

## **E-mail Auto-Responder Series**

**By Jenny Higgons**

Willard Animal Hospital

### **1) Subject line: Prep Your Pet for Winter**

Now that the cold weather is almost here, it's time to think about how this climate change will effect our cats and dogs. With that in mind, we at the Willard Animal Hospital would like to provide you with a few tips on how to help our furry friends get through the winter safe and sound.

- Never leave your dog or cat alone in a car during cold weather. The vehicle can act as a refrigerator, trapping the cold and increasing the chance of your pet's freezing to death.
- Cats and dogs are attracted to the sweet taste of antifreeze. Thoroughly clean up any spills of this lethal poison, and instead consider using products that contain propylene glycol rather than ethylene glycol.
- When the temperatures drop, outdoor cats are sometimes drawn to the warmth radiated by a car engine. If you regularly park your car outdoors, bang on the hood before you start the engine, so if a cat is there, she can escape before being injured or killed by the fan belt.
- Keep your dog on his leash on snow and ice, especially during a snowstorm. The cold stuff can make your pooch lose his scent and then easily become lost. Since more dogs vanish over the winter than the other seasons, make sure yours always wears ID tags.

**SPECIAL OFFER: Get your cat's or dog's nails clipped at Willard Animal Hospital before November 1, and we'll give you a 20% DISCOUNT from our wide selection of**

### **fun coats and sweaters.**

- And immediately after those walks in sleet, snow or ice, meticulously wipe off your dog's legs and stomach, which could have picked up road salt, antifreeze and other dangerous chemicals. Pay particular attention to his paw pads: Encrusted ice can make them bleed. Better yet, have him wear snow booties.
- Never shave your dog down to the skin in winter, as his a long coat must help him stay warm. After bathing your dog, be sure his fur is dry before taking him outside. For a short-haired breed, consider wrapping her in a doggie coat or sweater that's got a high collar or turtleneck and covers her from the base of her tail to her belly.
- And lastly, make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep that's off the floor and away from drafts. A snuggly dog or cat bed with a blanket or pillow is perfect.

### **2) Subject line: Keep Your Pet Safe When You Travel**

With the holidays just around the corner, chances are that you'll be visiting friends and relatives by car and taking your cat or dog along. Along with you and your two-legged traveling companion, your four-legged family member must abide by his own safety rules. Read on to find out how to keep *him*, too, comfy and safe.

- Rather than letting your pal roam free in your car, keep him safe and secure in a well-ventilated pet crate or carrier and ensure that it's big enough for your pet to stand, sit, lie down and turn around in. Secure the carrier so it won't slide or shift during the trip. Another alternatives: Strap your dog into a chest harness that locks into a seat belt buckle.

- Let your pet get used to being in the carrier while still in the comfort of your home. Will your drive be a long one? Take her on a series of short drives first, gradually lengthening time spent in the car. Then assemble a travel kit, with travel papers, food, bowls, a leash, a waste scoop, plastic bags, medication and a pet first aid kit. Pack a pillow or favorite toy that will give him a sense of familiarity.

***BONUS: Bring your pet in for a check-up at Willard before Thanksgiving and receive a set of FREE food and water travel bowls.***

- Your pet's pre-travel feeding schedule should begin with a light meal three to four hours before your leave. Don't feed your cat or dog in a moving vehicle, even if it's a long drive. Bring your own bottled water for the trip, as your pet's drinking water from a unfamiliar area could result in a tummy upset.
- If you'll be traveling across state lines, have your pet's rabies vaccination record handy. While it's not the norm, some states require this proof at certain interstate crossings.
- Along with her usual collar with a tag imprinted with your phone numbers and home address, get a temporary travel tag that has the phone number of your destination and any other relevant contact info.
- And last, but certainly not least, while it is fun and looks adorable, don't ever—even for a three-minute break—let your dog travel with his head sticking out the window. The possible consequences: inner ear damage, lung infections, and body and eye injuries from flying objects.

“Bone” voyage!

### **3) Subject line: “People Food” That’s OK For Your Pet**

Here’s a scenario that may be common in your home: Your cat or dog begs or stares at you longingly at mealtime. If you’re a pet owner who doesn’t mind this behavior and enjoys sharing your “people food” with him—or, perhaps, you want to share you food but don’t know if it’s good for his wellbeing—here are some safe and healthful treats that you *and* your furry friend can enjoy.

Apples (seedless)

Almonds (unsalted)

Bananas

Baked potatoes

Bread (without raisins)

Carrots

Cucumbers

Green beans

Lean meats (cooked)

Pretzels (unsalted)

Pasta (plain, cooked)

Zucchini

Important: Make sure that all treats are cut into sizes that are easy (i.e., small enough) for your pet to chew. There’s a chance that your pet may experience digestive upsets because of any of these foods. If so, identify the offenders and stop giving them to him. Or, eliminate “people food” from his diet.

And please remember that delicacies should make up only five to 10 percent of your pet’s diet. The remainder should come from a nutritionally complete pet food.

**SPECIAL OFFER: Get your pet’s nails clipped at Willard Animal Hospital before December 1, and receive a 20% DISCOUNT from**

our wide selection of fun coats and sweaters.