



LOCAL NEWS

Pet oxygen masks could save pets' lives

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Reported
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The Chesapeake Fire Department hopes some new equipment will help save lives. It has purchased oxygen masks that are designed specifically for pets.

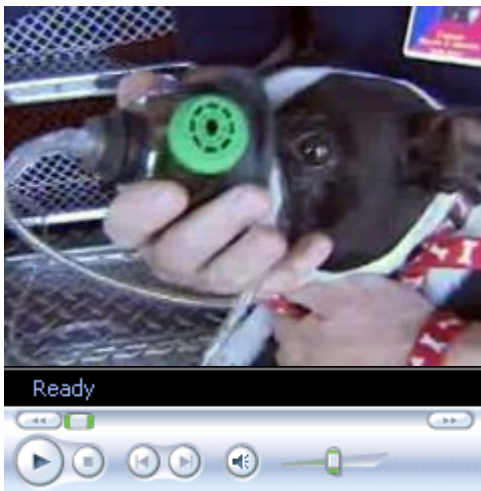
Chesapeake fire captain Steve Johnson says his Boston Terrier is more than just a firehouse dog. In fact, he says she gets better treatment in his home than he does.

"She has her own chair, her own blanket," he explains.

But when fire breaks out, Captain Johnson says pets are often out of luck. More than half of every fire call firefighters get involves a pet who's sucked in too much smoke.

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Firefighters say there's a huge problem across Hampton Roads with pets staying inside a burning home

trying to protect it, only to lose their lives.

"I've seen a firefighter deliver what you call mouth to snout, breathe through the dogs mouth to revive it," he said.

Chesapeake and other districts like Virginia Beach say they just didn't have the equipment to provide pets with oxygen until now.

"It makes a nice seal with that gasket. It gives the proper ratio so we don't overdose them."

These mini-masks come in three sizes to fit snouts from a German Sheppard to a Toy Poodle. They were a gift from the Chesapeake Humane Society. Every fire house in Chesapeake is now equipped to save a pet's life and a pet owner's emotions.

Some firefighters had chopped down human masks to fit pets, trying to save them in the past. Now they hope things will get easier and they can save more lives, whether two legged or four.

"30 cents worth of oxygen; it's worth it."

It costs 30 cents each time they use the device, but hundreds of dollars were spent to put them in each department, all thanks to the Humane Society in Chesapeake.