



Kathy Kopellis McLeod with Bullet, whose thick coat is not ideal for the summer.

Dogs 'in danger'

WITH summer temperatures rising, the Australian Veterinary Association is warning it could be a bad season for snakebites on dogs.

Cottesloe vet and association state president David Neck said people should keep an eye on their dogs, particularly at the beach and at nature reserves.

"Dogs often die from snakebite and at the beginning of the season, snakes are carrying more venom," he said.

"The biggest threat in the western suburbs area is from dugites and where we might wear tough trousers and boots as protection if we were walking through bush area, a dog has no protection."

He said some breeds of dog like the Jack Russell tended to attack a snake several times in a row.

"They can end up being bitten five or six times and will need six times the anti-venom, which is very costly."

He advised people to keep their back yards tidy and clear long grass that might provide cover for snakes.

Also, dog behaviour consultant Kathy Kopellis McLeod said summer posed other dangers for dogs apart from the obvious overheating in hot cars.

"Consider walking your dog early in the morning or evening when it's cooler, so your dog doesn't have to put their paws on the hot pavement," she said.

Keeping windows down on both sides of the car to allow air flow and only leaving your dog in the car for a couple of minutes were two simple measures.

Ms Kopellis McLeod said people should check their dog's coat regularly for grass seeds, which left untreated, could cause infection and abscesses.

Having plenty of water available throughout the day is crucial during the hot weather and a few ice-cubes in the dog's water bowl will help keep it cool.