



Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter

2200 7th Ave., Santa Cruz, CA 95062

580 Airport Boulevard, Watsonville, CA 95076

Phone: (831) 454-7200 Fax: (831) 454-7210

Melanie Sobel
General Manager

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Erika Smart, 831-454-7229

July 4th Safety Tips for People and Pets How to Protect Your Pet, and Where to Turn if Your Pet Gets Lost

Frightened runaways are a frequent side effect of noisy 4th of July celebrations. Every year fireworks cause an alarming uptick in lost pets!

It's important for people to know how to help a lost animal. Unfortunately, the internet offers confusing and inaccurate advice, and many good Samaritans turn to the Santa Cruz SPCA, simply on the strength of name recognition. The SPCA has a respected tradition of promoting adoption and humane education, but the Santa Cruz SPCA does NOT handle lost-and-found cases.

The Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter, located at 1001 Rodriguez St. (7th Ave. and Rodriguez St. in Santa Cruz), is the only open-admission, full-service facility set up to receive and care for lost pets at both its Santa Cruz and Watsonville (580 Airport Blvd) shelters. We understand how stressful losing a pet can be and go to great efforts to return animals to their owners as quickly as possible.

The Santa Cruz and Watsonville Shelters will be closed on July 4th in observance of the holiday. To help facilitate a safe haven for lost pets and their return to their homes, the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter will be open from 10am-6pm on Monday, July 5th.

The good news is that there are many things you can do to help ensure your pet's protection. Just follow these simple guidelines to make July 4th a great holiday for both you and your pet!

- **Don't take your pet to fireworks displays.** The explosions of the fireworks are loud to the human ear. Imagine how loud it sounds to your dog, who can hear sounds up to 60,000 cycles per second -- that's three times greater than the human ear can even register.
- **Do not leave your pet in the car.** With only hot air to breathe inside a car, your pet can suffer serious health effects, even death, in a few short minutes. Partially opened windows do not provide sufficient air, but do provide an opportunity for your pet to be stolen.
- **Keep your pets indoors in a sheltered, quiet area.** Some animals become destructive when frightened, so be sure you've removed any items your pet could destroy or may be harmful to your pet if chewed. It's important that they have a safe, quiet "den-like" place to relax, such as a secure room of the house or blanketed crate. Leave a television or radio playing at normal volume to keep him/her company if you go out. Shut windows and blinds or curtains.

- **Exercise your pet.** Tire your dog or cat out with plenty of exercise early in the day.
- **If you know that your pet is seriously distressed by loud noises like thunder,** consult with your veterinarian before July 4th for ways to help alleviate the fear and anxiety he or she will experience during fireworks displays.
- **Never leave pets outside unattended, even in a fenced yard or on a chain.** In their fear, pets who normally wouldn't leave the yard may escape and become lost, or become entangled in their chain, risking injury or death.
- **Make sure your pets are wearing identification tags so that if they do become lost, they can be returned promptly.** Animals found running at-large should be taken to the local animal care and control center, where they have the best chance of being reunited with their owners. Two forms of ID are always best when it comes to protecting your pet. If an individual finds your pet, the first thing he or she will look for is an ID tag. In Santa Cruz County, if your pet is taken to Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter, he/she will be scanned for a microchip, which is permanent identification. Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter offers microchips pets for \$15, by appointment.

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About Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter (SCCAS)

The Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter is an open admission shelter which welcomes EVERY animal in need. Our goal is to be a humane resource for the community by providing a safety net and second chance for local animals. There are two locations where owners can find and recover lost pets, adopt new animal companions, or sign up for PLANNED PetHood, our low cost spay/neuter program available for all resident pets. Our success is achieved through a variety of life-saving services and programs which are described in detail on our website, www.scanimalshelter.org. The support of our community is crucial to sustaining and expanding these services.