

It's time to winterize your pet!

Dallas Animal Services does not encourage people to leave their pets outside full-time but urges pet owners who do keep their pets outdoors to follow these guidelines:

- Any animal that lives outdoors during wintertime needs to enter that season healthy. Make sure your pet is current on all shots, spayed or neutered and is the proper weight. They also need to wear a collar with an ID tag and be microchipped.
- Weatherproof living quarters are a must. Whether your dog is inside a kennel or has the run of the backyard, a doghouse is essential. Outdoor pet quarters should be able to retain heat and be well-insulated and dry. The house should be elevated and the entrance pointed away from wind. Always provide plenty of dry bedding. Wet weather during times of extreme temperatures can lead to hypothermia or pneumonia.
- Outdoor dogs need more calories in the winter to produce body heat, so increase the amount you feed your pet. You may want to check with your veterinarian first.
- Indoor dogs shed their undercoats so they're not well insulated. They should never be made to stay outside for very long.
- Chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate paws. Wipe them with a wet cloth after an outing. When purchasing a product to melt snow and ice, look for pet-safe snowmelt.
- Thoroughly clean up all spills and take precautions when storing antifreeze. This can be toxic to pets who are attracted to the sweet smell.
- Accessories, including sweaters and paw booties, can help to protect against frostbite. Just be sure to remove this outerwear once your pet gets home.
- During cold weather, outside cats look for places to get warm. One such dangerous place is under the hood of your car. To a freezing cat, a warm vehicle engine is just thing on a cold day. Always knock on the hood and honk the horn before starting the engine.

- Check outdoor water bowls often when it's below freezing, and be sure to break the ice or refill with water as necessary. Always provide fresh water for your pet.
- Finally, during times of extreme low temperatures, all pets should be brought inside.

Following these tips and using a little common sense can provide for a safer and happier winter for both our pets and us.

For more information visit [www.dallasanimalservices.org](http://www.dallasanimalservices.org).