

Anti-freeze poses threat to pets, experts warn

January 6 2012

Ethylene glycol, a major component of anti-freeze used in car radiators to prevent freezing during winter, has been identified by UCD veterinary pathologists as the cause of a recent outbreak of cat deaths.

“Over the past few weeks we have seen an increase in the number of cats referred to the UCD [Veterinary](#) Hospital by local veterinary practitioners,” says Professor Sean Callanan, Professor of Veterinary Pathology at the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine, University College Dublin, Ireland.

“Many have died suddenly or after a short illness, and our post mortem examinations have confirmed that these animals experienced rapid kidney failure following the ingestion of ethylene glycol, a major component of anti-freeze.”

“We cannot identify the precise sources of the ethylene glycol that is poisoning an increasing number of cats, but we are asking people to be vigilant with the storage, use, and disposal of their anti-freeze products,” he says.

“Ethylene glycol has a sweet taste, so any small puddles created from leaky car radiators, or improperly discarded or stored anti-freeze, will pose a poisonous threat to small animals,” explains Professor Callanan.

It only takes a small quantity of ethylene glycol to poison small animals and induce relatively rapid kidney failure. After ingesting ethylene glycol, [small animals](#) may initially present with relatively vague, non-

specific signs such as dull, listless, and uncoordinated movement and this can rapidly lead on to [kidney failure](#) and [death](#).

The researchers warn that dogs can also be poisoned by the ingestion of [Ethylene Glycol](#).

Provided by University College Dublin

Citation: Anti-freeze poses threat to pets, experts warn (2012, January 6) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2012-01-anti-freeze-poses-threat-pets-experts.html>

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