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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 29, 2022

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### **CVMA Emphasizes Importance of Helping Minimize Stress Response in Pets This Summer** *Chicago Veterinary Medical Association provides tips for calming pets during storms, fireworks*

With summer upon us, we naturally expect that there will be severe storms in the future, which can cause a worrisome stress response in pets. The same goes for fireworks noise, which isn't isolated to Fourth of July celebrations, and can continue throughout the summer.

Fear of thunder and lightning and loud noises in general, can affect both dogs and cats, although dogs are more susceptible. This stress response in pets can manifest in a variety of ways including yawning, whining, panting, paw-licking, chewing, pacing, or hiding. Some pets also may become destructive and destroy things around the home in response to their stress.

"Dogs, in particular, have sensitive hearing and therefore are more prone to reacting in a stressful way to loud sounds," said Dr. Kirsten Plomin, CVMA Board President. "If you have a pet that shows stress symptoms during a thunderstorm or fireworks, there are some relatively simple things you can do to help soothe their discomfort."

Several ideas include:

- Provide a small, comforting, and safe place like a crate where pets can feel cozy. Consider adding a blanket or a favorite toy
- Turn on soothing music or a white noise machine
- Purchase a toy that supports the licking and/or chewing stress response
- Have your pet wear an anxiety vest, which can provide comforting and soothing pressure

Sometimes just speaking in a quiet manner and petting your dog or cat can go a long way to providing them with comfort during a stressful experience.

For some pets, whose anxiety becomes a significant issue, it is possible that helpful meds can be prescribed.

Owners should seek the advice of their veterinary professional if this may be the best course of action for the overall health and wellbeing of their pet.

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**About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Association:** Chicago Veterinary Medical Association is a professional network with a longstanding tradition that connects more than 1,000 veterinarians with comprehensive resources that support their continued development as champions of animal health while encouraging the fostering of the human-animal bond.

**About the Chicago Veterinary Medical Foundation:** The CVMF, established in 2009, is a 501<sup>©</sup>3 charity that works with Chicagoland veterinarians to provide financial assistance to pet families in need by helping with the costs of their pet's urgent, unexpected medical and surgical bills. The Foundation's work plays a vital role in strengthening the human-animal bond by helping sick and suffering pets get well again.