

Winter Pet Safety

Winter weather can be dangerous to pets as well as people. Supervise your pets closely to avoid hazards.

Everyday Winter Hazards

When temperatures fall, your pet needs a little extra care. Cold weather and wind chill can threaten a pet's life. Here are some very important tips:

- Be aware of the cold when you take your pet outdoors, especially if it's young, old or short-haired. Short-coated dogs may need a sweater during walks.
- Bring your pet indoors overnight or for extended periods of time. If he must stay outside, provide a warm, dry bed for your pet.
- Don't let your pet sleep on a heating pad or electric blanket — indoors or outdoors. Your pet could be easily burned, and when left unattended, heating pads or electric blankets can overheat and spark a fire.
- An outdoor dog needs an insulated, elevated, dry dog house with clean, dry bedding and a flap over the opening to keep water and drafts out. Consider a dog door to the garage with a soft cushion in the warmest corner.
- Warm vehicle engines attract cats. Bang on your vehicle's hood or honk the horn a few times to scare away cats. Wait a few moments before you start the engine.
- Antifreeze tastes sweet to animals, but it's a deadly poison! Make sure animals can't access antifreeze around or under your car, or in storage areas around the garage or house. If your vehicle has a leak, get it repaired immediately, especially if you park it where animals have access. Use a funnel when adding antifreeze and mop up any spills. If your pet ingests any amount of antifreeze, seek immediate help from your veterinarian or the emergency veterinary clinic nearest you.
- Outdoor dogs need more calories during the winter to produce body heat, so increase the amount you feed your pet, being careful not to overfeed. Indoor dogs may require less food in the winter months if they get less exercise.
- Don't assume your pet is warm because he has fur. The cold weather has different effects on animals, depending on their size, age and breed. **As a general rule, if it is too cold for you, it is too cold for your pet.** Puppies and kittens, small breeds and geriatric pets have a harder time keeping warm, as do pets with an illness or injury.
- Outfit small, young, sick, injured or older pets with a warm sweater.
- Make sure your pet has its license or ID tag on its collar. Look for missing pets in person at your local Humane Society or both locations of [Maricopa County Animal Care and Control](#).
- File a lost pet report and search found pet reports or post information on them at [Pets 911](#) and [PetHarbor](#).
- Call Missing Mutts, Cats, Etc. at (480) 898-8914 and call Arizona PetLine at (602) 252-2727.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) has posted some [cold weather tips](#) for caring for companion animals when temperatures dip to its website.

(Source: [Arizona Humane Society](#), [Maricopa County Animal Care and Control](#))