



Nationwide

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More lost pets on July 4 than any other day of the year

The issue of lost pets is heightened during the July 4 holiday. In fact, July 5 is one of the busiest days of the year at animal shelters due to runaway pets frightened by Independence Day fireworks.

"You'd be hard-pressed to find a pet that enjoys the Fourth of July as much their owners, but the holiday doesn't have to be so bad for them," said [Dr. Jules Benson](#), Nationwide's Chief Veterinary Officer. "Taking a few basic precautions can prevent stress and other hazards to our pets."

July is Lost Pet Prevention Month. Nationwide recommends taking the following steps to protect your furry family members:

- **Microchip your pet.** While every pet – even indoor cats – should have a collar with an up-to-date ID tag, collars can be easily removed or slipped. That's why a microchip is your best bet for being reunited with a lost pet. Microchips - the size of a grain of rice - are a form of permanent ID injected just under the skin. It's important that owners keep microchip information current.
- **Use pet ID tags.** Make sure your pet has an ID tag and that it's being used to its best advantage. Don't waste tag space with the pet's name, your name, or your address. Instead, put "Reward!" on the tag and as many phone numbers as you can fit, including area code. It's best to meet anyone who has found your pet on safe, neutral ground.
- **Talk to your veterinarian about anti-anxiety medications.** In recent years, safe and effective medications to treat noise phobia in pets have become widely available. Pick these up before the Fourth of July and follow your veterinarian's guidance on administering them. Once a pet's noise phobia has been activated, it can be difficult to manage the panic and fear they feel.
- **Keep pets secure at home while out.** It's not the best idea to take your pet out on the Fourth, but if you do, always use a leash. Once the fireworks begin, bring your pets inside, pull drapes to keep bright lights out, and turn on "white noise" to help dampen the sound. While classical music has been clinically shown to be calming, you can also find playlists or CDs arranged specially to help keep pets more relaxed.
- **If your pet escapes, begin looking for them right away.** Contact all area shelters as soon as they're open, and post information in community forums and groups online immediately. Remember that a frightened pet can travel pretty far or be picked up by someone out of the area, so cover nearby areas as well. Cats tend to hide when lost or frightened, so post flyers in your neighborhood and ask neighbors to check sheds, garages, and other possible hiding places.
- **Keep looking.** Pets can be found weeks and months after they're lost and are usually reunited because of a microchip.
- **Remember - fireworks aren't the only hazard.** While parties may not be as common this year because of social distancing, even small family gatherings can be troublesome. Make sure visitors keep medications locked up and are asked to help keep doors and gates closed. In addition, summer celebrations mean food and other hazards that should be avoided.

Share these and other helpful tips with pet parents at petinsurance.com/referral.

<https://news.nationwide.com/en-us/july-4-pet-safety-tips/>