



It's that time of year again as Thunder Over Louisville 2021 kicks off the beginning of the Kentucky Derby Festival on Saturday, April 17.

Thunder Over Louisville will look different this year. It will be held at various undisclosed locations throughout the city of Louisville and Derby officials are requesting that onlookers watch WHAS-TV11 or listen to the Summit Media's Mix 106.9 FM for details throughout the event.

Thunder will be held on Saturday, April 17 starting at 3pm for a 2-hour air show, which will be followed by Louisville's first-ever drone show leading up to the fireworks, which will begin around 9:00-9:30pm (once the darkness sets in) and will be approximately 18 minutes long, according to a recent article in the Courier-Journal.

As wonderful as this display is, the sounds from it could cause high stress for your pets. Here are a few suggestions to help keep your animal calm.

Before the Event

- Earlier in the day, take your dogs for a long walk, have some extra playtime with your cats. Do your best to wear them out so they'll be calm and tired.
- Feed your animals at their regular times and make sure they have plenty of water for the evening. Create a comfortable safe place for them to hide if they get frightened.
- Close all doors and curtains before dusk so they can't see the light flashes of the fireworks. You can watch them on TV or go outside and look at the sky. Turn your radio to 106.9 FM for the show's commentaries, both for the fireworks and for the air show.
- Turn on the TV or some music to create "white noise" which can drown out some of the booming sounds of the planes or the fireworks, and leave it on until the fireworks are over.

During the Event

- If you can stay home with your pet, do that. Your calm demeanor can go a long way to help lower your animal's stress. If your cat puts its head in your armpit or your dog wants to be held, let them have that luxury. Don't reprimand them; instead, talk to them in a calm voice and let them know it's going to be okay.
- Never take your pet to a fireworks display. If you plan to go outside to watch the fireworks, make one of the following arrangements:
 - See if a friend who lives away from the noise can keep your pet while you're gone.
 - Take your pet to a Pet Resort or boarding kennel for the night, preferably one that is not near the fireworks display. (This may be more difficult to do this year because the locations for the evening have not been announced.)
 - Find a dog sitter to come stay at home with your pet and keep it company for the evening.
 - Put a Thundershirt (or similar item) on your pet to give them the feeling of being held. This will frequently keep your pet calm. (Be sure that you try this out on your pet days to weeks before the event so it is familiar to your animal.)
- Medication can also help keep your pet calm. Talk to your veterinarian to find out what he or she recommends.

And enjoy the air show and the fireworks, knowing you've done your best to keep your pets safe!

Shamrock Pet Foundation