

Cold Weather Tips for Your Pets

During the cold weather, we want to make sure your pets stay safe and warm! Here is some information for you to keep in mind during cold weather months!

Outdoor Dogs:

- Although dogs have fur, they can still get very cold and get frostbite and hypothermia! Whether they have long or short hair, it is dangerous to leave them outside without warm, dry shelter.
- Tips for outdoor housing:
 - A sturdy wood/plastic shelter to get inside.
 - No holes or damage where rain, snow, or ice can get in.
 - Put a LOT of straw/hay inside to make it warm.
 - If you use blankets, be sure to check them often to make sure they are dry. If they get wet they can make your dog colder!
 - Cover the front entrance of the dog house with a thick tarp/plastic to keep the draft out (unless that would make your dog not go inside).
- Water bowls should be checked at least once a day– water can freeze quickly and your dog ALWAYS needs access to water!
- Dogs use a lot of energy to stay warm, so provide regular meals, maybe even a little extra food when it's cold.
- This applies even if your pet comes in at night and stays outside during the day!
- **If you want help transitioning your dog inside for the winter, ask us and we can help!!**

Walking Your Dog:

- Keep an eye out for salt or ice melt on sidewalks and streets. Dogs have sensitive paw pads and they can be irritated by salt and ice.
- Wipe off their paw pads with a warm cloth after walks.
- If you see your dog start to limp, check between their paw pads to make sure there is nothing stuck in between their toes or cuts.

Outdoor Cats:

- Cats need shelter too! Just like with dogs, a warm dry shelter is important to keep cats safe in the cold.
- Everything provided for dogs should also be provided for cats! Check cat's water daily and make sure cats get enough food to stay warm.

Did you know that a smaller shelter actually works better? A smaller space, just large enough for the dog or cat to stand up and turn around, traps the pet's body heat and keeps them warmer. If a shelter is too large, it is more difficult for pets to use their own body heat to stay warm.