

Pet Tip of the Week

www.houssennet.nb.ca/dogworld.htm

Canine Fear: THUNDER

Dogs can sometimes fear the most natural sounds. Thunder is probably the most common of those fears. Sometimes they react by hiding in a secure place in your home, or shivering beside you or even salivating heavily.

These reactions are stress related because their whole focus is on the the thunderstorm. It is a very difficult situation for some dogs to handle but there are a few things that you could do to help him cope with the dreaded event. First, check the weather before leaving for the day. If your home situation permits, leave a radio on for him a bit louder than usual. This will help to drown out the thunder clashes. Isolating him in one room with the radio or TV left on is better than giving him free roam of the whole house. Remember, when your dog is highly stressed, he may become creative and do things he would not ever normally do, such as chew or destroy various items, or even urinate even though he is 100% house-broken. These behaviours are really not his fault as he is reacting out of stress and anxiety in a particular situation.



Darr Houssen

If you are at home during the storm, try to keep the dog active with games or toys to keep him preoccupied until it's over.

Having him close to you is OK as long as you are not feeding the fear by babying him and reassuring him that he will be alright in a timid fearful voice. You are actually amplifying the fear and justifying the fear emotions that he is feeling. An obedience workout, or a game of catch or even vacuuming the carpets are all great pastimes during a thunder storm.

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