and then begin taking them outside. Start with brief periods outside, somewhere contained and safe, like your back yard. Over time, give them longer times outside. Keep in mind that walking your small pet is not like walking your dog; it's simply a way to keep them under control while they get fresh air and sunshine.

Always use caution when taking your pet outside; never take your eyes off of them, and be keep them out of excessive heat and sunlight. Be sure some water and shade are nearby to keep them healthy.

For small animals kept outside in hutches, be aware of the weather. During the hottest part of the day, move their cage into a protected environment, like a garage or back porch. Make sure they have plenty of fresh water and shade.

Reptiles – Since the days are longer and the sun is brighter, we can use a lower wattage bulb on their cages (it's the reverse of what we do in the winter.) This will also help prevent them from overheating, too. Keep your higher power "winter" bulbs, and use them either for backup or for when the weather (ugh) gets cold again.

We wait for this weather for so long. With a little preparation, it can be as safe and fun a summer for your pet as it is for you!