

Do you know how to keep your pet safe and warm this winter?

Keep your pets safe and warm this winter with these helpful tips.

- **Shelter.** Dogs and cats that sleep outdoors should have a snug, dry, draft-free place to sleep. The floor of the shelter should be raised off the ground to keep cold and moisture away from your pet. Ideally, the shelter should be heated, insulated, and have a door to keep the elements out. During extreme weather, pets should stay inside. If your pet is shivering and refuses to play, the animal is too cold and should come in-

side.

- **Diet.** A high quality food with adequate protein and extra fat is required for animals that spend time in the cold. Your veterinarian may also recommend a vitamin supplement. Remember that water may freeze outdoors. Provide fresh, warm water in a large, deep, plastic bowl throughout the day.

- **Exercise.** When walking smaller and older dogs, protect them with sweaters, and do not stay outside longer than necessary.

- **Paws.** If snow and ice

clumps form on your dog's paws, be sure to wipe between each toe with a warm, wet cloth. De-icing salt can cause paws to dry and crack; soak or wash your dog's paws in warm water and dry them thoroughly after walks in areas where salt has been used.

- **Car Motors.** Car motors are of particular danger to cats who sleep outside. Cats seek the warmth of car motors, and they can be severely injured or killed when caught in the fan belt of a car's engine. Make it a habit to check under the hood for animals and honk your horn before starting your car.

- **Antifreeze Danger.** Antifreeze is toxic to your pet's

kidneys and can have deadly consequences. The ethylene glycol in antifreeze is sweet tasting and appeals to cats and dogs. As little as one-half teaspoon can be toxic to a cat and just a quarter cup can kill a medium-size dog. Cats can lick enough off their paws to cause a fatal reaction.

Do not leave antifreeze unattended or allow it to spill onto the garage floor or into the street. Consider using nontoxic antifreeze with a bittering agent to discourage pet consumption. If you see your pet drinking any amount of antifreeze, take it to a veterinarian immediately. The sooner treatment is started, the better for your pet.

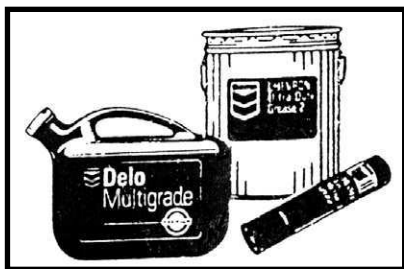
- **Holiday Plants and Decorations.** Mistletoe and holly are poisonous and should be kept out of reach of pets. If eaten, poinsettia plants can cause severe gastrointestinal upset. A list of other poisonous plants can be found at <http://www.oregonvma.org/petowners/plants.asp>. Be careful with ornaments, tinsel, ribbon, and other small holiday decorations that your pet may try to ingest.

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Pet microchipping clinics being offered

Having a pet run away can be a distressing event for any pet parent, and the worry doesn't go away until the lost pet has been found. Feeling powerless, owners will post signs, check local shelters and drive around for hours just hoping to see their lost loved one walking down the street.

Now, through the technology of pet microchipping, pets can be more easily reunited with their parents. PETCO is supporting the continuing trend in pet microchipping by running special offers on the service during the holiday season.

During the PETCO Foundation's Tree of Hope fundraising campaign, Luv My Pet and Vetco Animal Hospitals, Inc. will give customers \$10 off microchipping services.

In addition, these sponsors will donate \$1 to the Tree of Hope collection for every pet microchipped during the promotion.

The microchipping trend is ever-increasing and thousands of pets and their parents have already been reunited as a result of animal shelters and veterinarians painlessly scanning for the embedded code of the microchip. Some communities are even requiring that all dogs and cats be implanted with these small devices, which are about the size of a grain of rice.

Luv My Pet and Vetco offer microchipping and low-cost vaccination services in more than 550 PETCO locations within the states of California, Arizona, Utah, Colorado, Wash-

ington, Oregon, Texas, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine.

Go to www.LuvMyPet.com or www.PetService.com to find the availability and schedule of upcoming Luv My Pet or Vetco events at a local PETCO near you. For more information on Tree of Hope and the PETCO Foundation or to locate a store near you, visit www.PETCO.com.

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Give a gift pet?

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search to find out which animal might make the best pet for that person.

Also, consider waiting until after the holiday rush so you can take the person with you to pick out the pet. He or she will get the pet they want, and the animal will go home to a much more welcome and calm environment.

It is important to remember that the main reason animals are abandoned or taken to shelters is because they are unwanted.

Always talk with your veterinarian if you have any questions about getting someone you know a pet as a holiday gift.

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