

Protect Dogs From Cold Weather

Pet Sitters International offer tips for dog owners in wintry weather.

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Animal welfare groups are urging pet owners to keep cats and dogs indoors during frigid winter weather. The cold temperatures, snow, and ice that send people back inside for another layer of protection also call for extra care for the family pet, according to Pet Sitters International.

In addition to keeping pets inside as much as possible, the association for professional pet sitters also offers the following winter-proofing tips to help keep pets healthy and safe. Provide adequate shelter if dogs must be kept outside. Provide extra insulation from the cold and furnish a snug, warm bed that doesn't sit directly on the ground. Keep a careful eye in snow. Dogs should not be left out during a snowstorm because they frequently lose their scent in snow and ice and easily become lost. Supply pets with extra food and water when outside for extended periods of time. Use plastic dishes, as glass or porcelain can crack when temperatures drop. Ice-melting chemicals and salt can irritate and burn the pads of your pet's paws. Thoroughly wipe off your pet's feet once he has returned inside. Clip the long hair on the bottom of your dog or cat's feet to prevent buildup of ice balls that can be painful and difficult to remove. Trim nails regularly. It's difficult to maintain solid footing in icy conditions with long nails. Take care with antifreeze, which is poisonous. Clean any spills and store household chemicals out of reach. Consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol. Offer pets have a warm place to sleep. All pets, including small, caged pets, need to be kept warm and away from drafts. Honk the car horn or bang on the hoods and sides of the car before driving to alert cats who may be taking advantage of the engine's warmth.