



## Winter Safety for Your Furry Family Members

*Ready or not, winter is rapidly approaching. As we all know, winter in New Jersey may bring cold, snow, ice, and potentially hazardous substances such as antifreeze and rock salt. Here are a few tips to help you and your pet through the season safely and comfortably.*

### Cold, Snow, and Ice

- The best place for your pet in the winter is indoors, with you. If your pet does spend any time outdoors, or you are caring for an outdoor cat, make sure he has a draft-free, waterproof shelter that is large enough for him to lie down in comfortably, but also small enough to hold in body heat. Make sure the floor is raised off the ground, and there is dry bedding material on the floor such as an old coat or blanket.
- If it is too cold for you to spend more than a few minutes outdoors, it's probably too cold for your pet.



- When you do take your dog outside, never let him off leash in snow and ice. Although many dogs love to run through the snow, it is easy to slip, which can lead to injuries such as torn ligaments, especially in larger dogs.
- If you need a warm coat, your dog may too. If your dog has shorter hair, invest in an insulated coat. Although we often see small dogs in outerwear, large dogs often need the extra warmth as well, especially if their fur gets wet.

- Although a coat might keep kitty warmer, cats don't normally tolerate them well.

- As in any season, never leave your pet unattended in a car. A parked car is not sufficient protection from the cold.
- Very young puppies and older dogs should not be out in the cold for more than the necessary walks. They are not equipped to tolerate freezing temperatures.

### Hazardous substances

- After walking outside, make sure you wipe off your pet's feet and legs. Rock salt can burn tender paws, and the salty taste is a temptation which should be avoided.
- Consider boots if you and your pet do a lot of walking outdoors. Pets can get frostbite too. Be sure boots fit snugly, but are not too tight.
- If your car has leaked antifreeze in your garage or driveway, clean it up thoroughly. The sweet taste is a poisonous temptation. If you suspect your pet has ingested antifreeze, take him to the vet immediately.
- If you know there are outdoor cats in the neighborhood, be aware that they may look for shelter under your car or under the hood of your car. Bang on the hood of your car, or toot the horn before starting the car.



## General Tips

- Make sure you have plenty of extra food and kitty litter on hand. Weather conditions could leave you and your pet unexpectedly housebound.
- If you and your pet spend lots of time outdoors, your pet may need extra protein calories to replace those burned while playing outside.
- Make plenty of fresh water available for your pet. Pets get thirsty in cold weather just as they do in the heat.

We hope these tips help keep your pet safe and warm this winter. It will be spring before you know it!

### Additional resources (click on links for more info)

[http://blog.theanimalrescuesite.com/coldweather/?utm\\_source=social&utm\\_medium=arsfan&utm\\_campaign=coldweather&utm\\_term=20141118](http://blog.theanimalrescuesite.com/coldweather/?utm_source=social&utm_medium=arsfan&utm_campaign=coldweather&utm_term=20141118)

<http://pets.webmd.com/features/pet-winter-safety-prepping-your-pet-for-winter-weather>