

Cold Weather Advise For Pet Owners

It is important to keep your outdoor pets safe and warm during the winter months. They are vulnerable to extreme conditions just as humans are and it is your responsibility as a pet owner to protect them. The following tips and information can help you to provide a safe winter for your pet.

Bring Them Inside: The easiest way to ensure the safety of your pets during the winter months is to bring them inside. It is understandable that some people are not always able to bring their pet indoors. However, when temperatures are extremely cold or below freezing, it is crucial for you to provide some form of shelter for your animal. If you can't bring them indoors, bring the pets into the garage or provide a well insulated house appropriate for the animal's size.

Provide A Shelter: If you can't bring your animal indoors, provide them with an outdoor shelter. You can purchase dog and cat houses at almost any pet supply store. If you are handy, you can build your own with wood. If possible, provide a shelter for your animal in the garage. If you do not have a garage, make sure you place the shelter in a place that is sheltered from the wind and other elements. Check for leaks and seal them.

Insulate: When temperatures are extremely cold and the winds are high, a shelter is useless without insulation. Line the floor of the shelter with blankets or old pieces of clothing. Straw is very good floor [insulation](#) for dog and cat houses during the winter. Cover the floor with a thick layer of straw and tuck a blanket over it so that no straw is visible. You are creating a straw bed. You can roll up old towels or clothing and press them up against the walls of the shelter to create a nest for your critter. *You should change the straw every few weeks. If the straw is wet, replace it with new dry straw as soon as possible. Mold can grow in the damp straw.*

Water: Always check your pet's water bowl during the winter. It will freeze quickly. Make sure you change their water frequently and ensure that they receive enough to drink. Don't use hot water! It will freeze too and be too hot to drink! Snow is not enough to sustain a dog or a cat! Please check and change your pets' water frequently.