

Got Skunk?

If your dog is unlucky enough to get sprayed by a skunk, suit up with rubber gloves and clothes you can toss, and do the following:

- 1) Check your dog for injuries he may have incurred from the skunk. Look closely for scratches, puncture wounds, and lacerations. If your dog has wounds, call an emergency vet immediately for instructions – skunks are carriers of rabies, and although your dog may be protected if he's had his rabies shot, *you are not*.
- 2) Use a saline solution or eye rinse for human eyes on your dog's eyes if it appears he got sprayed in the face (you'll be able to tell; your dog's eyes will look irritated and he'll appear uncomfortable).
- 3) In a plastic bucket, mix the following ingredients:
 - 1 quart of 3% hydrogen peroxide (the standard stuff in your medicine cabinet)
 - ¼ cup of baking soda
 - 1-2 teaspoons dish detergent (Softsoap and Ivory Liquid are two brands groomers particularly like)
 - One quart of room-temperature tap water
- 4) Wash your dog promptly and thoroughly, working the solution deep into the fur. Use your hands to carefully rub the solution on your dog's face. *Be very careful not to get it into your dog's eyes.*
- 5) Leave the solution on for about 5 minutes; let your nose be your guide. Super-stinky or longer-haired dogs may require a rinse-and-repeat.
- 6) Thoroughly rinse your pet with room-temperature tap water.
- 7) Pour used or leftover solution down the drain while running the water; don't save for future use as the chemical compounds in the solution break down and become ineffective.
- 8) NEVER put mixed solution in a closed bottle or sprayer.

As inconvenient as all this is for you, keep in mind that it's miserable for your dog (not so much the skunking itself, but the bath afterwards!). And while some dogs learn from this experience, many just cannot help themselves each and every time they see the little black and white buggers, so keep these instructions in a handy place with a couple extra bottles of hydrogen peroxide and a box of baking soda. And try to remember you'll laugh about it one day. ☺