



**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT**  
300 N. San Antonio Road • Santa Barbara, CA 93110  
(805) 681-5102 • FAX (805) 681-5191  
[www.countyofsb.org](http://www.countyofsb.org)

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **December 14, 2017**

**News Media Contact:**  
Santa Barbara County Joint Information Center  
805-696-1188 **Media Line Only**

### **HEALTH PRECAUTIONS FOR PET OWNERS**

*Protect your pets from smoke and poor air quality during fires*

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** -- Pet owners should limit their pet's exposure to the smoke and heed air quality warnings.

- Pets in an air quality warning area should avoid long walks. The pets (especially small ones) will experience labored breathing in these conditions and this can result in dangerous particles getting into their lungs.
- Outdoor dogs and cats should be brought indoors, at the very least, into the garage.
- Ash should be brushed off pets coats and paws and then the pet should be bathed to remove any dangerous particles.
- Animals with asthma or a pre-existing lung issue merit owners to be on high alert and veterinary consultation is advised.
- Smoke and ash exposure to pets can cause eye irritation, coughing, difficulty breathing and even lethargy. Pet owners should consult their veterinarian.
- Animals closest to the ground and those that are scent driven (constantly smelling with their nose on the floor) are the most at risk.
- Ensure your pet is wearing proper identification at all times.

If you are evacuating, do not leave your pets behind. Contact the Animal Services hotline at **805-681-4332** should you need assistance in housing your evacuated animals.

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