

Keep Your Pets Safe & Healthy This Winter



Winter weather is finally here. You may be ready for winter, but are your pets?

- ***Keep Pets Indoors When Temperatures Drop*** - Most pets are safer indoors. If your pet begins to shiver, it is time to bring him/her inside. According to the American Animal Hospital Association, animals are vulnerable to frostbite and hypothermia in less than an hour.
- ***Provide Sturdy Shelter For Animals That Must Be Outside*** - Prepare a dry, draft-free doghouse that is large enough to allow the dog to sit and lie down comfortably but small enough to hold his/her body heat. The floor should be raised a few inches off the ground and covered with warm bedding: blankets, towels, or similar. The house should be turned to face away from the wind, and the doorway should be covered with waterproof burlap or heavy plastic. These guidelines are also recommended for small livestock such as goats and sheep. Rabbits also need protection from the wind and should have extra bedding for added warmth.
- ***Provide Plenty of Proper Food In Cold Weather*** - Pets and livestock who spend a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy. Check with your vet if you have questions.
- ***Routinely Check Your Pet's Water Dish*** - Cold temperatures can cause standing water to freeze. Your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to metal so use plastic food and water bowls when the temperature is low.
- ***Check Your Pet's Paws Routinely*** - Ice cuts and abrasions on the pads paws aren't that unusual during the winter months. Salty sidewalks can also be drying and irritating. Protect your dog's paws with boots or protective wax and spray products.
- ***Clean-up Chemical Spills*** - Like coolant, anti-freeze is a lethal poison for pets. Be sure to thoroughly clean-up any spills from your vehicle.
- ***Never Leave Your Pet Alone In A Vehicle*** - It is against the law to leave an animal in a vehicle when the temperature is extreme. During cold weather, a vehicle can act as a refrigerator, holding in the cold and causing an animal to freeze to death.
- ***Always Check Your Car Before Starting It*** - Cats and other animals often climb into the engine to stay warm in the winter. To avoid injuring any animals, bang on the hood to scare them away before starting the engine.



This flyer provided by Kern County Animal Control. For more information, please call 661-321-3000 or log onto www.co.kern.ca.us/acd.