

Keep pets warmer in winter



Jack, a Silky-Maltese terrier cross pup, gets some warmth from an AWL volunteer dog walker.

Photo: Supplied

JUST as you feel the winter chill creep into your slumberous abode and early morning starts to become almost unbearable, spare a thought for your pet.

For the feline friend and cuddly canines not fortunate enough to sleep indoors, the cooler months can affect these warm-blooded companions.

Animal Welfare League public relations manager Gabrielle Wheaton said as winter set in, temperatures in Ipswich and surrounds could drop drastically overnight, so now was the time to give your pet's sleeping area a bit of a makeover.

"Most cats will find the warmest spot available with ease," Ms Wheaton said.

"If you are keeping them inside at night this will usually be your own bed, so remember to stake your claim before they

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do." You may have noticed your older dog, cat or even horse starting to look a bit stiff when they walk and having trouble getting up from a lying position.

RSPCA media and community relations manager Michael Beatty said although it was probably a combination of old age and a bit of arthritis, easy and inexpensive actions could be taken to ensure your pet remained comfortable.

"They can be made a lot more content during winter by providing warm and comfortable bedding," Mr Beatty said.

"In winter, pets need extra blankets and shelter from the cold wind.

"Many dogs kept outside have their own kennel and by keep-

ing a few warm blankets in there will help keep the winter chills at bay.

"Alternatively you could move them into the garage or laundry area."

Ms Wheaton said it was important to maintain your dog's exercise levels - particularly for active breeds.

"Winter's shorter days mean many walking or exercise routines can be either shortened - or dropped entirely - but is important to note your dog will still need the same exercise levels to maintain not just healthy weight, but also a positive attitude," she said.

"Some dogs can become destructive if they get bored, so maintain their normal physical activity."

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