



## Emergency Preparedness & Response News



### Cold Weather Tips For Pets!

Brrrr — it's cold outside! Don't forget to take precautions to keep your pets warm and healthy. The following guidelines will help you protect your companion animals when the mercury dips.

1. Keep your cat inside. Outdoors, felines can freeze, become lost or be stolen, injured or killed. Cats who are allowed to stray are exposed to infectious diseases, including rabies, from other cats, dogs and wildlife.
2. During the winter, outdoor cats sometimes sleep under the hoods of cars. When the motor is started, the cat can be injured or killed by the fan belt. If there are outdoor cats in your area, honk the horn or bang loudly on the car hood before starting the engine to give the cat a chance to escape.
3. Never let your dog off the leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm. Dogs can lose their scent and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than during any other season, so make sure yours always wears ID tags.
4. Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs and stomach when he comes in out of the sleet, snow or ice. He can ingest salt, antifreeze or other potentially dangerous chemicals while licking his paws, and his paw pads may also bleed from snow or encrusted ice.
5. Never shave your dog down to the skin in the winter, as a longer coat will provide more warmth. When you bathe your dog in the colder months, be sure to completely dry him before taking him out for a walk. Own a short-haired breed? Consider getting him a coat or sweater with a high collar or turtleneck with coverage from the base of the tail to the belly. For many dogs, this is regulation winter wear.
6. Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. A car can act as a refrigerator in the winter, holding in the cold and causing the animal to freeze to death.
7. Does your dog spend a lot of time engaged in outdoor activities? Increase his supply of food, particularly protein, to keep him, and his fur, in tip-top shape.



Historic Routt County Courthouse Annex  
136 6th Street, Suite 113  
P.O. Box 773598  
Steamboat Springs, CO 80477

Phone: (970) 870-5551 (David 'Mo' DeMorat)  
E-mail: [ddemorat@co.routt.co.us](mailto:ddemorat@co.routt.co.us) Phone:  
(970) 870-5549 (Cheryl Dalton)  
Email: [cdalton@co.routt.co.us](mailto:cdalton@co.routt.co.us)

# Emergency Preparedness & Response News

8. Puppies do not tolerate the cold as well as adult dogs, and may be difficult to housebreak during the winter. If your puppy appears to be sensitive to the weather, you may opt to paper-train him inside. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only to relieve himself.



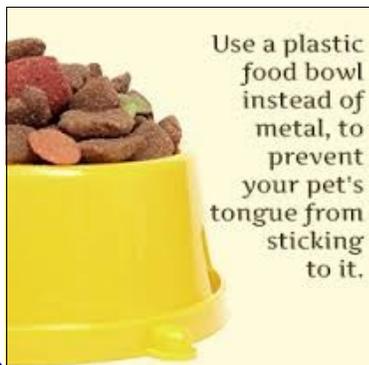
9. Antifreeze is a lethal poison for dogs and cats. Be sure to thoroughly clean up any spills from your vehicle, and consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol. Visit the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (<http://www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control/>) for more information.

10. Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep, off the floor and away from all drafts. A cozy dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow is perfect.

11. It's a good idea to have your furnace checked for carbon monoxide leakage before you turn it on, both for your pets' health and your own. Carbon monoxide is odorless and invisible. Pets generally spend more time in the home than owners, particularly in the winter, so they are more vulnerable to carbon monoxide poisoning than the rest of the family.

12. Keep an eye on your pet's water. Sometimes owners don't realize that a water bowl has frozen and their pet can't get anything to drink. Animals that don't have access to clean, unfrozen water are more likely to drink out of puddles or gutters, which can be polluted with oil, antifreeze, household cleaners, and other chemicals.

13. You can also keep an eye out for two serious conditions caused by cold weather. The first and less common of the two is frostbite. Frostbite happens when an animal's (or a person's) body gets cold and pulls all the blood from the extremities to the center of the body to stay warm. The animal's ears, paws or tail can get cold enough that ice crystals can form in the tissue and damage it. The tricky thing about frostbite is that it's not immediately obvious. The tissue doesn't show signs of the damage to it for several days. If you suspect your pet may have frostbite, bring him into a warm environment right away. You can soak his extremities in warm water for about 20 minutes to melt the ice crystals and restore circulation. It's important that you don't rub the frostbitten tissue, however—the ice crystals can do a lot of damage to the tissue. Once your pet is warm, wrap him up in some blankets and take him to the veterinarian. Your veterinarian can assess the damage and treat your pet for pain or infection if necessary.



Winter can be a beautiful time of year. It can be a dangerous time as well, but it certainly doesn't have to be. If you take some precautions, you and your pet can have a fabulous time taking in the icicles, the snow banks, and the warm, glowing fire at the end of the day. Visit the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) web site at [www.healthypet.com](http://www.healthypet.com) or [www.ready.gov/animals](http://www.ready.gov/animals) for more pet care advice.