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The 60-Second Dog Food Safety Check

Heard about a recall? Grab the bag and your phone. Here's how to know if your food is affected.

Step 1 · Find the 4 spots on the bag

1 Brand and who made it
"Manufactured by" = that company made it. "Manufactured for" or "distributed by" = another company usually made it for them. Note both names.

2 Lot code and best-by date
Usually stamped on the top or bottom seam. Recall notices list the exact lot codes and dates affected.

3 Company phone or website
Your direct line for questions. Save it in your phone.

4 AAFCO nutrition statement
Says whether the food is "complete and balanced" and for which life stage. This isn't about recalls, but it's good to know.

Step 2 · Check the recall lists (about 60 seconds)

1. **FDA:** fda.gov/animal-veterinary/safety-health/recalls-withdrawals
2. **AVMA:** avma.org (search "pet food recalls")
3. Match **all** of these: brand, product name, bag size, lot code and date.

Not on the list? If your lot code and date aren't listed, your bag usually isn't part of that recall. If you're unsure, call the company.

Step 3 · Build two easy habits

☐ **Photograph the lot code and date** on every new bag the day you buy it.

☐ **Keep the bag until the food is gone**, even if you pour the kibble into a storage bin.

If your food IS recalled

1. **Stop feeding it** right away. Set the bag aside and don't throw it out yet.
2. **If your dog seems unwell, call your vet.**
3. Follow the recall instructions for a refund or disposal. Wash bowls, scoops and storage bins.
4. **Report problems** to the FDA (Safety Reporting Portal, or your state's FDA Consumer Complaint Coordinator).

3 questions to ask any dog food company

1. Who makes your food?
Your own plants, or a co-packer?

2. Have you ever had a recall?
When, and why? Compare with the FDA list.

3. How do you test for safety?
Ingredients and finished food? Before it ships?

A company that answers clearly, with a real track record, is one you can feel good about.

Not veterinary advice. Ask your vet about your dog's health or diet.

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