

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 24, 2013

## **KEEP IT MERRY**

### *spcaLA Offers Tips for a Safe Holiday Season & Happy New Year*

**Los Angeles, CA** – The holiday season is a joyous time filled with fun, family, and celebrations. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Los Angeles (**spcaLA**) reminds everyone to safeguard pets from hazards that may go unnoticed. Follow these tips to ensure your holidays are merry and bright:

- Holiday plants such as poinsettias, holly, mistletoe, and hibiscus are toxic to pets so keep them out of reach.
- Be on the lookout for tiny decorations and tinsel that look very appetizing to pets, but can be lethal if ingested.
- Use ribbon or yarn instead of hooks to hang ornaments instead of metal that can be harmful if chewed or swallowed.
- Deck the halls with tape and cord covers. Pets can suffer burns and electrocution from chewing through electrical cords. Place cords out of sight, cover with tape, or use plastic tubing available at hardware stores to cover the cords.
- Dogs and cats should wear a collar with I.D. tags at all times, in addition to being microchipped. Make sure information is current. This is important throughout the entire year, but especially during the holidays as there may be a greater risk of your pet escaping due to increased visitors.
- Bells may ring and children may sing, but your pets may need a quiet place to retreat. During holiday parties, secure your pets in a separate room with favorite toys, a cozy pet bed, and soft music. Pets that have their own room will feel safer, less stressed and won't be able to accidentally escape out the front door.
- Be careful of candles as curious pets can tip them over or may be burned by the flame.
- Never give your pets leftover bones from meals you are making. Cooked bones splinter and can be fatal to pets.
- Turkey and gravy makes a festive feast for humans but not for pets. Over time, fatty foods such as gravy and turkey skin can cause your pet to develop pancreatitis which can be deadly.
- Chocolate is a great treat, but is toxic to your pet. Instead get yummy treats just for them.
- Teach your pet to "come when called." This command is a fail-safe, should your dog get loose. spcaLA Animal Behavior & Training Department offers a Come When Called class.

Rather than purchase an animal as a surprise gift that the recipient may not be ready for, spcaLA encourages you to buy a gift certificate from either of spcaLA's Pet Adoption Centers or at [www.spcaLA.com](http://www.spcaLA.com) that can be redeemed at any time. That, along with a book about pet care will make a great gift and begin the journey of responsible pet ownership. If now is the right time to expand your family with a new pet, please adopt from spcaLA or your local shelter.

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

**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.**

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