



## Fido Files: Summer Traveling with your Pet

It is that time of year again. Families are venturing out on the road on vacation. Whether you choose to bring Fido or not, the following are a couple of vacationing hints and tips for pet owners.

### **Kenneling**

If you choose to book your pet into a kennel during the summertime, do so early! Although the selection of great kennels in the Calgary area is growing, so is our pet population making it sometimes difficult to get in. When choosing a kennel, make sure you check it out before booking your pet in.

- Meet the staff. Are they friendly, and knowledgeable? Are they experienced with dogs? Do they have references?
- Ask them about food – can you bring your own? Or, would they rather you feed theirs and are you ok with this?
- Ask for references. The best way to find out if a kennel is a good one is through word of mouth. Ask the local pet store or vet clinic if they have gotten any feedback.
- What are their vaccination policies? Are you ok with them? If your dog cannot be vaccinated, are they ok with titers?
- How much time will your dog be confined vs being outdoors or having free run?
- How does Fido react when you pick him up from the kennel? Your dog's positive or negative behaviour is often a good indication of how his stay was.

To ensure your pet has a healthy stay, you may consider naturally boosting his immune system with supplementation and a healthy diet before, during, and after his visit. Even if he has a great time, a kennel stay is still stressful and there are always the risks of disease transmission when dogs share quarters with each other. The healthier your dog going in, the better!

### **Traveling in the Car**

So, you've opted to bring Fido along! In order to make sure his traveling experience is a good one, ensure the following:

- He gets adequate rest stops to use the little doggie's room and stretch
- He is never left in a warm/hot vehicle
- He has access to water throughout the trip
- To avoid car sickness and extra bathroom breaks, it might be best to wait until you have reached your destination to feed your dog
- Ensure he is properly restrained. Although I personally don't believe that there is a perfectly safe vehicle restraint for dogs yet, there are some that are better than others. You could crate your dog. That way, he is out of your way and allows you to drive the vehicle safely. There are also safety harnesses made for dogs that clip into already present seatbelts.



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- PLEASE do not transport your dog in the back of your pick up truck! There are so many reasons why this endangers the safety of your dog, other motorists, and pedestrians. If you must transport your pet in the back of your pickup, use a crate that is securely fastened to your vehicle and make sure that the weather is fair.
- If he is extremely fearful of the vehicle, it might be less stressful for him to stay home, but if he can't there are lots of natural products that can help relax your pet, or prevent car sickness. Ask your vet or a Tail Blazers' employee for suggestions.

### **Crossing the Border**

If your trip takes you over the US border, keep in mind:

- The vaccination policies in the US are different. Ask your veterinarian for details.
- Bringing food over the border can be an issue. Unfortunately, food produced in Canada is sometimes confiscated at the border. You may have to purchase food made in the USA for your holiday. It will also be easier to find more should you have a long stay.

### **Travel Checklist**

Don't forget to bring the following with you on your trip:

- Pet Carrier, food and water dishes
- Food, bottled water, treats
- Disposable plastic bags for pickup
- Collar, leash and harness with ID tags
- Familiar bedding
- Medications, cotton balls and swabs
- Natural flea/tick powder or spray
- Citronella bug spray
- First aid kit
- Documentation of inoculations
- Toys and grooming supplies
- Dog coat/boots for cold weather
- Paper towels, moist tolettes
- Pet stain remover
- Contact info of your vet
- Directions to local animal hospital

Have a safe and fun holiday!!

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