



TEN HOLIDAY TIPS TO KEEP PETS SAFE

Safety and Health Are the Best Gifts for Your Furry Friends

By Barbara Kantor, CEO of [Vedante Corp.](#) with Cristina Willard, CMO

Every year, I look forward to the holiday season. While the season brings wonderful celebrations with family and friends, it's important to think about how the holidays affect our furry friends. You can take simple steps to keep your pets safe in the winter months.

Ten Tips for Pet Safety During the Holidays

1. Make sure your pets are visible at night

Fewer hours of daylight in winter can translate into visibility issues for your pet. Dogs and cats should wear highly reflective collars that offer 360° visibility. Reflective dog leashes, as well as reflective arm and leg bands for pet owners, add extra visibility for both dogs and the people walking them. Look for visibility that extends from 1000-1500 feet (500-700 CPL), particularly for cats that stay out at night. Highly reflective materials include 3M Scotchlite and Reflexite, products that meet ANSI 107 (U.S.) and EN 471 (Europe) standards. Items with reflective paint will work, but have lower reflectivity (typically 200-600 feet). Be cautious when using blinking lights for outdoor pet safety – check to see if batteries are functioning and keep any blinking lights at the slowest setting (quickly flashing lights can trigger seizures in those with photosensitive epilepsy).

2. Keep pets away from dangerous food and drinks

I once brought a decadent chocolate rum cake to a party. While guests and I were doing the dinner dishes, the family dog found and devoured the entire cake. Although we were surprised by this, the dog had to be rushed to emergency care for ingesting not only alcohol, but also chocolate. Pay attention to the food and drink that your pet can reach, including leftovers and bones from your holiday meal, which can be deadly to an animal.

3. Make sure your animals are wearing collars and ID tags

Not only should your pets be wearing highly reflective collars to be seen at night, but the collar should have an ID tag attached with contact information. Pets may become disoriented and lost outside of the home – especially because of New Year's Eve fireworks and other loud celebrations – and this can lead to extended exposure to cold weather. An ID tag will ensure that anyone who finds your lost pet can also find you. It's a good idea to leave pets inside during loud celebrations, giving them a quiet, protective space to escape the noise.

4. Keep candles and flames out of reach

Pets don't have an awareness about the dangers of an open flame. Keep your menorah and advents candles away from wagging tails and whiskers. I like to keep candles on shelves that are high up or out of the way, and make sure I'm always in the room when they are burning. Another option is to cover open flames with a hurricane glass lamp.

5. Be mindful of holiday decorations

There are some decorations that we might not consider when thinking about pet safety. Something as simple as an electrical cord, tinsel, or a decorative ribbon may pose a threat if your pet thinks it is something to chew. Use cord protectors and give your animals safe alternatives like chew toys. Learn which plants are poisonous to your pets, including ivy, mistletoe, and poinsettia – which can all cause intestinal upset.

6. Keep time out in the cold to a minimum

Just because your pets have fur, doesn't mean they don't get cold. Animals should be kept out of extreme temperatures, whether the heat of summer or the chill of winter. Walks in snow can lead to frostbitten paws, so keep time outdoors to a minimum when temperatures drop. You may even want to keep cats indoors in the winter. Never leave your pet in a car for an extended period in extremely high or low temperatures.

7. Keep chemicals and medicines away from animals

House guests may unknowingly introduce unsafe conditions if their medicines and toiletries become more accessible to pets. Outdoor chemical exposure also increases in winter – whether chemicals or salt used to clear icy streets or antifreeze that has leaked from your car. Keep an eye on your pet, and be sure to wipe away visible chemicals and salt from fur and paws after a walk. If you suspect that your pet has ingested poison, contact the [ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center](#) – 888-426-4435.

8. Arrange for qualified pet sitting if leaving town for the holidays

Whenever I leave town for a vacation or work trip, I make sure I have a pet sitter in place. Even though some animals can do quite well for a few days, it's important that there is someone who can check in on your furry friend while you are away. When I have a pet sitter, I like to call once a day for updates. If you can't find a neighbor or friend who can step in, look into kennels or bring your animal to a pet-friendly hotel with you.

9. Make sure young children are supervised when with an animal

Young children may not understand the consequences of their actions when playing with a pet. If your animal is exposed to children, make sure both are safe by paying close attention during interactions. You may want to keep your dog or cat in a separate, safe room where they can get away from rough play with children.

10. If giving a pet, consider giving pet care tips and gifts

Giving a pet can be a sweet holiday gift. Before you give a pet as a family gift, take the overall home environment into account: Will the animal be well cared for? Is there enough time to dedicate to a new pet? Are the children old enough to understand the responsibility of pet care? If the answer is yes, giving an animal can lead to years of joy. You may even want to give a book on pet care and a super-reflective collar with the animal so that health and safety will be paramount in the life of a new pet.

About the Authors

Barbara Kantor, CEO of [Vedante](#)[®], was inspired to create reflective gear in 2006 during an evening walk when she witnessed a pedestrian being struck by a car. The pedestrian, in a crosswalk, was unaware that the driver couldn't see her. Barbara began to realize that she and others weren't safe walking or biking in the evening. She developed POP BANDS[®] to keep people safe at night, and patent-pending super-reflective cat collars and dog collars and leashes to keep pets safe. Vedante[®] pet products can be purchased at [Amazon.com](#), [Alphapetcollars.com](#), McGuckin Hardware, [Mouthfuls](#), [Muttropolis](#), [Puuttypower.com](#), and [vedante.com](#).

Barbara delved into research on safety and visibility, drawing on her 25-year background as a successful fashion designer and her graduate degree in textiles. The result was the creation of a completely different style of reflective products for people and pets that promote both safety and fashion. Vedante[®] products are reflective up to 1500 feet and can provide 360° visibility at night.

Cristina Willard is the Chief Marketing Officer of [Vedante](#)[®] focusing on the company's philanthropic outreach program. She publishes articles about health, safety, and sustainability.

About Vedante Corp.

Barbara named the company [Vedante](#)[®] to represent her long-term mission and vision. The name is based on the Italian word "vedere," which means "to see," and the term vedantic, which means "living in a higher

way." Ultimately, Vedante's reflective products can significantly reduce deaths and injuries from vehicle-pedestrian accidents.

[Vedante®](#) is a company committed to saving lives and reducing injuries from pedestrian-vehicle and bicycle-vehicle accidents by 80% in markets in which it operates. The mission is to increase visibility, and therefore nighttime safety through education, awareness campaigns, and the creation of great "fashion that reflects well on you™." Although the company is new, it has consistently ranked among the top 10 best sellers on Amazon in its respective categories for highly reflective POP BANDS® and pet accessories. For more information, visit www.vedante.com (Vedante Corp., PO Box 19391, Boulder, Colorado, 80308.) 303-938-4040

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