



what's inside



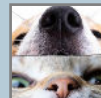
How do we protect our pets from winter's dangers?

PAGES 1 - 2



Would you give your pet the gift of good health this holiday?

PAGE 2



Do your dogs and cats smell the world like you do?

PAGES 3 - 4

Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter

REASON for Burke

voice of REASON:
saving dogs and cats in our county

Fall 2026



state of REASON:

**homeless animals?
crowded shelters?**

**Don't complain.
DO something!**

If you can't TNR: Adopt
If you can't Adopt: Foster
If you can't Foster: Sponsor
If you can't Sponsor: Volunteer
If you can't Volunteer: Donate
If you can't Donate: Educate

Be part of the solution!



winter's hidden dangers: beyond the cold

As it gets cooler, many animal lovers begin to prepare homes, yards, and pet areas for the winter. But winter isn't just about cold. Hazards multiply this time of year for outdoor pets.



Many animal lovers likely cringe at the thought of an animal freezing or starving to death. But did you know there are other hazards in the winter we might not think about? For example, the use of antifreeze and deicers increases in winter, and both pose grave dangers to dogs and cats. Antifreeze smells sweet to pets and

can destroy the kidneys in 24-48 hours. It only takes a small amount to be fatal: as little as one teaspoon can kill a cat. Deicers contain salts, which can burn the tender skin on paw pads. And if ingested, these salts can raise sodium levels significantly, leading to severe vomiting and seizures. To prevent problems, seal these items, store them away from pet areas, clean up any spills, and wipe your pet's feet after walking outside.

Monitor outdoor water sources. Be sure you are checking bowls and buckets for freezing. Refill water bowls as needed and be sure they are placed in a sunny area to speed any melting after freezing overnight temps.

Use straw for outdoor pet bedding! Fabrics feel cozy to us, but they can hold moisture and freeze in cold weather. Straw is insulating and doesn't hold water as easily. If you have outdoor shelters for cats, make sure they are leakproof and insulated

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

with straw. Be sure the shelter is placed in the sun when possible and the opening is facing north to keep the rain out.

And for your indoor pets, keep the regular "holiday hazards" in mind:

- Extra people in/out the door during gatherings could allow pets to escape.
- Strange people and more activity leads to stress for pets.
- Busy holidays mean less time to walk or play with your pet.
- Fragile decorations and poisonous plants such as poinsettias and mistletoe can be dangerous.
- More sweets lead to possible health emergencies (xylitol is TOXIC for dogs, often within just 30-60 min).
- Increased use of space heaters and/or fireplaces can be fire hazards.

***Coming in the next issue...
more tips on keeping pets
safe during the winter!***

Open Volunteer Application

Click above or type in browser:
reason-burkenc.org/volunteer/



Total Spays/Neuters
Supported by REASON
(on September 30, 2026)

6,880



**Outdoor pets need shelter in winter.
You may need to help them if they can't
build it themselves.**

Find simple DIY
instructions and
videos for building
outdoor shelters on
our Facebook page,
YouTube Channel,
and website.

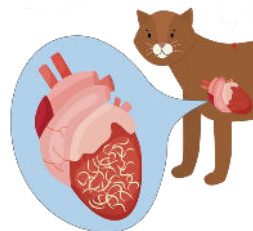
giving your pets the gift of good health

Do you love giving your pets gifts? New toys? A special treat? A cozy new bed? These are all gifts that your pet will enjoy, but there's another gift that is much more important. One of the most important gifts we can give our pets is something they can't play with or unwrap: **the gift of good health.**



Heartworm prevention is one of the simplest ways we can protect our dogs and cats from a potentially deadly disease. It starts with the bite of an infected mosquito. Once a pet is infected, heartworms grow into large worms

that live and multiply in your pet's heart, lungs, and blood vessels. Over time, these worms can cause potentially fatal damage. Treatment for heartworms can be expensive, lengthy, and difficult for both pets and their families.



Here in North Carolina, prevention is very important. The American Heartworm Society's 2025 Heartworm Incidence Survey ranked North Carolina eighth among states for heartworm incidence. This places our state firmly among the areas where heartworms are a great concern. The survey also identified the central Carolinas as a new heartworm "hot spot." Some areas in the central Carolinas report more than 100 heartworm cases per veterinary clinic.



**To find out if you qualify for pet
spay or neuter surgery assistance,
contact REASON at 828.403.3675.**

The good news is that heartworm disease is preventable! The first step is regular testing for heartworms by a veterinarian.

The American Heartworm Society recommends year-round heartworm prevention for dogs and cats. Preventatives come in several forms, including monthly medications, topical treatments, and longer-lasting options. Your vet can help determine which option is safest and most appropriate for your pet.

We know that preventive care can be expensive. Is the cost keeping you from protecting your pet? If so, please know that you have options.

- Call your vet and tell him/her you would like to know the most affordable option to prevent heartworms for your pets.
- In Burke County, visit the monthly clinics at Tractor Supply Company. Speak with the vets there about options for your furry friends.
- Outside Burke County, contact groups that offer heartworm packages. The Humane Society of Catawba County currently offers low-cost wellness packages that include heartworm testing and prevention. The Humane Society of Charlotte provides affordable heartworm testing and preventative medications. In western North Carolina, Noah's Ark Humane Society offers heartworm preventatives and reduced pricing for income-qualified families.

Your pet doesn't need another toy nearly as much as they need the gift of another healthy year by your side.

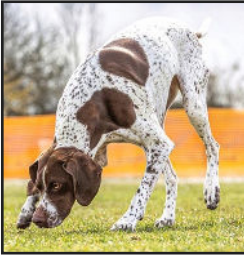


Give your pets the gift of good health!

how dogs & cats smell our world

Does your dog sniff the ground or the air when you're taking a walk?

Does your cat stare into space with his upper lip curled and his mouth partially open? If your pets do these things, then they are learning about their surroundings.



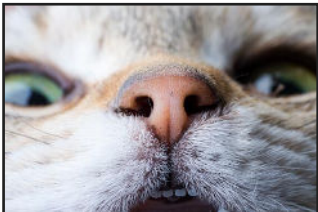
So how good is your dog or cat's sense of smell? How do their noses differ from ours, and what part do their brains play in detecting smells?

How the Nose Works

When humans breathe in, one path to the brain handles both smelling and breathing. The air we breathe runs in and out. And when we breathe out, any scent we just smelled is also expelled.



When dogs and cats breathe in, a tissue membrane inside their nostrils splits the wind stream into two different paths: one path goes to the back of the nose for smelling and one path runs to the lungs for breathing. When scents are in the smelling path, they pass through a maze of coiled mucus-covered bones, a "sniffing highway" to the brain. These bones filter out dust and other irritants before the air streams leave the nose.



Dogs and cats gather smells all around them while also sorting out one specific scent AND breathing normally. In addition, each nostril operates independently to capture different smells from different directions.

The Scent Sensors

A human has about 5 million olfactory receptors (odor sensors) in his nose that collect and send smells to the brain. In comparison, a dog has 125 million to 300 million olfactory receptors, depending on the breed. These receptors allow a dog to recognize scents up to 12 miles away in perfect weather. Under normal real-life conditions, most dogs can recognize scents up to 1 or 2 miles away.

A cat has 45 million to 200 million olfactory receptors in his nose. All in all, a cat's sense of smell is 14 to 20 times better than a human's. Most cats have an even better sense of smell than the average dog and can identify a larger variety of scents up to 4 miles away.

In real life, a human might smell food cooking in the next room. A cat smells the same food from several houses away. And the average dog might pick up that scent from the other end of the neighborhood.

The Secret Scent Organ

Each dog and cat has a secret weapon in the roof of their mouth. The Jacobson's organ works with your pet's nose to "taste" special chemicals in the air called pheromones. If you see a tomcat staring into space with his upper lip curled and his mouth partially open, he's probably catching the scent of a female cat in heat several miles away! Cats tend to rely on their Jacobson's organ more than dogs do. And humans? They don't even have this organ.

From the Nose to the Brain

The part of your dog or cat's brain that processes scents takes up more of their brain than the same area in a human's brain.

Picture these examples. In a human, the processing area is about the size of two postage stamps. The cat's receptors live in an area about the size of a business card, while the dog's receptors are about the size of a regular piece of paper.

(continued on page 4)



5 ways to get information from REASON

Did you know that REASON posts valuable information on the internet? From our website to social media accounts, you can read tips or get updates on our spay/neuter schedules.

Our website

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to open our website:

<https://reason-burkenc.org/>

Our YouTube channel

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to view our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@REASON-SpayorNeuter>

Our Facebook page

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to view our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/REASON.SpayNeuter>

Our Instagram account

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to view our Instagram videos:

https://www.instagram.com/n_burkenc/

Our email address

You can contact us directly by sending an email to the REASON webmaster:

webmaster@reason-nc.org

Remember: Please like, follow, or subscribe to our social media to get the latest updates.

(Cont.) how dogs & cats smell our world

Collecting Scents in Memory

Humans are great at linking scents with happy or sad memories. We have a harder time identifying specific odors.

Dogs collect aromas, especially smelly ones, by sniffing 5 – 6 times per second. This helps them remember scents for years in their brain's "aroma memories" library. While humans might recognize 10,000 different aromas, dogs can collect 40,000 – 100,000 aromas.

Scents tell a dog where he is located; which dogs, humans, and other animals are around him; where those animals or humans have been; and how they are feeling. When a dog sniffs other dogs (or just their pee or poo), he finds out how old they are, if they are male or female, "fixed," a friend or outsider. When your dog sniffs YOU, he knows your state of mind.

Cats can remember familiar scents for months up to a few years. For example, they might recognize their owner's scent after six months or a familiar cat after a year. They remember stronger, regular scents that happened during a pleasant experience the longest. And young, healthy cats have better scent memories than cats who are older or ill.

Picture this. If scent particles were drops of red food coloring, humans need a full eyedropper of coloring just to barely see red in a swimming pool. Cats can detect a single drop of red color in an Olympic-sized pool. And dogs? They could find that red drop in a lake.

Distinguishing Scents

Researchers believe that young, active dogs can distinguish smells between 10,000 to 100,000 times better than humans can. For example, a human may smell spaghetti cooking. A dog or cat, however, smells the same spaghetti in layers: they smell the meat, then the green pepper, then the onions.

In addition, a cat can detect yesterday's meal, everyone who lives in the house, and if there are other pets. The dog will smell what you cooked in the past few days, the people who visited in the past week, whether your guests brought food last weekend, and what everyone ate for breakfast.



Cats have another secret weapon: they possess 30 special cells that distinguish between different types of scents. This is WAY more than dogs, who have only 9 of these special cells, making cats champions at discriminating between very similar odors.

Want another example of the difference between us and our pets? Look at your backyard. You might smell freshly cut grass. Your cat detects the mouse that ran through the yard yesterday. Your dog knows about the mouse, the rabbit that hopped through last week, and the neighbor's dog that marked the fence three days ago.

Using Scents in the World

A dog uses his sense of smell for tracking and detecting scents that are days old over long distances. Because they can pick out one scent among thousands, dogs are valuable in searching and rescuing people and animals, detecting small amounts of drugs and explosives, identifying illnesses such as infections or tumors in other animals and humans, sniffing out bedbugs, and even



protecting endangered species by tracking and monitoring their populations. Some breeds, such as bloodhounds, beagles, pugs, and German shepherds, have a greater sense of smell than the average dog.



In contrast, a cat relies on his sense of smell for hunting and navigating his surroundings.

A cat hunts mice; determines whether his food is tasty or rotten; identifies other cats, animals, or people in his area; detects danger; and even finds his way home from up to 4 miles away with his super sense of smell. Some researchers believe that a cat can even SMELL health problems in humans and other animals.

Cats have scent glands on their paw pads, cheeks, lips, forehead, flanks and tail, as well as their two anal glands. They use these scent glands to navigate and mark their territory. When a cat rubs against objects with his scent glands or sprays urine, he's leaving his own scent behind for other cats to detect.

Smells are also important to a cat when it comes to eating. Because a cat's sense of taste is not great, he smells his food; if food smells good, he eats it.

Summary

Your pet's sense of smell is the primary way he communicates. A dog or cat makes decisions based on smell first, sound second, and then sight. Their sense of smell is a powerful tool that far exceeds a human's sense of smell and allows them to learn about the world in ways that we can't even imagine.

Next newsletter...
how your pet hears the world.



call us:

828-403-3675

email us:

reason.nc.org@gmail.com

write us:

PO Box 633

Rutherford College, NC 28671

REASON's mission:

To eliminate the killing of healthy and unwanted cats, dogs, puppies, and kittens.

We accomplish this by:

- ◆ providing low-cost spay/neuter surgical fee assistance through partnerships with private practice veterinarians and low-cost clinics,
- ◆ collaborating with other animal welfare groups,
- ◆ promoting education on the humane treatment of animals.

