



Nutrition Excellence!

February 2011



Winterizing Your Pet

Food and Water

When it's cold outside, dogs and cats often need to eat more food to keep warm, especially if they're active. As always, make sure that your pets have fresh, unfrozen water available to drink at all times so they don't get dehydrated.

Housing

If you have an outside dog in a dog house, make sure it's ready for winter by repairing any holes and adding a warm bed and a door or plastic flap to keep the cold air out. You can also put up sheets of plastic along the walls of outdoor runs to stop cold drafts and make it more enjoyable for your dog. For dogs that come into the garage, make sure that they too have a warm bed to lie in.

Keeping Your Pet Warm

Long haired dogs that are bred to withstand the cold and snow love the winter months. However, if you have a short haired dog they don't have enough fur or fat to insulate them. Consider getting them a coat or sweater that has a high collar and covers from the base of the tail to the belly.

Keep your cats inside, or offer them constant access to shelter such as a barn or garage. Also provide them with some sort of warm bedding such as a cat bed or basket with blankets.

Remove ice, salt, mud, and snow from your pet's fur and feet as soon as possible. If your dog is long-haired, trim the hair between its toes and footpads to make cleaning easier.

Additional heat sources used in the winter, such as fireplaces and portable heaters, can severely burn your cat or dog. Protect them by putting screens on fireplaces and keeping portable space heaters out of reach.

Hypothermia

Hypothermia occurs when animals spend too much time

exposed to cold temperatures, so your pet can't keep their body temperature from going below normal. When your pet's body temperature goes between 89 and 86 degrees Fahrenheit, it is classified as mild hypothermia, between 77 and 71 F moderate, and between 46.5 and 32 F severe. Symptoms for mild cases include shivering, depression, lethargy, and weakness. As it gets more severe muscles stiffen and heart and breathing rates slow. If you suspect hypothermia, try to warm your pet by wrapping it in blankets and using a hot water bottle wrapped in fabric and contact your veterinarian.

Frostbite

Just like people, animals can get frostbite too. It happens when the body pulls blood from the extremities, including the ears, tail, or paws, to keep the core warm. Frostbite damage often isn't visible for a few days. But if the skin looks reddish, white, or grey or is scaly or peeling, it could be frostbite. Get your pet warm by soaking its extremities in warm water (don't rub), and then wrapping your pet in blankets, and take it to your veterinarian.

Puppies and Seniors

Don't leave puppies outside for long periods of time, because they can't handle the cold as well as adult dogs. If taking your puppy outside to housebreak it is difficult, you can consider paper training him inside or using a puppy training pad. Cold temperatures are also difficult on older dogs, especially if they have arthritis. Make sure they have a thick, soft bed in a warm area, and consider making its living environment easier to get around.

Automobiles

Although it's necessary for your car during the winter months, antifreeze is deadly to your pets. Pets love the sweet taste, but even a small amount can do a lot of damage. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills and store it in a secure place.

To stay warm, cats and kittens often climb into engines of cars. Before turning on your car, bang on the hood, honk your horn, or look under the hood to avoid accidentally hurting your furry friend.

Never leave your cat or dog left alone in the car, during the winter they can become even colder than outside.

A PROUD SUPPLIER OF PURINA FEEDS

WFS • PO Box 68 • Truman, MN 56088
507.776.2831 • www.wfsag.com



Purina Mills