



# Pet Proofing Your Home For The Holidays



The bright colors and scents of the holiday season are delightful additions to your pet's everyday environment. However, many of the colorful decorations and delights can pose significant health risks to pets. The following suggestions will allow you and your pet to enjoy this and many more holidays to come.

## **Christmas Tree**

Pine needles can get lodged in an animal's esophagus, making it painful for your pet to swallow. Drinking the water from beneath the tree can cause diarrhea, mouth sores, vomiting and loss of appetite. Cover your tree stand tightly with skirting and distract your pet from tree temptations such as holiday toys and treats.

## **Holiday Plants**

While Mistletoe may be a symbol of love, to animals it may be deadly. Eating the leaves and berries of Mistletoe can cause a drop in an animal's blood pressure and decrease their heartbeat. While Poinsettias are a low toxicity plant it is best to keep them away from pets. Holy berries and leaves are considered a moderately toxic plant and may cause painful intestinal problems.

## **Tinsel and Lights**

Pets are intrigued with flickering flames and shiny decorations. Keep your pets away from lighted candles. Remember to tape electrical lights to walls or the floor to ensure no chewing or tripping takes place. Tinsel is not a toy and can cause choking or even an upset stomach.

## **Angel Hair, Artificial Snow, Chocolate**

Angel hair can irritate the eyes, skin and the gastrointestinal tracts of animals. Artificial snow can cause problem if sprayed into the mouth or inhaled. Chocolate, of any type, should never be given to your pet. Theobromine, an active ingredient in chocolate, can have a highly toxic effect on pets.

## **Antifreeze**

Anti-freeze contains ethylene glycol, which causes rapid and permanent kidney damage to your pet, if it ingests even a very small amount. It takes only 6 milliliters of antifreeze to kill an average size cat. A cat can walk through an antifreeze puddle and ingest it while cleaning its paws. It takes only 60 milliliters of antifreeze to kill a 30-pound pup. A dog could ingest this much antifreeze with a few laps out of an open container or from a puddle on the garage floor.

Clallam County Emergency Management  
Courthouse Basement; (360) 417-2483