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PET SAFETY CHECKLIST (for dogs & cats)

- ✓ Take “a pet’s eye-view” of things. Get down to the pet’s eye level and take a look around. Check areas that a pet can access by way of climbing or jumping.
- ✓ Look for choking, strangulation and suffocation hazards. Window treatment cords should be cut so that there are no loops.
- ✓ Look for wires and electrical cords that should be covered or unplugged to prevent pets from chewing them and possibly being electrocuted.
- ✓ Look for human foods and medications that should not be left where pets can access them. Medications, cleaners, household chemicals, and laundry supplies should be kept on high shelves or in cupboards.
- ✓ Look for “ladders” that curious pets can climb to access elevated areas, such as countertops and tabletops.
- ✓ Check that any indoor plants are of varieties that are pet-safe. Lilies can cause kidney failure in cats. Other common plants that are toxic to pets include amaryllis, poinsettia, mums, and aloe vera.
- ✓ Check the latches on cupboards to make sure the doors are kept shut. The smell and taste of some chemicals, such as anti-freeze, are especially appealing to both cats and dogs. Childproof latches work well to keep pets from prying open cabinets.
- ✓ Check that the toilet lids are down. Especially if using automatic bowl cleaners, an inaccessible toilet bowl will help eliminate the risk of poisoning. And it also prevents a drowning hazard.
- ✓ Check the trash can. It should be covered or located inside a latched cabinet.
- ✓ Look at the windows. Cats are known to fall out of them. For windows that open, their screens should be made of sturdy wire mesh that’s properly installed.
- ✓ Check the floor covering. Carpet isn’t the best choice for pet owners. Hardwood with adequate urethane finish is a common and easy-clean choice. Ceramic tile or other non-porous, hard-surface flooring is best.
- ✓ Check that the heating and cooling vent registers have louvered covers installed over them.

- ✓ Look behind the clothes washer and dryer. Openings in the wall or nearby cabinet should be patched.
- ✓ Check the outdoor plants. Some plants are hazardous to dogs and cats, including azaleas, some ferns and ivies, daffodils, and daylilies. Pet-friendly plants include bamboo and, of course, catnip.
- ✓ Check with local authorities about dog fences. Dog runs are typically constructed from chain-link fencing, and they provide a handy outdoor exercise area.
- ✓ Look at the fencing. Check for openings and holes under the fence. Traditional fencing of a solid material (usually wood) is the best overall solution for most dogs. It secures the dog, it keeps out curious people and animals, and it's typically attractive and blends in well with the home. Wooden fences can also prevent a dog from looking beyond its immediate territory, which can help reduce barking. "Invisible" fencing may include a wireless or underground wire system around the perimeter of the property.
- ✓ Check for rescue alert stickers on windows and doors to let emergency responders know that pets are inside the home.