



Hello Everyone!

We hope you all had a wonderful holiday season and look forward to seeing you all in the clinic throughout the new year!

Just so you are all aware, many of the supply companies have increased their prices for the new year. We have adjusted our fees so that they are in line with the service and supply costs to us so you will see that reflected in our office prices.

We are doing our best to let individual families know the new cost of their diets and medications when they place an order and we ask for your patience and understanding while we do so.

Thank you! Please don't hesitate to contact the hospital at (613) 354-6615 if you have any questions!

## Preparing Your Pets for Winter

It's that time of year again. Time to have the oil and coolant mixture changed, the belts and hoses checked, and the snow tires installed. We are used to thinking about winterizing our vehicles, but those of us who share our lives with animals must remember to "winterize" our pets as well. Colder winter months and the busy holiday season can pose special health risks to pets. Help your special furry friends weather the winter by considering a few simple tips.



### Is antifreeze really a deadly poison?

Antifreeze (ethylene glycol) has a sweet taste that many animals find irresistible. They may seek it out to drink it.

Unfortunately, it only takes a small amount to cause permanent and fatal damage to the kidneys. Never drain antifreeze into the street, be careful to wipe up any spills, and store antifreeze in tightly closed containers far out of the reach of pets (and children). There is no antifreeze product available that is truly safe.



### My pet has a thick coat. Do I need to be concerned about windchill?

No matter what the temperature outside, wind chills can be devastating. That same windchill combined with dampness, rain, sleet, or heavy, wet snow can be fatal. It is best not to leave any dog or cat outdoors unsupervised when the temperature drops. Cold, wet, windy snowstorms can often come up both quickly and unexpectedly. Short Haired, very young, and senior pets are at greatest risk for problems related to exposure to cold.

A dog is happiest and healthiest when kept indoors, going outside to relieve himself, go for a walk, or play a game of fetch with his owner. If however, your

dog or cat must live outside, protection from the elements is critical. An insulated house is a must. It should be elevated a few inches above the ground to prevent moisture from accumulating inside.

Carpeting, a blanket, or a padded bed should cover the floor of the house. It must be big enough for your dog/cat to stand up, lie down, and turn around comfortably, but small enough to contain body heat. The doorway of the house should face away from prevailing winds, and a burlap or canvas hung over the opening can act as a "door".

### "Outdoor pets need more calories in the winter just to keep warm."

Outdoor pets need more calories in the winter just to keep warm. Talk to your veterinarian about a specific dietary recommendation (and portion size) in order to ensure that your pet is meeting his/her energy requirements. Adequate water is just as important to an outdoor pet's health as food. You will need to check the water supply frequently to make sure it does not freeze. Also, use plastic bowls rather than metal. In low temperatures, a warm, wet tongue can stick and freeze to metal dishes.

### Are pet paws delicate? Do I need to do anything specific to protect them?



Pet paws, like human hands and faces, are susceptible to frostbite. Remove caked ice from your dog's feet as soon as possible. Frostbitten skin may turn color, becoming reddish, gray, or white. It may become scaly and begin peeling. If you suspect frostbite, thaw out the affected areas slowly using warm, moist towels that are changed frequently. Have your pet evaluated by your veterinarian as soon as possible to determine the extent of the damage.

Salt and other chemicals that are used to melt snow and ice have varying degrees of toxicity. Their effects depend upon the ingredients and the amount ingested. These chemicals can burn the pads of a pet's feet. If the pet then licks its feet to clean them, the mouth maybe burned too. Wipe your pet's feet off with a damp towel after any exposure. Read the labels of the products you use, and take all recommended precautions.

Common sense can guide most of the decisions you make as you keep pets out of harm's way during the upcoming winter months. Consider the consequences as our furry family members face the frigid cold.

