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Keep me cool, please!  
Photo by L. Vanessa Gruden



## PRESS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### Get your Ferret an Air Conditioner!

(Hartford, CT, July 25, 2016) The Ferret Association wants to remind pet owners about the dangers of hot weather to pet ferrets.

With heat advisories blanketing large parts of the nation and no cooldown in sight, it's important to make sure your fur-covered companions are safe. When the temperature rises over 85 degrees, ferrets can suffer from hyperthermia. Hyperthermia – also known as heat stroke or heat exhaustion – can be fatal. According to veterinarians, as little as 10 minutes confined in temperature over 90 degrees can damage a ferret's internal organs.

Heat stroke/exhaustion symptoms include:

- Open-mouth breathing, progressing to rapid panting
- Weakness/lethargy
- Red tongue/pale gums
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Fainting or coma

If your ferret shows these signs in hot weather, lower their body temperature by immersing them in room-temperature (not cold) water. Place them on a damp towel and, as soon as possible, transport to the vet in an air conditioned vehicle so a doctor can determine if they require further supportive care.

“Prevention is the best medicine,” says Ferret Association Executive Director Vanessa Gruden. “Ferrets are designed for temperate zones. High heat and humidity is more serious for them than for people – pets can't control their environment.” Be sure to keep ferret cages out of the sun on days when temps will rise, and never house a ferret outdoors.

Gruden goes on to say that with the cost of a room-sized air conditioner as low as \$100, it's foolish to risk your ferret's health; the cost of an emergency vet visit could be hundreds more. “And that's if you get to the hospital in time,” she adds. “Do you really want to chance your companion's life when the remedy is so inexpensive and readily available?”

If you can't air condition, at least move your ferret's cage to a basement, where the surrounding ground usually keeps spaces cooler. “I've known ferret owners who checked into a motel in really hot weather,” says Gruden. “If you have multiple ferrets and no way to keep them cool at home, it's cheaper and safer.”

The Ferret Association, celebrating 25 years of operation, is a nonprofit humane and educational organization based in Hartford, Connecticut.

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