



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB®

Press Release

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DON'T PUT A PUPPY UNDER YOUR TREE! AKC OFFERS TIPS FOR SAFE HOLIDAY SEASON WITH YOUR DOG

New York, NY – Nothing tops a holiday wish list more than an adorable puppy – but with the hustle and bustle of the season, the family pet can get lost in the shuffle. The American Kennel Club (AKC®) reminds those considering adding a dog to their home this holiday season that puppies are not stocking stuffers and also offers safety tips for current dog owners.

“So many people want a cute, cuddly puppy for the holidays, but there are many hazards associated with this season for dogs,” said AKC Spokesperson Lisa Peterson. “Many responsible breeders won’t plan litters with a Christmas due date. With all of the time and attention he needs, on top of holiday safety risks in the home, it’s much safer and wiser to bring a puppy into your life after the holidays have ended.”

During their critical first weeks at home, puppies require a great deal of time, love, and attention. The disrupted schedules and stress that the holidays can bring, along with the many holiday hazards that can harm even adult dogs, are even more dangerous for a new puppy in an unfamiliar setting.

A dog is also a commitment, and you should never surprise a loved-one with a puppy they aren’t ready to keep for a lifetime. New dog owners need to consider what breed is right for their lifestyle before getting a dog because each one has a unique energy, size, coat type, and temperament.

Consider wrapping dog supplies such as a leash or bowl to symbolize the gift of a puppy to come once you’ve done your research and think things through.

With the holidays rapidly approaching, the AKC offers the following tips for dog owners to keep their four-legged family members happy and safe this season:

- Holiday Dangers Facing Dogs & Puppies -

- When decorating for the holidays, avoid using food such as popcorn or cranberry strands. If eaten, they can cause blockages, which can require surgery to

remove. Puppies are notorious chewers when young and will look to get anything they can.

- Place ornaments, tinsel, glass bulbs, and things that sparkle and catch your dog's eye higher up on your tree where he can't reach them. Ingesting ornaments can cause major problems for your dog or puppy.
- Poinsettias, holly, and mistletoe should be kept out of your dog's reach, as they can be poisonous to pets.
- Consider having an artificial Christmas tree, but if you do have a natural one, make sure your dog doesn't swallow the pine needles or drink the tree water which can cause stomach irritation, or contain poisonous plant food. Try putting a gate around the tree to keep the puppy away.
- Puppies like to chew and explore, and exposed wires from holiday lights pose a threat to your inquisitive little friend– if he chews on them, he could be electrocuted. Tape indoor wires to the wall and outdoor wires to the side of the house where your dog can't reach them.
- Be wary of lit candles, as energetic puppies can knock them over causing them to receive serious burns or even start a house fire. They may also be inclined to investigate a fireplace too closely.
- Common holiday foods such as chocolate, butter, turkey skin, fat, and candy can make your dog very ill. Don't let your puppy's cute face convince you that he should be given table food. Take care to keep these foods out of reach.

Additional holiday pet safety tips can be found at https://www.akc.org/press_center/facts_stats.cfm?page=13.

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The American Kennel Club, founded in 1884, is a not-for-profit organization which maintains the largest registry of purebred dogs in the world and oversees the sport of purebred dogs in the United States. The AKC is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Along with its more than 5,000 licensed and member clubs and its affiliated organizations, the AKC advocates for the purebred dog as a family companion, advances canine health and well-being, works to protect the rights of all dog owners and promotes responsible dog ownership. More than 22,000 competitions for AKC-registered purebred dogs are held under AKC rules and regulations each year including conformation, agility, obedience, rally, tracking, herding, lure coursing, coonhound events, hunt tests, field and earthdog tests. Affiliate AKC organizations include the AKC Humane Fund, AKC Canine Health Foundation, AKC Companion Animal Recovery and the AKC Museum of the Dog. For more information, visit www.akc.org.

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