

Milwaukee Area Domestic Animal Control Commission (MADACC)  
Seasonal Weather Pet Care

Summer is a time for both you and your pet to enjoy the sunshine and outdoors, but along with the fun, the season also offers up situations that can endanger your pet. By taking precautions, you can decrease the chance that disaster will happen. Here are some tips for pet owners to keep their furry friends safe this summer:

- Don't leave pets in parked cars for any period of time. Every summer, animals left in parked cars suffer brain damage and die from heatstroke. On a warm day, even with the windows cracked, the temperature in a car can reach 120° in a matter of minutes. Dogs and cats can't perspire and can only dispel heat by panting and through the pads of their feet. If you see an animal in a parked car during the summer, alert the management of the shopping mall or grocery store. If the owner does not return promptly, call local animal control or the police.
- Provide plenty of water and shade for your pets while they're enjoying the great outdoors so they can stay cool.
- Pets need exercise even when it is hot, but extra care needs to be taken with older dogs, short-nosed dogs, and those with thick coats. On very hot days, limit exercise to early morning or evening hours. Keep in mind that asphalt gets very hot and can burn your pet's paws.
- With people and dogs spending more time outside, dog bites are likely to increase in the summer months. Spaying or neutering your dog reduces the likelihood that he will bite and provides many other health benefits.
- Make sure your pet is ALWAYS wearing a collar and identification tag. If you are separated from your pet, an ID tag may very well be his or her ticket home.
- Check with your veterinarian to see if your pets should be taking heartworm prevention medication. Heartworm disease, which is transmitted by mosquitoes, can be fatal in both dogs and cats.
- Pets and pools can equal disaster. Prevent free access to pools and always supervise a pet in a pool.
- Summer is often a time when people fertilize their lawns and work in their gardens. But beware: Plant food, fertilizer, and insecticides can be fatal if your pet ingests them.
- If you plan on traveling with your pet during the summer, take the time to prepare for your furry friends in advance. Many airlines have summer pet embargoes, and most trains and ships do not allow pets other than service animals. The HSUS has information on traveling with your pet that may make the difference

between a pleasant trip and a vacation nightmare.

- Another summertime threat is fleas and ticks. Use only flea and tick treatments recommended by your veterinarian. Some over-the-counter flea and tick products can be toxic, even when used according to instructions.
- Pets can get sunburned too, and your pet may require sunscreen on his or her nose and ear tips. Pets with light-colored noses or light-colored fur on their ears are particularly vulnerable to sunburn and skin cancer.
- Don't take your pets to crowded summer events such as concerts or fairs. The loud noises and crowds, combined with the heat, can be stressful and dangerous for pets. For your pet's well being, leave her at home. Be especially aware of these threats during holidays, such as the Fourth of July.

In many areas, winter is a season of bitter cold and numbing wetness. Help your pets remain happy and healthy during the colder months by following these simple guidelines:

- Don't leave dogs outdoors when the temperature drops. Most dogs, and all cats, are safer indoors, except when taken out for exercise. Regardless of the season, shorthaired, very young, or old dogs and *all* cats should never be left outside without supervision. Short-coated dogs may feel more comfortable wearing a sweater during walks.
- No matter what the temperature, windchill can threaten a pet's life. A dog or cat is happiest and healthiest when kept indoors.
- The salt and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe the feet with a damp towel before your pet licks them and irritates his/her mouth.
- Antifreeze is a deadly poison, but it has a sweet taste that may attract animals and children. Wipe up spills and store antifreeze (and all household chemicals) out of reach. Better yet, use antifreeze-coolant made with propylene glycol; if swallowed in small amounts, it will not hurt pets, wildlife, or your family.
- Warm engines in parked cars attract cats and small wildlife, who may crawl up under the hood. To avoid injuring any hidden animals, bang on your car's hood to scare them away before starting your engine.

**MILWAUKEE AREA DOMESTIC ANIMAL CONTROL COMMISSION STRONGLY RECOMMENDS KEEPING COMPANION ANIMALS INSIDE YOUR HOME!**

Probably the best prescription for winter's woes is to keep your dog or cat inside with you and your family. The happiest dogs are those who are taken out frequently for walks and exercise but kept inside the rest of the time. Dogs and cats are social animals who crave human companionship. Your animal companions deserve to live indoors with you and your family.

If your dog is an outdoor dog, however:

- Your dog must be protected by a dry, draft-free doghouse that is large enough to allow the dog to sit and lie down comfortably, but small enough to hold in his/her body heat. The floor should be raised a few inches off the ground and covered with cedar shavings or straw. The house should be turned to face away from the wind, and the doorway should be covered with waterproof burlap or heavy plastic.
- Pets that spend a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy. Routinely check your pet's water dish to make certain the water is fresh and unfrozen. Use plastic food and water bowls rather than metal; when the temperature is low, your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to metal.
- Pets kept outdoors need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy. Routinely check your pet's water dish to make certain the water is fresh and unfrozen. Use plastic food and water bowls rather than metal; when the temperature is low, your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to metal.