

Antifreeze Kills Cats

Yesterday, my best friend had to have both of her beloved cats put to sleep. Bertie and Winnie were just two years old. Brother and sister, they were inseparable and rarely left each other's side.

The vet said that the cats had been poisoned by antifreeze, most likely from a neighbour's garden water feature, or a spillage as someone prepared their car for the winter.

Apparently, antifreeze has a sweet taste and is attractive to animals, especially cats. The smallest amount can lead to kidney failure and a slow and painful death.

Unless they receive immediate veterinary treatment – within 30 mins to an hour – most cats will not be able to be saved. Even with immediate treatment, many cats will not survive.

Bizarrely, there's currently no requirement for antifreeze manufacturers in the UK to add any kind of bittering agent to the mix, or any labelling that describes the dangers to animals.

A petition, supported by the [RSPCA](#) and the [Feline Advisory Bureau](#) aims to prevent antifreeze from being sold in the UK without clear labelling and the addition of bittering agents which would make it unappealing to cats and other animals.

[Sign the petition](#)



What else can you do?

- **Don't** use antifreeze in water features – cider vinegar added to the water will keep your pumps running and will not cause harm to animals. (Hat tip @blitzrussia)
- **Do** check for and clean up any spillages, when you put antifreeze in your car.
- **Do** keep antifreeze in clearly labelled, robust, sealed containers, away from pets and their environment.
- **Do** dispose of antifreeze and water coolant safely and responsibly. Contact your local authority for advice.

If you wish to deter cats from using your garden

I'm a 'cat person' but many people would prefer cats to stay out of their gardens. There are many [deterrents available for purchase](#). Alternately, a 'tea' of vinegar, garlic and black pepper sprayed around the boundaries of your garden and any areas where cats like to sit can put them off.

Hate cats? Love freedom?

There have been reports all around the UK of people deliberately spiking food with antifreeze and other poisons to kill or injure cats and other animals. The poisoning of a cat can constitute a criminal offence. Under the [Animal Welfare Act 2006](#) the maximum penalty for anyone found guilty of this offence is up to **6 months imprisonment** and/or a **fine of £20,000**.

If you suspect your cat has been poisoned

The RSPCA and Feline Advisory Bureau have this advice:

"There are times, no matter how careful you are, when accidents can still happen. If you suspect your pet has come into contact with antifreeze, leaked water coolant or if they show any of the following signs get them to a vet immediately:

- Vomiting
- Seeming depressed or sleepy
- Appearing drunk and uncoordinated
- Seizures (fits)
- Difficulty breathing
- Increased thirst
- Increased urination

Signs of antifreeze poisoning can start to show as soon as 30 minutes after ingestion, though it can be two or three days before signs of kidney failure are seen. The sooner your pet receives veterinary treatment, the better their chances of survival. If left untreated, antifreeze poisoning can cause animals pain, suffering and distress, and will lead to the death of your pet."

Let people know

Please share this information with anyone you know who likes cats, hates cats, has a garden or uses antifreeze. In other words, everyone.

- **Thank you**