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If you don't like being out in the heat on triple-digit days, remember that your pets don't either.

The City of Burleson ordinance says a person commits an offense if any animal is left in a standing or parked vehicle in a way that endangers the animal's health, safety, or welfare. The animal control officer, or police officer, has the authority to use force to remove an animal from a vehicle, then the animal will be impounded.

"If you see an animal locked in a hot car, looking like it is in distress, call animal services or the police immediately. They can determine if an animal's health or safety is being threatened and take appropriate measures to render aid," Michelle Spradlin, supervisor of Burleson Animal Services, said.

Don't think that leaving the dog inside the vehicle with the air conditioning on is an alternative. It is against the Texas Transportation Code to leave a vehicle unattended without stopping the engine, locking the ignition, removing the key from the ignition, setting the parking brake effectively, and turning the front wheels to the curb or side of the highway if the vehicle is standing or stopped on a grade.

The Burleson Animal Shelter urges pet owners to follow these guidelines from the Humane Society of the United States.

- Never leave your pets in a parked car. On a warm day, temperatures inside a vehicle can rise rapidly to dangerous levels. On an 85 degree day the temperature inside a car with the windows opened slightly can reach 102 degrees within 10 minutes. After 30 minutes, the temperature will reach 120 degrees.
- Shade and water are a must. Anytime your pet is outside, make sure he or she has protection from heat and sun (a doghouse does not provide relief from heat) and plenty of fresh, cool water. Heat stroke can be fatal for pets as well as people.
- Limit exercise on hot days. Take care when exercising your pet. Adjust intensity and duration of exercise in accordance with the temperature. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours, and be especially careful with pets with white-colored ears who are more susceptible to skin cancer, and short-nosed pets. Asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws.

- Recognize the signs of heatstroke. In case of an emergency, it's important to be able to identify the symptoms of heat stress caused by exposure to extreme temperatures. When in doubt, contact your veterinarian immediately. Some signs of heatstroke are: heavy panting, glazed eyes, a rapid heartbeat, restlessness, excessive thirst, lethargy, fever, dizziness, lack of coordination, profuse salivation, vomiting, a deep red or purple tongue, and unconsciousness. If the animal shows symptoms of heatstroke, take steps immediately to gradually lower the pet's body temperature and contact your veterinarian as soon as possible. Follow these tips, and it could save your pet's life:
 - Move the animal into the shade or an air-conditioned area.
 - Apply ice packs or cold towels to her head, neck and chest or run cool (not cold) water over her.
 - Let her drink small amounts of cool water or lick ice cubes.
 - Take her directly to a veterinarian.

To contact the Burleson Animal Shelter, 1695 John Jones Dr. (FM 731 South), call 817-447-5426, e-mail animalshelter@burlesontx.com, or log on to the City's web site through this shortcut, <http://tinyurl.com/kp4r6v>.

For more information about this release, call the public information officer at 817-447-5400, ext. 286.