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USE COLD WEATHER COMMON SENSE TO PROTECT PETS

With the mercury falling within the next few months, Animal Emergency Referral Center advises pet owners to be aware of special precautions and animal care tips to keep their pets healthy, happy, and warm.

“There are a variety of dangers associated with cold weather and pets,” says Dr. Quantz. “Pet owners can take a few simple steps to ensure their pet’s health and safety in the coming winter months.”

Animal Emergency Referral Center recommends these cold weather precautions:

- Pet owners are encouraged to keep their pets indoors whenever possible or to provide appropriate shelter, water, and bedding if the pet must be left outside for any length of time during cold weather. Keep pets indoors for general health conditions such as diabetes, heart and kidney disease, and hormone imbalances. Younger and older pets also have compromised abilities to regulate body heat and should be kept indoors.
- Cats are attracted to the warmth of car engines. Check beneath the car, honk the horn or rap on the hood before starting the engine because they can be seriously, if not fatally, injured if the car is started.
- If clean water is not readily available, pets are more likely to drink out of puddles or gutters. This puts animals at risk of poisoning from antifreeze, household chemicals, and other pollutants that end up on the street.
- Pet owners may dress their animals in sweaters or outer wear in an attempt to keep them warm, but remember pets lose most of their body heat from the pads on their feet, through their ears and respiratory track.

In addition to dropping temperatures, cold weather dangers for pets include precipitation and wind. Just as in humans, pets can suffer from frostbite and hypothermia during winter months. Although, southern California rarely sees snow, remember that any drop in temperature affects your pet a bit differently than it does you. When in doubt about the weather conditions, it’s best to leave pets indoors.

Animal Emergency Referral Center is a 24-hour emergency/referral hospital located in Torrance at 3511 Pacific Coast Highway, Suite A. In the event of an emergency, please contact us at (310) 325-3000.