

People increasingly leaving pets in hot vehicles

An alarming increase in “dog in hot vehicle” reports this spring has the Washoe County Regional Animal Services reminding pet owners that leaving a pet in an enclosed vehicle, even for a short time, can be a deadly idea.

In May, dispatchers received 68 high priority calls for dogs left in an enclosed vehicle during hot temperatures. This is more than five times the number reported during May 2011, when there were 13 calls for dogs in vehicles.

So far there have been no pet fatalities as a result of pets being left in hot cars.

“When it gets to the point where an animal’s well-being is threatened, Animal Control Officers will take the necessary steps, as obligated by the law, to save an endangered animal by removing it from the vehicle. Even if they have to break a window to do it,” Regional Animal Services Manager Barry Brode said. “Our goal is to prevent this from happening by getting this important message out to the public now.”

Temperatures inside a closed automobile can easily rise to 20 degrees or warmer than outside temperatures. This could prove deadly to a pet.

The public is encouraged to report distressed animals locked in hot cars immediately by contacting Washoe County Regional Animal Services dispatch at (775) 322.3647.