

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2013

**Have a Hauntless Halloween**  
*spcaLA to offer safe haven for pets*

**Los Angeles, CA** – Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA) does not want to add to the stigma of black cats or discourage anyone from adopting this Halloween. Instead, spcaLA offers to hold newly adopted pets for an extra day, if they were scheduled to go home on Halloween night.

“Traditionally, shelters suspend black cats adoptions around Halloween, to protect them from being adopted for use as a costume party accessory, or by Halloween pranksters or those who wish to harm them in some ritualistic manner,” said spcaLA President, Madeline Bernstein. “All pets – not just black cats – are in danger at the end of October, perhaps more frequently from a party than a practitioner of ‘black’ magic.”

A constantly-ringing doorbell, streets thick with trick-or-treaters in terrifying masks, chocolate and other treats strewn about, and the often-opened door during spooky parties all pose significant risk to your pets. Your pet could become stressed, run away and get lost, lash out in an aggressive manner, or he could ingest something that lands you both in the emergency veterinary waiting room. Pets – especially black cats – who are running the streets on Halloween night are in special danger of being picked up by those who wish to do them harm.

For a recently adopted pet, these dangers are magnified because he is still adjusting to his new home. spcaLA is offering a safe haven for all newly adopted spcaLA pets who were scheduled to go home on Halloween night. Adopters can safely celebrate and opt to pick their pets up on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

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spcaLA thoroughly screens adopters, and reserves the right to delay or deny adoptions if there is a question about the pet's safety or care.

spcaLA recommends all pet owners set up a safe haven in their homes for their pets on Halloween, and take the following safety measures.

- Keep pets indoors.
- Make sure your pet is wearing a collar with an ID tag at all times, even inside.  
*90% of lost pets are found by neighbors – a collar with ID can lead to a quicker reunion if your pet escapes.*
- Confine your pet to a safe, quiet area on Halloween night and during parties.  
*Give him his favorite bed, toys, soothing music, and if possible, a human companion.*
- Do not take the family pet trick-or-treating. Go to a pet-friendly event instead – like spcaLA's 6<sup>th</sup> Annual **Howl-o-ween Spooktacular** on October 26<sup>th</sup>!
- Never dress your pet in a costume that was not made for pets.
- Keep your pets away from lit candles.
- Remember, candy is not for pets! *Keep pets away from toxic treats and their wrappers.*
- Program the number for poison control, and your pet's veterinarian, in your phone.
- Teach your dog to "come when called" – *a fail-safe should he get loose when trick-or-treaters come calling.* spcaLA offers a *Come When Called* class.

spcaLA reminds Halloween tricksters that a costume does not excuse animal cruelty. Targeting a dog, cat, or other animal in a prank can lead to serious consequences for both the perpetrator and the animal, no matter how benign the actions may seem. If you see animal cruelty, report it by calling 1-800-540-SPCA.

*For more information please contact Ana Bustilloz at (323) 730-5300 x252, by cell (323) 707-1271, or by email [abustilloz@spcaLA.com](mailto:abustilloz@spcaLA.com).*

**Society for the Prevention Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (spcaLA) is an independent, nonprofit animal welfare organization serving Southern California since 1877. There is no national SPCA, parent organization, or umbrella group that provides financial support to spcaLA. Donations run programs and services including Cruelty Investigation, Disaster Animal Response Team, Humane Education, and a variety of shelter services.**