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PAW'S CORNER

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By Sam Mazotta

Fireworks and pets do not mix

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I am so frustrated by the incredible amount of fireworks set off by neighbors on July Fourth. My two dogs, "Skip" and "Marbles," cower in the farthest corner of the house and are emotionally wrecked for days afterward. People need to be considerate of pets and not set off unregulated fireworks in neighborhoods. They should go and watch the professional fireworks displays instead; it'll be a better experience for everyone. —
Jill S. in Orlando, Florida

DEAR JILL: You're absolutely right, and thank you for telling them. There is no reason to set off loud fireworks in the driveway or backyard; it's a dangerous activity (14,700 injuries and 11 deaths occurred in 2024, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission). Loud fireworks stress out pets to the point that many need medical attention. Some dogs and cats react aggressively to the sudden loud noise, turning and snapping at anyone in reach.

You get the picture. Fireworks are not fun for pets, and they can injure themselves or others in a frenzy of fear.

Great, some of you are saying; how does that help my pet? I know that completely stopping neighborhood fireworks is difficult, perhaps impossible.

As a pet owner, you can take proactive steps to keep your pet comfortable. Talk to the veterinarian and create a strategy. For example, take your pet for a long walk or play session in the afternoon of the Fourth of July to tire them out. Before sunset, give your dog or cat anti-anxiety medication and set up a cozy nook — or even their carrier crate — with their favorite blankets, water and snacks. This can help them stay calmer during the hours after sunset as random fireworks go off.

Send your tips, comments or questions to ask@pawscorner.com.