

# MassPAWS Newsletter



The Massachusetts Progressive Animal Watchdog Society has an eye on animals in Massachusetts, and the animals are the beneficiaries.

We're on the Web!  
MassPAWS.PetFinder.org  
www.masspaws.org

## The Hidden Costs of Letting Cats Outside . . . By Beverly Alba, President

We think of cats getting hit by a car, being lunch for a predator, being victims of cruelty, and starving to death. These are not pretty sights or easy to think about, and they are some of our worst nightmares.

But, realistically, there are even more things going on when cats are on the street; they are not often seen or understood except by those of us who proactively look, but nonetheless are significant reasons for keeping pet cats indoors where they belong.

**From the cats view:** The nature of cats is that there is nothing more important to them than TERRITORY. When new cats enter a colony looking for food and companionship, other cats roam farther out to avoid conflict and to seek their own territory. What results is skirmishes, fights and wounds, less food for all, competition for shelter, and unknown dangers in new territory. Outdoor feral cat colonies must be manageable, with sufficient food and shelter for all, in order to be successful for the cats. New cats coming in upset the stability of the colony and some will suffer. For this reason, managed cat colonies must be continually monitored for

not only kittens but also for new stray cats moving in, so that they can be returned to an owner or rehomed.

From the human view: It is very emotionally traumatic for adults to see cats dead, injured or threatened

on the street, and much more so for children. It is traumatic even for our volunteers, who would not wish for anyone to see what we have seen in terms of cats suffering, and who carry on despite crying over those invisible, suffering and lost street cats.

**Some suggestions:** Please help us spread the message of keeping pet cats indoors. We have printed resources for those who have had an indoor cat get out unintentionally. They must start looking for the cat immediately, not after a few days when the cat doesn't "come home".

Cats are not Lassie; they get scared and hide and may have to be trapped. Microchips for cats are underutilized but a good tool and can easily be placed during a vet visit for



vaccinations or at the time of spay/neuter. Be proactive in your neighborhood and try to find out whether a "stray" cat really does have an owner or is abandoned, and seek help. We are here to help. But if we take cats off the street and a greater number are then abandoned or lost to the street, the cats will lose. 82% of the American public responded to polling that they want stray and homeless animals cared for in a no-kill, humane manner.

We will do our part, but it takes all of us in all of our communities to speak up for all of the cats.



An Inside Cat is a Safe Cat – Safe for You and Safe for your Cat

## If your Dog has Swallowed Poison

Dogs will put almost anything in their mouths, and may view something as simple as a weekly pill holder as a plastic chew toy. Unfortunately, this means they are prone to swallowing all manner of poisonous materials -- most cause unpleasant side effects, but some can be fatal without treatment.

When in doubt, pet proof your home and avoid self-administering over-the-counter medications without first consulting your veterinarian. And if you think your pet may have ingested something poisonous, call your veterinarian or a pet poison helpline immediately!

- ◆ **What To Watch For:** Clinical signs will vary depending on the type of poison swallowed. They can be as mild as generalized lethargy, malaise, and weakness to gastrointestinal signs like vomiting, diarrhea, drooling, and nausea. More severe signs can include agitation, excessive sedation, tremors, twitching, seizures, or even coma. Because symptoms vary, always call your veterinarian or the Pet Poison Helpline at 1-855-213-6680 for help.

**Primary Cause:** Most poisons are ingested by accident, when an inquisitive dog finds unsecured substances lying around. Sometimes, owners may self-medicate their pet, only to find out days later, when their pet is symptomatic, that the medication is poisonous to pets due to their altered ability to metabolize certain drugs.

### Immediate Care

- ◆ If your pet has accidentally ingested something poisonous, immediately remove him or her from the source of poison. However, you first must determine if it is safe to do so. Some substances require special safety equipment for handling (i.e., rubber gloves, masks, etc.).
- ◆ If possible, identify the poison and have the contents available for your veterinarian to evaluate. Having the labels and/or containers of the material or medication is extremely helpful, too.
- ◆ If the dog has vomited, gather a sample of it in a plastic bag and save it for your veterinarian. It may be used for testing and analysis. However, never induce vomiting without consulting with your veterinarian or the Pet Poison Helpline at 1-855-213-6680 first, especially if it is unconscious. Certain types of poisons can be made worse when vomiting is induced.

Contact the Pet Poison Helpline on the way to the veterinarian or emergency clinic. It may help you relay important information to the doctors.

**Instructions for poisoning with household products:** Some common types of household products include acids, alkalis, or petroleum-based hydrocarbons as:

- |                            |                     |                    |                               |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| ◆ Drain cleaner            | ◆ Oven cleaner      | ◆ Toilet cleaner   | ◆ Dishwasher granules/tablets |
| ◆ Laundry soaps/detergents | ◆ Kerosene          | ◆ Gasoline         | ◆ Paint thinner               |
| ◆ Paint stripper/remover   | ◆ Lye               | ◆ Furniture polish | ◆ Floor polish                |
| ◆ Shoe polish              | ◆ Wood preservative | ◆ Caustic soda     | ◆ Chlorine bleach             |

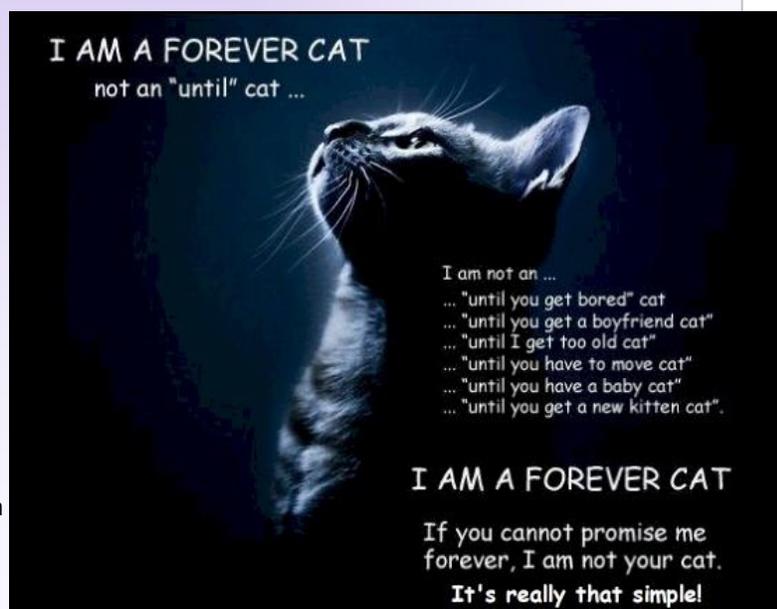
### If your pet is exposed to any of these products:

- \* Stay calm!
- \* Contact a veterinarian immediately and tell them you are on your way; this will allow them to prepare for your arrival.
- \* Move your pet to a safe area (away from the poison), if possible.
- \* Check to see if your dog is breathing. If not, perform CPR on the animal.
- \* If your pet begins to tremor or convulse, move her to a safe area where she won't injure herself (away from stairs or furniture).

Always take the dog to the vet as soon as possible, as your vet may need to pump your dog's stomach (called "gastric lavage") or administer activated charcoal to bind up any toxins in the stomach.

### Instructions for poisoning with acids, alkalis, and petroleum products:

- ◆ If your pet swallowed anything caustic (i.e., acids or alkalis), do not administer home remedies. Neutralizing the chemical ingestion can, in and of itself, cause a chemical reaction, which can further aggravate the dog's injuries.
- ◆ Instead, flush your pet's mouth out with tepid water for 15 to 20 minutes by using a shower head or kitchen sink spray hose. Try not to point the hose to the back of the mouth, though. The water may go into the lungs, which can complicate the situation. It is better to clean the mouth from different angles.
- ◆ Never induce vomiting without consulting a veterinarian or the Pet Poison Helpline first, as sometimes you can make your pet worse by inducing vomiting.



- ◆ Burns in the mouth often take hours to show up. Just because you don't see any injury, doesn't mean it's not occurring! Also, burns may only show up in the esophagus or stomach, where you can't visualize them.
- ◆ If your pet is unconscious, seek immediately veterinary care!
- ◆ If your pet swallowed a petroleum product, do not induce vomiting. This can make your pet worse, and these substances are easy to aspirate into the lungs, making your pet develop a potentially severe aspiration pneumonia.

**Other important points to consider:** If your veterinarian recommends inducing vomiting, use fresh, non-expired, bubbly hydrogen peroxide as directed by your veterinarian. It is no longer recommended to use syrup of ipecac, salt, or any home remedies, as this can make your pet worse.

Do not administer activated charcoal products that you have at home – these aren't as effective as what your veterinarian can give. If your veterinarian or emergency clinic cannot be reached, call an animal poison helpline.

**Prevention:** Treat your dog as you would a young, inquisitive child

- ◆ Crate train your dog -- this is the best way to prevent accidental toxicities!
- ◆ Pet proof your house adequately, making sure all dangerous substances (i.e., medication, chemicals, household products) are stored in secured cabinets or closets, out of reach of inquisitive paws and noses.
- ◆ Do not allow your dog to play in areas where chemicals are stored.
- ◆ Keep the garage floor or parking space free of oil, antifreeze, and petroleum products, even minor spills. Antifreeze is especially toxic and enticing to dogs because of its sweet taste, and should be stored away securely.
- ◆ Store your medication in a separate area from your pets' medications. This will help prevent you from giving your own medications to your pet by accident.
- ◆ Carefully read the label of the prescription vial to make sure you're administering the correct drug to your pet.
- ◆ If you keep pills in a weekly pill holder, make sure to put this in an elevated cabinet, instead of on the kitchen counter. Dogs view these as plastic chew toys (they even rattle inside with all those pills!), and can easily chew through this.

Do not store your pills in a plastic storage bag (i.e., Ziploc) -- these can easily be chewed through, exposing your dog to many medications all at once.



Bryson



Tinka



Minya



Tater Chi

*These dogs were rescued by MassPAWS and are all living in their new Forever Homes! Couldn't have been done it without your help!*

MassPAWS is proud to have received grant monies from: The Petco Foundation, PetSmart Charities and from the Massachusetts Animal Coalition License Plate Program.



Your tax deductible donations DO make a difference!

**DONATE TODAY**

- \$25 Feeds orphaned kittens until weaned
- \$35 Provides grooming and a collar for a neglected dog
- \$50 Provides pet supplies to a new foster family
- \$100 Provides extended veterinary care for an abused dog



Help Homeless Pets in your Neighborhood; please participate in the PETCO Foundation and PetSmart Charities fundraising programs; they work!

## Safeguard Your Pet from BBQ Hazards

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*By Michael M. Pavletic DVM, DACVS, Director of Surgery, Angell*

### **What to look out for:**

- ◆ Corn cobs
- ◆ Peach pits
- ◆ Chicken, beef and pork bones
- ◆ Foil, plastic wrap and cotton string used to bind roasts
- ◆ Grease and meat drippings spilled onto loose wood/gravel
- ◆ Wooden or bamboo skewers for shish kabob or teriyaki dishes

As pet owners fire up the outdoor grill for the family barbeque, many are unaware of the underlying dangers to their pets. Simple, discarded food items can cause serious gastrointestinal problems, and in some cases, death. Objects attached to flavorful food products also become tempting morsels for consumption.

Corn cobs and peach pits top the list of intestinal foreign bodies during the summer. Corn cobs flavored with butter or meat juices are especially tempting and dangerous to the family dog. In the stomach, cylindrical cob segments are not digested and eventually pass into the small intestine. The intestine cannot dilate or stretch sufficiently to facilitate their passage, resulting in a small bowel obstruction. Both dogs and cats are at risk for swallowing the casually discarded peach pit, resulting in the same life-threatening condition. Chicken, beef, and pork bones are readily swallowed by wandering pets. Although less common, chunks of bone can become lodged in the esophagus or intestinal tract. Esophageal obstruction with subsequent ulceration can result in a life-threatening infection within the thoracic cavity.

Foil, plastic wrap, and the cotton string used to bind a roast can become hazardous objects of consumption. Grease and meat drippings that spill onto the ground may flavor wood or gravel. Dogs may lick and swallow these foreign objects, occasionally in large numbers. In one case I removed a small bucket of gravel from the stomach of a German shepherd.

Obstruction of the esophagus, stomach, or small intestine is often followed by variable amounts of vomiting or gagging, depending on the location of the obstruction. Continuous vomiting can lead to dehydration, depletion of the patient's electrolytes, as well as other serious metabolic derangements. With perforation of the gastrointestinal tract, fatal infections can occur without prompt diagnosis, medical support, and surgical intervention. Veterinary costs increase with the severity of the patient's condition.

Perhaps the most insidious foreign bodies related to food consumption are the wooden or bamboo skewers used for shish kabobs or teriyaki dishes. Dogs in particular tend to chew and swallow these pointed skewers. Unfortunately, they often punch a hole through the wall of the esophagus, stomach or small intestine where they will migrate throughout the body of the unfortunate pet. I have removed whole and partial skewers from a variety of locations in the thorax and abdomen of dogs. Fortunately, many of the pets survived after these miniature migrating "arrows" were located and removed.

Prevention is simple: dispose of all these items in a secure garbage can. Keep the garbage bag in the can until disposal. If food products contact the ground, a few blasts from a garden hose can disperse the flavored residue. In so doing, your pet can enjoy the festivities and avoid a trip to the veterinarian.



The Massachusetts Progressive Animal Watchdog Society, Inc.

## Spay / Neuter Information

Thousands of kittens, cats and dogs are stray, abandoned, homeless and unclaimed every year in Massachusetts; sadly, many are destroyed. Please have your pet spayed or neutered, show your love and keep them safe!

- Find upcoming low cost **CATMOBILE** Spay/Neuter clinics at [MRFS.org](http://MRFS.org) or call (978) 465-1940 or email [Catmobile@MRFS.org](mailto:Catmobile@MRFS.org)
- The **S.T.O.P. Clinic**; this mobile unit drives to many cities performing low cost Spay/Neuter (cats only, fee includes initial vaccinations) [www.TheStopClinic.com](http://www.TheStopClinic.com)  
Call the S.T.O.P. clinic at (617) 571-7151
- Low cost Spay/Neuter certificates at **Friends of Animals** [www.FriendsOfAnimals.org](http://www.FriendsOfAnimals.org) or call (800) 321-7387
- **Animal Rescue League SPAY Waggin'** (877) 590-7729, a mobile unit that provides low cost spay and neuter for cats and dogs under 60 pounds, fee includes initial vaccines. [www.arlboston.org](http://www.arlboston.org)
- **Alliance For Animals** offers low cost Spay/Neuter services 232 Silver St., South Boston, (617) 268- 7800 [www.afaboston.org](http://www.afaboston.org)  
**NOTE: will spay/neuter Pit Bulls for FREE.**
- **MSPCA SNAP** (617) 541-5005 & **Shalit-Glazer** (617) 541-5007 programs, assisting low-income households with Spay/Neuter needs; go to: [www.mspca.org](http://www.mspca.org) and search SNAP or Shalit-Glazer
- **Merwin Animal Clinic**  
542 Cambridge St. Allston  
(617) 782-5420  
Walk-in clinic open 12-3 Mon-Sat (cash only). Low cost spay and neuter by appointment.

"Until one has loved an animal, part of their soul remains un-awakened."

**Willow** This little bundle of wiggles was found wondering the streets. The kennel staff in the pound were quickly drawn to her happy nature. She weighs in at 39 pounds and is around 1-2 years old. She needs a special owner. She is frightened of new people. She does warm up nicely once she gets to know them but she is not good with strangers. She has been in intensive training for 2 months accessing her needs. She knows all her commands and is extremely bright.

Willow's options for adoption are limited. She needs an experienced handler and a structured environment- calm and quiet. No wild parties for this girl. She is happy simply spending time with her people and doggie friends. And she thrives on affection. She needs an adult loving home that will be patient and keep up her training. Her ideal home would have another dog and fenced-in yard where they could play together. If you are an experienced dog handler that enjoys a quiet environment and could fulfill a need to help a dog with limited options please consider Willow. She loves walks, cuddles, car rides and playing with other dogs. Willow spends her time between the kennel and her foster Mom in Gloucester. She has wonderful eye contact and seems to have lots to say when she looks at you.

Willow is trying to find her place and wants nothing more than a human companion who will spend time with her showing her a safe, quiet new life in this world. She is waiting patiently for that special someone. For that she will give you undivided love, affection and tons of smiles.



# MassPAWS

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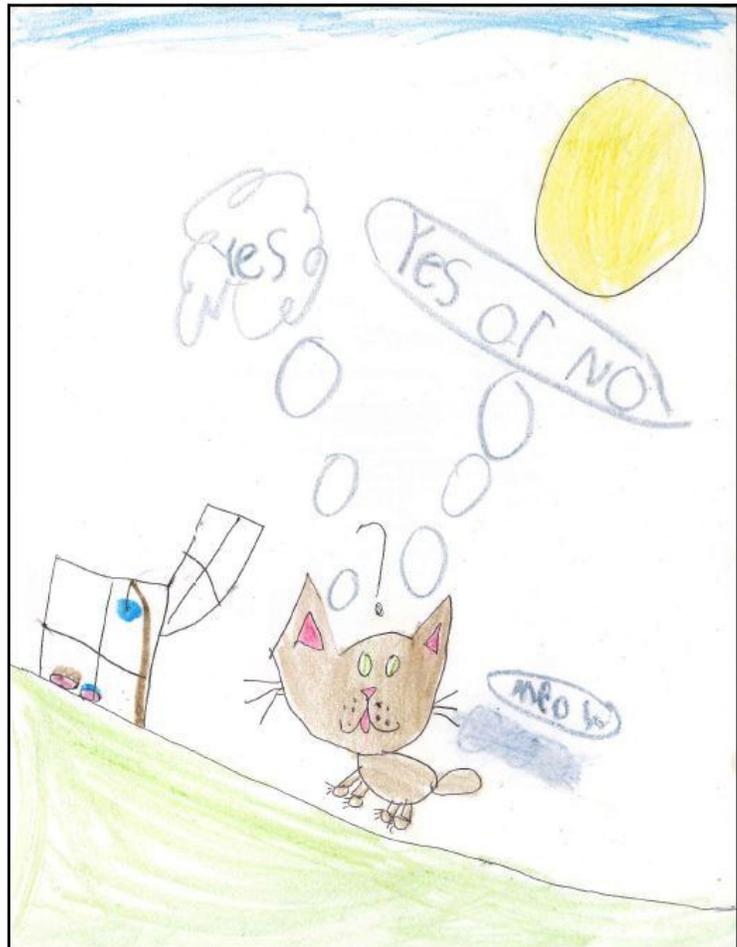
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MassPAWS

the Massachusetts Progressive Animal Watchdog Society has an eye on animals in Massachusetts, and the animals are the beneficiaries.

This kitty picture, (presented to Carol, our Field Manager from one of the neighborhood children) is trying to decide if she should enter this strange contraption. But, the treats prove to be too tempting so little Miss Kitty does surrender and enters the trap; she gets a paid visit (thanks to your generous donations) to the vet for an examination and spaying!



Your compassion and generosity towards the animals is so much appreciated; without your help we would not have been able to save as many dogs & cats & many would have suffered and many would have been euthanized.

You Guys ROCK! While this is great news, it also means that we hope you will continue to help us rescue more animals.

Please donate to MassPAWS at 617.846.5586 or to P.O. Box 520136, Winthrop 02152 or with [www.PayPal.com](http://www.PayPal.com) to [MassPAWS@aol.com](mailto:MassPAWS@aol.com)

--- Thank You!



[www.alleycat.org/](http://www.alleycat.org/)

Alley Cat Allies and we are aligned with their contemporary philosophies.



We love to honk at other Spay/Neuter plates !



One of MassPAW's colonies in East Boston where these cats have been trapped; spayed / neutered; & continue to be cared for.

