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**** UPDATE ****

LEPTOSPIROSIS

**** With the continued increase in the number of dogs diagnosed with Leptospirosis, the State Veterinarian, Dr. Peter Mundschenk, recommends dog owners consider vaccinating their pets. Dr. Mundschenk strongly recommends that dog boarding and day care facilities consider requiring proof of a Leptospirosis vaccination prior to boarding. ****

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Recently, a kennel facility in the Phoenix area had an outbreak of a disease called leptospirosis. *Leptospira* is a bacteria that can infect most mammals including people. Most commonly, the bacteria infect dogs, cattle and wild animals. Previous Arizona Leptospirosis cases in dogs were rare. However, in February and October 2016 two such outbreaks occurred in dogs, one involving a kennel.

The Arizona State Veterinarian's office encourages dog owners to watch for common signs in their pets:

- Drinking more than usual
- Urinating more than usual
- Lack of urination
- Redness in the eyes
- Depression
- Reluctance to eat
- Fever over 103.5° F

If your pet has any of these signs or you are concerned about Leptospirosis in your pet family member, please seek advice from your pet's veterinarian. Your veterinarian may recommend

vaccines for Leptospirosis depending on the degree of risk they may have. Dogs at increased risk include:

- Outdoor dogs that engage in hiking and swimming in natural waters
- Dogs with contact with other animal species (i.e. farm animals or wildlife)
- Hunting dogs
- Dogs that are frequently exposed to areas of standing water or flooded areas.
- Dogs that have frequent exposure to other dogs in high density areas (dogs shows, dog parks, pet boarding facilities)
- Dogs that travel frequently or have contact with dogs that travel

To protect themselves owners should be aware that Leptospirosis can infect humans. However rare, there are some precautions that owners, veterinarians and their staff should consider:

- Avoid areas that pets urinate frequently
- Wash hands after taking pets for their walks
- Wash clothes that may have come in contact with pet urine

Symptoms of Leptospirosis in people vary. If pet owners are concerned about their risk of infection, they are encouraged to talk to their primary care physician.