

## Dogs Say: Let It Snow!

### Tips for dealing with dogs and winter weather.

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"The day after a major snowstorm, I let my English Springer Spaniels out to relieve themselves," says Donna Thompson of Cross Junction, Va. "When they didn't come flying back in for breakfast, I knew something was wrong. Looking out the window, I almost had a heart attack! Almost obliterated by the snow they were kicking up, the dogs were running and romping, but in the far fields, not their fenced yard. The snow had frozen and allowed them to walk right over the fence to the freedom beyond. Now we keep a path shoveled around the fence so the escape artists stay at home." While you might not get 42 inches of snow, winter storms can wreak havoc for dog owners in many ways, so be prepared. Stay warm in power outages: Unless you have a generator or wood stove, cold temperatures can quickly invade your house when the power fails. If your dog has a coat or sweater, use it to keep her warm. Keep plenty of blankets ready and be prepared to snuggle. And, keep a good supply of bottled water on hand. Stock up on essentials: Make sure you have plenty of your dog's regular food and treats in case road closures keep you from the store. If your dog needs medications, be sure your supply is large enough to outlast any winter storm; don't wait until it's completely gone to stock up. Check with your veterinarian about what other basic veterinary first-aid supplies to keep on hand, such as stomach remedies. For more information, see "Make your own first-aid kit" (DOG FANCY, April 2004). Travel with supplies: Says Anu Roots of New Boston, N.H., "Pukak, my 6-year-old American Eskimo, rides with me all winter unless there are subzero temperatures or howling winds. I outfit my car with doggie emergency supplies for her in case we get stuck." See "Winter travel survival kit," for a list of things to pack. Clear the way: Be sure to shovel a path to your dog's preferred area. "During storms, my dogs go under the deck to relieve themselves, so I shovel a path to give them access," Thompson says. Breaking a path through deep snow can cause exhaustion and strain in your dog. Watch for black ice on steps that could cause injuries, and use cat litter as needed to help with traction. Designate doggie care: Make arrangements with a nearby neighbor to care for your dog in case you get stranded away from home by bad weather. Planning for emergencies will let you rest easy, knowing you're ready for winter's worst. Be prepared, and let it snow!