

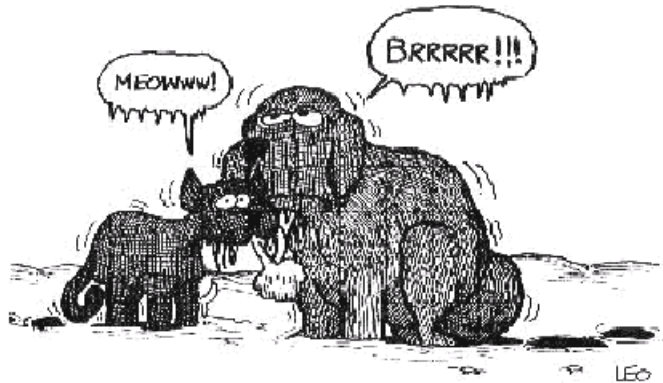


PUBLIC SAFETY MESSAGE



WINTER PET CARE

Cold weather can be hard on pets, just like it can be hard on people. Sometimes owners forget that their pets are just as accustomed to the warm shelter of the indoors as they are. Some owners will leave their animals outside for extended periods of time, thinking that all animals are adapted to live outdoors. This can put their pets in danger of serious illness. There are things you can do to keep your animal warm and safe.



- Provide proper shelter for your pet whether they live indoors or outdoors.
- Make sure to provide fresh food and clean water for your pet every day.
- Keep your cats indoors during the winter. Not only can outdoor cats freeze, they sometimes sleep under the hoods of cars to stay warm. Honk or bang loudly on the car hood before starting your car.
- If you have a short-haired breed of dog, consider getting him/her a sweater with a high collar or turtleneck with coverage from the base of the tail to the belly to keep them warm.
- Dogs and cats are attracted to the sweet smell and taste of antifreeze which contains ethylene glycol. A tiny lick can kill your dog or cat, so make sure to check your car for leaks on your driveway or gutter. Keep containers tightly closed and clean up spills immediately.
- Rat and mouse poisons are commonly used during the winter months. Place them out of reach as they can cause fatal bleeding or kidney failure in your pet.

Remember that cold temperatures require animals to burn more calories to stay warm. You may find you have to increase your pet's ration of pet food until the weather warms up. Be sure the pet still has plenty of clean drinking water that doesn't freeze.

If your pet gets too cold, bring him into a warm area. Don't use extremes like hot water to thaw toes and ears and don't rub any frozen areas. This could cause more harm to already damaged tissue. Contact your veterinarian or take the pet to an emergency clinic as soon as possible.

Most dogs start feeling frisky when the temperature drops. A little planning can keep your puppy playful and your kitty, cozy.

Please be especially mindful of your pets this winter and to keep telephone numbers for your veterinarian and a local emergency veterinary service in a convenient location.

Get more safety tips at the following link:

Houston SPCA: http://www.houstonspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=homepage_new