



## FIREWORKS PRECAUTIONS

Cats are very vulnerable in early November. Apart from the physical damage by accidental or malicious contact with fireworks, cats can be badly affected by firework noise and flashes. Possible behavioural problems as a result of trauma could include house soiling and excessive grooming or aggression. And most importantly, if allowed outside they can become badly disorientated - ending up lost a long way from home - or even worse if they run in front of a car.

Years ago, most fireworks were let off only on "Bonfire Night", 5th November, Nowadays, depending on which day 5th November falls, fireworks can be let off over several days before and after this date. Therefore, it is important to take precautions in the days running up to, and after, 5th November. Bear in mind that many bonfire events are organised to take place over a weekend, and it is likely that the Friday and Saturday evenings both before and after 5th November will be especially "firework active".

You might find the following reminders useful:

- 1) On EVERY ONE of the relevant days, keep your cat indoors - ideally from late afternoon - or as soon as is practically possible - but certainly no later than 5pm. (If your cat is already outside when the fireworks have begun, it may well be too traumatised to find its way home. This can then be a very worrying time for owners as they wait for the return of their beloved felines). If fireworks are evident in your area on other days, you might want to apply your curfew on those days as well.
- 2) Always ensure that your cat has some form of identification (i.e. a collar displaying your telephone number as well as a microchip) just in case it gets outside by accident.
- 3) Make sure there are plenty of "bolt holes" and places to hide inside the house - by perhaps leaving internal doors open so that it can find somewhere that feels secure.
- 4) Shut all curtains and blinds.
- 5) It can be useful to put on some music or the TV to try and drown out the firework noise.
- 6) Wherever the cat chooses to hide - leave it well alone and let it emerge in its own time.
- 7) Stay calm and act normally (although this can be difficult if your cat is spread-eagled across the ceiling). If possible, reassure your cat by stroking it gently or by brushing it.

To summarise, even though upset by the noise, your cat WILL BE SAFE IF KEPT INDOORS - SO THAT'S THE KEY.