

## **IT'S WINTER FOR PETS, TOO**

The end of 2008 has brought lots of cool weather, rains and early snows here in Brigham City and pets are feeling it strongly. With the early, cool fall weather, hundreds of cats that had been multiplying throughout the spring and summer with and without the help of human counterparts, are now searching for warmer places to live. Food supplies of mice and birds have nearly stopped and cats are starving and becoming a nuisance while they seek food and shelter. You'll always find the cat seeking the very warmest place possible, which is often your home, garage or other outbuildings.

Cats are not the only pets struggling with the weather. Dogs and puppies, as well as rabbits, goats, horses, fowl and other domesticated animals need extra care and expense during the winter months. The puppies and rabbits bought for the backyard are now in need of shelter and possibly extra food. Farm animals may require extra bedding and purchased food, now that the ground is covered with frozen snow. Not all animals can fend for themselves as is commonly believed and, as human caretakers, we have put most domesticated animals into a situation where they depend completely on their owners for their lives.

Following are some helpful suggestions to keep animals warm, safe and unlikely to become a nuisance. If your household pet is not allowed indoors, provide a warm dog house or corner of your garage or outbuilding lined with old blankets, towels, straw or carpet remnants. Make sure the bedding is raised off the ground to prevent it from freezing to the surface. Cats need and can use small outdoor shelters and dog houses work great for them also. Place the shelter on the south side of your outbuilding so they can take advantage of the southern sunlight. A south side location of shelter is perfect for livestock also. You may have to provide water more than once a day because of freezing temperatures. Heated dishes work great and stock water heaters are available from farm stores.

One other area of special concern is animals at large. Household pets as well as livestock are even more dangerous running at large and in the roads because of the inability of vehicles to stop quickly. Animal Control of Brigham City urges you to remember that it's winter for the animals too and we'd like all animals to be kept safe and warm this year. If you have questions or concerns, please call Animal Control at (435) 734-6650.