

August 17, 2018

Kevin Lembke
Park President
Busch Gardens Williamsburg & Water Country USA

Via e-mail: kevin.lembke@buschgardens.com

Dear Mr. Lembke,

I'm writing on behalf of People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) and our more than 6.5 million members and supporters worldwide regarding the recent [incident](#) in a Busch Gardens parking lot in which a dog was locked inside a vehicle while the engine was off and the windows were closed. Fortunately, a police officer was able to pry a door open and save the dog. Tragically, though, many children and dogs trapped inside cars aren't so lucky. Last year, at least 42 children and 44 dogs died in hot cars. Already in 2018, at least **33 children, 41 dogs, and one kitten** have died. In light of this nearly fatal accident, we urge Busch Gardens to post signs in parking lots warning guests of the dangers of leaving children and animals inside hot cars.

On warm days, parked cars can very quickly become death traps for children and animals left inside them. The temperature inside a vehicle can easily surpass that outside by 20 to 30 degrees in just a matter of minutes. As their internal temperatures rise, dogs often salivate heavily, lose control of their bladder and bowels, panic, and struggle to escape by clawing the windows and seats so violently that their paws become bloodied, before they go into shock. Just like human children, dogs can sustain brain damage or even die from heatstroke—even in cars parked in the shade. Please watch [this short video](#) to learn more. We think that after watching it, you'll find it easy to make this potentially lifesaving decision.

Please join the many other companies that have taken action on this issue—including some of the largest mall ownership groups in the nation, such as Simon Property Group, GGP, and Macerich—by posting signs warning people that hot cars can be deadly. Even carmakers are taking action: Tesla and General Motors both added software to their vehicles in order to address this issue. We've even created [artwork](#) to communicate this message, which you're welcome to use.

We hope to hear soon that you'll do your part to prevent these tragedies by posting signs.

Sincerely,
Dr. Laura Shields

Corporate Liaison
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