

Township of
Langley



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NEWS RELEASE

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HELP FURRY FRIENDS STAY SAFE FROM FIRE

There is no better feeling than being warm and cozy at home with your family during the chilly fall and winter months. But a bit of knowledge and a few precautions are required to ensure everyone stays safe – and that includes our four-legged friends.

“Pets are a huge part of our lives, and an integral part of many families,” said Township of Langley Fire and Life Safety Educator Krista Barton. “To keep them safe, we need to think ahead and eliminate any issues that would potentially cause them harm.”

Dog and cat owners should pet-proof their homes by walking around and looking for areas where pets might inadvertently start fires, such as stove knobs, loose wires, and other potential hazards. Pets are curious and may bump into things and knock them over, Barton added. “They can even inadvertently turn on equipment, so always keep pets away from stoves and countertops, and from sources of heat such as candles, lamps, and space heaters,” she said.

Pet owners should consider switching to battery-operated, flameless candles to avoid interactions with flames, and ensure pets are never left unattended around an open fire. Pets should also be kept away from outside chimney vents.

A “pet-free zone” of at least three feet (one meter) should be established around fireplaces. Since glass doors and screens can stay dangerously hot for several hours after the fire goes out, a metal or heat-tempered glass screen should always be used on a fireplace and kept in place.

Some pets like to chew on things, and owners should watch to make sure electrical cords are not among them. If it looks like your pet has tried to chew on an electrical cord, do not use the appliance until it is checked out by a professional.

The Township of Langley Fire Department recommends the following tips for pet owners, to help keep furry friends safe within the home:

- Practice home escape routes with pets. Keep collars, leashes, and pet carriers ready in case you have to evacuate quickly with your pet, or firefighters need to rescue them.
- When leaving pets home alone, keep them in areas or rooms near entrances where firefighters can easily find them.
- If you have young pets, especially puppies, keep them secure and confined away from potential fire-starting hazards when you are not at home.
- Ensure there are working smoke and CO alarms on every level of the home and test your smoke and CO alarms at least once a month.
- If the smoke or CO alarm sounds, get out and stay out. Call 911 from outside.
- Never go back inside for pets in a fire. Tell firefighters if your pet is trapped.

For more fire safety tips, visit tol.ca/firesafety or call the Township of Langley Fire Department at 604.532.7500.