WINTER SURVIVAL FOR COMMUNITY CATS

CAC COMMUNITY EDUCATION • PET PARENT SERIES

WINTER SHELTER ESSENTIALS

- Insulation: Provide waterproof, insulated shelters with small entrances to retain warmth.
- Bedding: Use dry STRAW, not hay, blankets, or towels, which retain moisture.
- Placement: Elevate shelters and face entrances away from prevailing winds.
- Size: Shelters should be large enough to turn around but small enough to retain heat.
- Maintenance: Check regularly for moisture, damage, or wet bedding.



FOOD & WATER IN FREEZING WEATHER

- Extra Calories: Cats may need more food to stay warm.
- Fresh Water: Replace frozen water often or use an outdoor-rated heated bowl.
- Feeding Stations: Protect food from snow, rain, and moisture.
- Consistency: Maintain a regular feeding schedule.

WINTER SAFETY HAZARDS

- Vehicles: Tap the hood and check for cats before starting engines.
- Antifreeze: Clean spills immediately; antifreeze can be deadly.
- Ice Melts: Choose pet-safer products and minimize exposure.
- Severe Weather: Watch for illness, injury, or cold-related distress.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Extreme weakness, lethargy, collapse, difficulty breathing, or suspected frostbite require prompt veterinary attention. Contact a veterinarian or experienced rescue for safe handling assistance.

REFERENCES & RESOURCES

- Alley Cat Allies. Winter Weather Tips for Community Cats. alleycat.org
- Neighborhood Cats. Winter Shelter. neighborhoodcats.org
- ASPCA Animal Poison Control. Animal Poison Control. aspca.org

Educational disclaimer: General educational information only. This handout does not diagnose, treat, or prescribe for any animal and does not replace examination or individualized advice from a licensed veterinarian. Identification, licensing, collar, and travel requirements may vary by location and circumstance. CAC Community Education: General pet-parent education only. Not a substitute for individualized advice from a licensed veterinarian.