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## Safety of Summer Gardens for Pets

- Make your garden escape-proof for dogs and smaller pets who are housed in runs. Dogs, rabbits and guinea pigs don't tend to be experts on the Green Cross Code!
- Be wary of the plants growing in your garden especially for grazing animals like rabbits and tortoises. For example, laburnum can cause convulsions by just chewing on the flowers. Most poisonous plants are bitter to the taste so animals will tend to leave them but do be vigilant as to what your pets are nibbling on.
- During barbeques, keep pets well away from hot coals and gas cylinders. Dispose of meat bones carefully. Cooked bones tend to splinter and can easily puncture the intestines of a greedy dog or cat.
- Make sure cats do not chase the lawnmower lead or dogs chew it. Remember, creosote can be very toxic if an animal gets it on its fur and tries to lick it off
- Slug pellets, insecticides and weed killers can be poisonous to pets so make sure they are well out of reach. Where possible use animal friendly products.
- In the hot sun make sure that guinea pigs and rabbits have shaded areas in outside runs.
- Dogs should be hosed down with cool water if they get too hot and cats can even be put in a bath of tepid water! If you are worried about your animal suffering from heat stroke, consult your vet immediately.
- Pets with fine, light or white hair are prone to sunburn. They should have their area, particularly noses and ears protected with sunblock as they are prone to developing a malignant cancer in these areas. Your vet can give advice on suitable sun creams that are safe to use on pets.
- Be wary of garden ponds. Cats and small dogs can easily fall in to them and panic or get caught on weeds so they are unable to climb out. Larger dogs can suffer the same fate in deep paddling or swimming pools. Pet should not drink from ponds or swimming pools so ensure there is always a bowl of drinking water outside for them.

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