

IT'S COLD OUT THERE!

Who are those cats you see outside on freezing cold days? They may be pets whose owners let them, (or put them), outside. Or they could be community cats, a group that includes feral, (who are afraid of people) and strays (lost or abandoned). No matter how resourceful these cats are they need help surviving winter.

Here are a few tips on what you can do for stray and feral cats during the winter season.

- Provide daily feeding to keep the cats weight on. Calories are burned faster when they are cold.
- Provide fresh drinking water daily. Add a bit of sugar to raise the freezing temperature and add a few calories.
- Bring the cat inside for one night. A basement, bathroom or garage. Even if they hide the entire night they are warm and dry.
- Always bang on the hood of your car and check tire wells. Cats as well as other Critters like to hide there for warmth. Honk your horn and wait a minute before driving off in case an animal is hiding under the car for warmth.

Give outdoor cats shelter from the cold

Although their thickened winter coats help feral and stray cats weather winter chills, they still need a warm dry insulated and appropriately sized shelter. It is cheap and easy to build a shelter, yet the feeling you will get helping is priceless.

Supplies needed

Rubbermaid Tote - 18 Gallon, Styrofoam Cooler to fit inside tote, Straw, Duct Tape, Exacto Knife

Simple instructions:

1. Using a utility knife cut a 6" diameter hole in the tote to act as an entrance or exit.
2. Insert a Styrofoam cooler for insulation and cut a matching 6" diameter hole
3. Add Straw in and around the Styrofoam cooler using as much as possible
4. Add your Styrofoam lid for added insulation. Secure lid in place with a few pieces of duct tape
5. Complete by adding your lid back onto the tote. You may want to place additional tape on the lid.



Size matters

The shelter must trap the cat's body heat to warm its interior. If the shelter is too large it will be difficult for the cat's heat to keep the space warm.

What to put in the shelter

Straw is the best bedding as it will allow the cat to burrow. Keep it clean and replace bedding often as it will get moist and dirty. Do not use blankets, towels or folded newspaper as they absorb heat and chill the cat lying on them.