



## **AFFILIATED VETERINARY EMERGENCY SERVICE, P.C.**

15220 Southfield Road  
Allen Park, Michigan 48101

Phone: 313 389-1700 Fax: 313 389-1717

[aves@affiliatedvet.com](mailto:aves@affiliatedvet.com)

[www.affiliatedvet.com](http://www.affiliatedvet.com)

# **DANGERS COMMON TO THE HOLIDAY SEASON**

## **PLANTS**

**Mistletoe** - Very toxic, all parts, especially the berries

**Holly** - Moderate to very toxic, especially the berries and leaves

**Poinsettia** - Leaves and stems low in toxicity

**Christmas Greens such as Balsam, Juniper, Cedar, Pine and Fir** - All parts of these plants have a low level of toxicity.

**Hibiscus** - May cause vomiting or bloody diarrhea in ingested

**Keep toxic plants out of your pet's and children's reach.**

## **HOLIDAY DECORATIONS**

**Bubbling Lights** - Moderate to lethal toxicity, depending on the amount of fluid (methylene chloride) inhaled or ingested.

**Fireplace Colors (fire salts)** - Moderate toxicity; symptoms are gastrointestinal irritation with vomiting and a variety of other manifestations, including convulsions.

**Angel Hair (spun glass)** - Low toxicity; can cause irritation of the eyes, skin and gastrointestinal tract.

**Christmas Tree Preservative Solution** - Low toxicity; depending upon formulation and quantity ingested.

**Snow Sprays and Snow Flock** - Low toxicity, dry particles are inert; however, toxicity from inhalation can occur if sprayed directly in mouth.

**Styrofoam** - Low toxicity; can cause choking from mechanical obstruction.

**Christmas Tree Ornament** - Non-toxic, however intestinal obstruction and choking are potential problems.

**Icicles (tinsel)** - Non-toxic, however intestinal obstruction and choking are potential problems.

**Snow Scenes** - Toxicity may come from organisms possibly in the water, most notably Salmonella

**Read label warning on all decoration and take the necessary precautions to protect your pet.**

## **GIFTS & MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

**Button Battery (disk battery)** - Caustic, potentially high toxicity depending upon the position of the battery in the gastrointestinal tract.

**Aftershave Lotion, Colognes, Perfumes, Alcoholic Beverages** - Ethanol in various concentrations is moderately toxic depending upon the amount ingested. The high concentration of essential oils in true perfumes are especially toxic.

**Plastic Model Cement** - Moderate toxicity

**Epoxy Adhesive (uncured hardener)** - Moderate to high toxicity. Uncured resin; Low toxicity, primarily irritation and sensitization.

**Adhesives, Super Glue** - Low toxicity, most difficulty occurs when eyelids become bonded together.

**Artists' Supplies (Crayons, Felt tip Markers, Pencils, Water-based paints)** - Low toxicity; however, may cause more than a mild mucous membrane and gastrointestinal irritation.

**Petroleum-based Paints** - Low toxicity; primary concern is possibility of aspiration.

**Toys** - Avoid toys with parts small enough to be pulled off and swallowed and toys painted with toxic materials, etc. **Use same precaution as with children.**

## **SPECIAL HOLIDAY TIPS**

- Alcoholic beverages, holiday treats such as chocolates, rich, fatty food scraps and bones can be harmful or toxic to pets. Keep your pet on his regular diet and caution visitors against giving your pet "special treats."
- Never put ribbons or yarn around your pet's neck and do not allow your pet to play with plastic or foil wrappings or sic-pack beverage holders.
- **Snow Removal Salt** – Some substances produced to melt ice and snow have low to moderate toxicity, depending on the ingredients and amount ingested. Read the labels and take necessary precautions. Keep these products stored in tight containers out of your pet's and children's reach and be sure to remove salt from your pet's paws immediately.
- **Antifreeze** – Even a very small amount of antifreeze can be fatal. Precautions are necessary with ALL antifreeze products on the market. Read labels and warnings carefully. Thoroughly clean up spills at once. Keep containers closed tightly and store them where pets cannot get to them.
- **Frostbite** – Remove ice and snow from your pet's paws and coat at once. Frostbitten skin may turn reddish, white or gray, and it may be scaly or sloughing. if you suspect frostbite, take your pet to a warm place immediately. Thaw out frostbitten areas slowly by applying warm, moist towels that are changed frequently. Continue until the affected areas become flushed. Contact your veterinarian as soon as possible; they will probably want to evaluate the seriousness of the condition.