



## Pet Safety Tips for Halloween

By Eve M. Holt

- **Trick or treaters can be scary.** Too many strangers in unusual garb can be scary and stressful for animals - all but the most social pets should be kept in a separate room during trick-or-treat visiting hours.
- **Keep them safe at home.** When opening the door for trick-or-treaters, take care that your pet doesn't dart outside. Make sure they're wearing identification, just in case. The Humane Society for Seattle/King County recommends that you microchip your pets as a way of permanently identifying them.
- **No human treats for pets.** Keep all Halloween candy out of your pet's reach. Candy can cause serious upset stomachs, chocolate can be fatal to animals, and candy wrappers can be hazardous if swallowed.
- **Candles pose risks.** Curious pets can burn themselves on the candles in a lit pumpkin or inadvertently knock it over while running around. It's a good idea not to use candles if you have a companion animal in the house.
- **Keep pets safe indoors.** Don't leave your pet in the yard on Halloween. There have been stories of vicious pranksters who have teased, injured, stolen and even killed pets on this night. It is especially important to keep cats inside for several days before and after Halloween. Black cats in particular may be at risk from pranks.
- **Costumes for pets?** Consider a costume for your dog or cat only if you know he or she loves it. And make sure the costume isn't annoying or unsafe, and doesn't restrict your pet's movement, vision, hearing or ability to breathe or bark. Avoid costumes with small or dangling accessories that could be chewed off and choked on.