Ferret Safety: Heating Your Home

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Heating your home can present a number of problems that ferret owners need to be aware of. Whether it's spring, winter, or just a chilly day, keep the following things in mind whenever you turn your heat on.

1. **Ferrets can injure themselves on heating units.**
   Inquisitive fuzzies can get under the covers of baseboard heaters, exposing hot pipes. The surface of a radiator becomes hot enough to burn your ferret as well. You will need to find a way to block your ferret's access to these kinds of heaters. If your ferret does burn herself on a heater, immerse the burned area in cool water and rush her to the veterinarian immediately.
2. **Make sure that all vents are securely fastened down.**
   If your ferret climbed into a duct, she could then climb throughout the ductwork in your entire house. You may or may not be able to find her with the use of a squeaking toy. But you could even end up having to take ductwork apart.
3. **Most heaters will lead to dry air in the house, which has the same effect on ferrets that it has on us.**

   Dry air causes your ferret's skin to dry out, crack, and become excessively itchy. Some ferrets even scratch themselves to the point of losing hair and bleeding because of dry air during months when the heater is in use. Use a humidifier in the room where you put your ferret's cage, and make sure your ferret always has plenty of fresh, clean water available. Some supplements such as FerreTone Supplement or FerreTone Treats can help alleviate dry skin when given regularly. Topically, you can use Vaseline on her dry, cracking paw pads and also on her nose.

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4. **Exposing your ferret to cold drafts may cause discomfort.**
   Exposing your ferret to drafts throughout cold months can have the same effect on your ferret as it has on you. Check walls and windows around your ferret's cage to make sure there are no drafts, and move her cage to an inside wall if possible.
5. **Overheating is dangerous at any time of year.**
   Ferrets are most comfortable at 65° - 68°F, so avoid the temptation to turn the heat in their room up to 75°F. Temperatures that may feel chilly to you in colder months are generally quite comfortable for your ferret. You may be surprised, but many ferrets even enjoy playing in the snow for short periods of time. Just make sure that your ferret's room is at a suitable temperature, provide sleep sacks, blankets and other bedding, and your ferret will be just fine.

Heat and your ferret may not mix, but by following the tips above, you can help your ferret any time of the year.

WE RECOMMEND

Drs Foster & Smith Ferret Lodge
Two levels, carpet-covered comfort, lambswool-lined snoozing zones, and climbing holes galore.

Marshall Hangin' Monkey Hammock
Roomy enough for up to three ferrets to play, swing, and snuggle in.

Octo-Play
Maze of climbing holes and tunnels encourages play.

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