

Dog kennel designed by Ford blocks fireworks, thunder noise

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Ford Motor Co. has developed a prototype quiet kennel for dogs by using noise-cancellation technology created for high-end vehicles sold in Europe.

For years, veterinarians have urged people to find quiet space for their pets because holiday fireworks can terrify the animals. They run away, get hit by cars, develop anxiety and stress that can lead to injury and self harm. Dogs have an acute sense of hearing that is far superior to humans, so loud noises can be especially painful and upsetting.

"We get animals that are absolutely scared to death," said Michele Mara, a vet tech at Gasow Veterinary Hospital in Birmingham. "They go through glass windows, rip the house up on the Fourth of July. They don't like the sound of guns or fireworks. They just don't handle it well. Many people often medicate the animals."

The Ford quiet kennel design detects noise and transmits opposing frequencies. In addition to noise cancellation, the structure also has a soundproofing component and an automatic door. Mara sees a strong sales potential if the kennel is produced commercially.

The kennels are not available for purchase and not yet being produced.

"We're not in the dog kennel business," Anthony Ireson, director of marketing and communications for Ford Europe, said, laughing.

But if someone wants to develop the prototype? Ford is open to the idea.

"We wondered how the technologies we use in our cars could be applied to help in other situations. Could [dogs](#) enjoy quieter New Year's Eve celebrations through the application of our Active Noise Control system?" Lyn West, brand content manager, marketing communications, Ford of Europe, told the Free Press.

"We have a few more ideas in progress as to how our everyday lives might benefit from a little Ford know-how."

Dogs in the quiet kennels hear less sound and feel less vibration. The sound systems are located in microphones around the dog bed in the kennel.

Ford uses the [technology](#) in its Edge/Endura SUV that went on sale in Australia in December 2018 for \$44,990.

"All we've done is try to see how the technology could be used in life," Ireson said during a phone interview while he delivered Christmas cards on his lunch break outside London. "If there's enough interest, we'll explore the technology" for production.

The project started as just a way of showing technology that's often invisible to the consumer and now available in cars, Ireson said. "It's hard to demonstrate what can be done. This is the first of a series we're doing about how our vehicle technology impacts life in other ways. This just struck a chord."

The Dearborn-based company is a leader in high-tech patent development, based on the sheer volume of government applications filed for patents and trademarks globally. The carmaker recently made headlines for its work to eliminate new-car odors from vehicles, an issue

that ranks among top complaints in China.

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