



HIGHLAND PARK & DEERFIELD

Published December 9, 2013



From left to right - Luigi, Beulah and Rusha

Wolf's Lair K9 Offers Top 10 Winter Weather Tips to Keep your Pets Safe

With snow in the 10-day forecast, winter can be a season of frigid temperatures and harsh conditions. Just as we need extra protection to survive the season, so do our pets. Carlos Aguirre, owner of North Shore-based Wolf's Lair K9, a professional dog training business offered these tips to prepare dogs for cold weather and ensure their health, safety and happiness.

1. Thoroughly wipe off your dog's legs, stomach and especially feet when coming in out of the rain, snow or ice. Always check paw pads which may bleed from snow or ice encrusted in them. Salt, antifreeze or other chemicals could hurt your dog if ingested while licking paws after being outside.
2. If your dog is sensitive to the cold due to age, illness or breed type, take him outdoors only long enough to relieve himself multiple times per day.
3. Never shave your dog down to the skin during the winter. Leave their coats in a longer style, which provides more warmth and overall protection. Remember that such a style will require more frequent brushing due to dry winter air and static electricity but well worth it for you dog in the end.

4. Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep far away from all drafts and off the floor, such as in an elevated Kuranda dog bed, or a travel kennel with a warm blanket or pillow in it.
5. You should never leave your pet unattended in a car during the winter months. The winter weather turns your car into a rolling refrigerator - great for keeping your groceries chilled, but terrible for keeping your pet safe. If it's cold outside, leave your animals warm and safe at home or you will have to leave the car running for them and set to at least 60.
6. In the winter, dogs can lose their scent if they become lost or disoriented in a snow storm, so always keep your dog on a dependable leash and collar. According to the ASPCA more dogs are lost in the winter than in any other season. Of course, all pets should wear a Dog Collar and up-to-date Dog ID Tags year round that say Reward If Found with your phone number. You are more likely to have someone contact you back as they will be interested in the "reward" more than anything.
7. Frostbite is a grave injury and it should be taken seriously as it can happen not only to humans but also to your pets. Be sure to always keep a close on them and be sure to always clean off any excess snow/ice from their fur and bodies in general.
8. Animals with fragile immune systems - including kittens, puppies, and senior pets - might be more susceptible to illness during the change of seasons. If you suspect your animal has a cold weather-related illness contact your vet immediately.
9. If you and your dog spend a lot of time engaged in outdoor activities, increase food supply or how often you feed, particularly protein, to keep fur thick and healthy.
10. A fur coat isn't all the protection your pet needs from the cold, especially if they are short-coated, a puppy, or a senior. Some dogs may be more comfortable in winter-wear, such as a sweater, jacket, or booties. Look for coats or sweaters that cover from neck to tail and aren't restrictive or uncomfortable to your pets.

Wolf's Lair K9 offers specialized training options, including everything from simple everyday obedience for the home such as unwanted jumping or anxiety related issues, to proper leash management, the fundamentals of aggression management to advanced canine obedience for competition sports. For more information, please go to www.wolfslairK9.com, or call 847.280.1532.