

Traveling with Your Pet

Safety Tips for Families Taking Their Pets on the Road

Meriden CT – Vacation season is underway and many dogs and cats will be joining their owners for a summer getaway. Although car trips can be stressful for many household pets, experts agree that they do not have to be if drivers take some simple precautions.

“There are more than 135 million household dogs and cats in the nation,” said Ray Palermo, director of public relations for Response Insurance, a national car insurer. “They’re members of the family and when we take a vacation or just get away for the weekend, they are often along for the ride.” He cautioned that too many drivers do not take the time to prepare pets for long trips. Palermo suggested several ways to help ensure a safe driving experience.

- If the pet is not used to car trips, try a few test runs to help acclimate them for the ride. Spending time in the car while parked and short drives to nearby destinations are an easy start.
- Cats should be kept in a carrier and dogs should be held in a restraining harness. This will help stabilize your pet if there is a sudden movement or crash.
- Feed your pet a little less than you would normally. Since too much water can upset their stomachs on the road, limit water by providing ice to chew on. Don’t forget to pack some toys and any other favorite items or bedding.
- When traveling to places your pet is not familiar with it is particularly important to have a collar with an ID tag that includes both your permanent and vacation addresses and phone numbers. Bring a photo of your pet in the event you need to put up “Lost Pet” posters. Many veterinarians and animal welfare organizations also offer micro-chip identification implants.
- Dogs like to stick their heads out of the car window, but this is very unsafe. Small stones and debris become dangerous projectiles at highway speeds.
- Never leave your pet in a car in warm or hot weather. Even with windows open, or parked in the shade, interior temperatures can quickly rise to lethal levels.
- Pack a first aid kit with tweezers and alcohol for tick removal, cloth bandages and topical antiseptic.

More information on this and other safety topics is available at www.response.com/safety <<http://www.response.com/safety>>