
ANIMAL CONTROL NEWSLETTER

Town of Sterling - November 2015

ACO CORNER

BLACK BEARS



Black Bears are especially active this time of year as they are looking for food before they hibernate/dormant for the winter which is usually late November depending on the weather. Bird feeders should be **TAKEN DOWN** as they are the primary source of backyard food for bears, but they will take advantage of garbage also; so put your rubbish out for pick up the morning of pickup. People that are concerned about attracting bears to their yards should be vigilant about keeping their property cleared of any of these possible food sources. Also, bears can be attracted to poultry and livestock. Chickens, domestic geese, rabbits, goats and sheep can be targets for bears. Like we recommend for dealing with coyote; all of these animals should be provided with secure shelters and taken in at night. Fenced pastures and paddocks should include electric wires to discourage predation of domestic animals by wildlife. While you can “never say never”, attacks by black bear on humans are **incredibly rare**. If a bear is encountered in the wild, the recommended action is to make the animal aware of your presence and then move off slowly. If a bear is seen in the backyard, adults should make every effort to scare it off and let it know that it is not welcome. Bears understand the concept of “territory” whether they’re dealing with another bear or a person. If people reinforce a bear’s natural wariness of people by scaring them out of their yards, the bears will learn to avoid the area. People are essentially defending their “territory” when they scare a bear away. As long as there is no reward associated with the backyard, such as a feeder full of sunflower seed, there is no reason for the bear to return. You can scare bears off by banging pots and pans together, car horn, bright lights, radio or basically any loud noises.

ACO REMINDER

**2016 Dog Licensing in Sterling begins
January 1ST**

Be prepared!

**Make sure your dogs rabies shot is up to date;
without it you cannot license your dog in
Massachusetts, (STATE LAW) call your veterinarian
to check!**

Thanksgiving Safety Tips



Thanksgiving is upon us. Here are some safety tips for your pets!

Danger! Pets may try to sneak out the open door as company comes in. So when you know family or friends are coming over, play it safe and put pets in another room, preferably with door closed or in a crate. If crate trained, keep them there until all company arrives and is settled in. Once everyone is settled, allow pets to join in but **WATCH THEM** - some holiday foods can be another danger.

Food dangers If you decide to feed your pet a little nibble of turkey, make sure it is boneless and well-cooked. Do not offer raw or undercooked turkey, which may contain salmonella bacteria. Grapes and raisins can also make your pets very sick. Guests may leave food dishes in areas where pets can get to them (like wastebasket) Be safe and post an area with “please put dirty dishes here” and keep food dangers away from your pets.

Holiday plants can be toxic and some real dangers exist for pets that eat house plants seen mostly during the holiday season. Holiday plants to keep out of pets reach are: Poinsettias, Mistletoe, Holly and Philodendron. Any of these plants can cause pets to be very sick if eaten.

Emergency veterinarian Post these emergency numbers near your phone they are open when your local vet is closed: Acton Emergency 978-263-1742, Tufts Veterinary Hospital in Grafton 508-839-5302 & Wachusett Animal Hospital in Westminster 978-407-1122. Reach the APCC Animal Poison Control Hotline 24 hours a day at **888-426-4435**

**Let’s make it a safe Thanksgiving holiday for your
pets!**