



## Environment



Prince George's County, Maryland

### Prince George's County Offers Winter Safety Tips for Pets

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*Keep your pet healthy, comfortable and safe by following these winter care guidelines*

**LARGO, MD** – As the expected snow and outside temperatures fall in the Washington Metropolitan area, pet owners are reminded to give their four-legged friends extra care to help them stay warm, healthy and safe. The Prince George's County Animal Management Division encourages pet owners to keep their animals indoors during cold weather and are advised to closely monitor their pets' exposure to winter elements throughout the season. But if your dog stays outdoors in cold weather the law requires you to provide the following:

- A dog house of proper size that is dry, draft free and raised off the ground;
- A wind flap attached to the doghouse to keep cold air out and warm air in;
- Bedding that is non-absorbent such as straw or wood shavings to help keep the dog warm; and
- Routinely check your pet's drinking water to make sure it is not frozen and use a secured container to prevent tipping.

**Other cold weather safety tips include:**

- Keep kittens and puppies under six months, and small or short-haired dogs inside.
- Increase the amount of their food; outdoor dogs need more calories in the winter to produce body heat.
- Never let your dog off their leash in the snow or ice; they can become disoriented and lost, even in familiar place. Be sure your pet has an ID tag, microchip and sturdy leash.
- Wipe your pet's paws after an outing with a wet cloth to remove any ice or chemicals used to melt snow on sidewalks that can irritate their paws.
- Don't leave your pet in a closed car in the winter because it can be just as deadly as in the summer.

- If there are outdoor cats in your area, bang loudly on your car hood before starting the engine to give them a chance to escape. Cats like to seek shelter from the cold and can be under the hood of your car.

For more information about pet care or to view the many homeless animals available for adoption, visit [www.princegeorgespets4us.com](http://www.princegeorgespets4us.com) or contact the Animal Services Facility at (301) 780-7200.

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