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Dog Park Danger: Pet Parents Warned of Hidden Health Risks

NAPPS issues cautionary message to pet parents regarding the hidden dangers of dog parks

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J. — The dog days of summer are quickly approaching, and with the warming weather comes an increase in outdoor pet activities, including dog park visits. To help protect the health and well-being of dogs across the country, the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS) is educating pet parents on the hidden dangers of dog parks.

“Pet parents are drawn to the wonderful social and exercise benefits of dog parks, but few are aware that dog parks can impose health risks on their beloved pet,” explained Monica Leighton, President of the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS). “At the core of NAPPS’ mission is a commitment to the welfare of animals. We urge pet parents to fully investigate the hidden dangers of dog parks before visiting one to protect their pet.”

Should a pet parent choose to visit a dog park, NAPPS has prepared the following tips to help make the visit both fun and safe:

- Bring a container of water to the park for your dog. The provided water stations are often used by raccoons or other wildlife during the night, and can spread dangerous infections, such as leptospirosis, a potentially fatal bacterial disease.
- Carefully wipe your dog’s paws after leaving the dog park. The park’s soil can be a source of parasites and diseases and should be cleaned from the dog’s paws immediately.
- Make sure your dog is up-to-date on vaccinations prior to visiting the dog park. Through playful activity, pets can be exposed to other dogs that have not received proper vaccinations.

NAPPS provides numerous safety tips and resources to pet parents on its website, www.petsitters.org, including a disaster preparedness guide, a pet sitter locator tool and information on finding and securing a professional pet sitter.

About NAPPS: NAPPS is a national non-profit trade association dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, “To be the most respected authority in professional pet sitting.” It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS’ free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, nationwide referral service, and quarterly teleconferences aimed to educate the pet owning public. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS’ nationwide “Pet Sitter Locator” at www.petsitters.org. For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](https://twitter.com/TheNAPPS) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at facebook.com/TheNAPPS.

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