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Pet Health and Safety Tips in Extremely Cold Weather

JANUARY 03RD 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

*Submitted by
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Dexter, Missouri - With the upcoming drop in temperatures it safe to say that our fluffy friends can not handle this type of extremely cold weather. Here is a list of helpful tips from the Human Society of Missouri that will help protect your pet during frigid conditions and keep them safe.

Bring Your Pet Inside: If your dog or cat normally stays outside please bring them in even if it's in the garage. Thermometers show one temperature, but wind chills can make it feel much colder. Limit time outdoors and be mindful of frostbite on ears, tail and paws. Dogs and cats who stay indoors can't handle these extreme temperature changes for long periods of time.

Acclimate Your Pets to Cold Weather: If your pets spend a lot of time outdoors, but typically live inside; make sure to introduce them gradually to dropping temperatures, rather than exposing them to the extreme cold all at once.

Provide Adequate Shelter: If your dog lives outdoors, you must provide a well-insulated and draft-free doghouse. The opening should face south with a sturdy, flexible covering to prevent icy winds from entering. Line the floors of the shelter with straw, not hay or towels/blankets. They can become damp or freeze making the space even colder.

Beware of Antifreeze and Rock Salt: Antifreeze often collects on driveways and roadways. Although it smells and tastes sweet to your pet, it is lethal. Deicing products like rock salt can irritate footpads. Be sure to rinse and dry your pet's feet after being outside.

Dray Off Wet Pets: A wet pet is a cold pet. Towel dry your pet if he gets we from rain or snow. Also, it is important to clean and dry paws to prevent tiny cuts and cracked pads.

Provide Plenty of Food and Water: It takes more energy in the winter to properly regulate body temperatures, so your pet needs additional calories if he spends a lot of time playing or working outdoors. Your pet is just as likely to get dehydrated in the winter as in the summer; so be sure to provide plenty of fresh water. Refill outside bowls often to prevent freezing.

Shown in the photo is Maddie Loflin, grand-pup to Dee Loflin. This was Maddie's first snow!

LAST UPDATED ON JANUARY 03RD 2014 BY DEE LOFLIN

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