



Pet Safety During a Home Remodel

Creating dedicated areas within your home where your pet can eat, sleep and bathe tells them they are just as much a member of the family as everyone else. A built-in eating area beneath the kitchen counter, a custom napping nook under the stairs, or a washing station in the mud room are popular home improvements that can enhance your pet's comfort as well as your home's value.

But embarking on such remodeling projects — even small ones like these — can cause anxiety for many pets due to the increased noise levels and the unfamiliar faces in the home. That kind of stress can be avoided if you take certain steps to prepare your pet before work gets underway.

To help keep your pet calm and safe during a home remodel, consider the following:

Before the project:

- Prepare your pet as far in advance as possible by gradually minimizing the amount of time they spend in the soon-to-be project area. Especially if it is a space where they frequently like to eat or sleep, establish a different space within your home where they can temporarily do those activities.
- Have the space inspected for mold, asbestos or lead-based paint (homes built before 1978). The presence of any of those things requires the contractor to use specific procedures and special equipment to reduce the risk of exposure and protect your pet's respiratory system.
- Anticipate that there will be varying levels of noise during the project. Ask your remodeler for advance notice of which days are likely to be the noisiest, and make arrangements to have your pet stay with a friend, family member or at a pet care facility on those days.

During the project:

- Introduce your pet to the remodeling crew. Whether the project duration is brief or extensive, allowing your pet to become familiar with the workers early on will help alleviate much of their anxiety.
- Restrict your pet to other areas of the house away from the project zone — just as you would if there are children in the home. Most projects require the use of tools or materials that could potentially be dangerous if discovered by a pet.
- Check throughout the home at the end of each day for any potentially hazardous items. Your contractor will take every precaution to ensure the area is safe and secured, but you know your pet better than anyone and can best identify possible risks. Inform your remodeler if you have any concerns or requests about how the project area is secured overnight.

Similar to how you appreciate being informed in advance of and during a remodeling project, your pet will also benefit if you help them prepare and adjust to the temporary change in routine.

For more information on home renovations, referrals for trade professionals or any other questions please contact the Builders Association at 814-833-3999.