

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Osborne's Stanfield Heat Mats are the preferred method of providing safe, gentle warmth for a variety of animals including pigs, dogs, reptiles, and more. Their consistent quality, durability and performance has earned the trust of thousands of professional livestock producers and pet and exotic animal caretakers. With heat mats, animals grow and rest better and maintain optimal health and comfort by providing gentle, under-body heat exactly where it is needed.

1 WHAT SURFACE TEMPERATURE SHOULD I EXPECT FROM A STANFIELD HEAT MAT?

In a farrowing barn that is maintained between 60 to 70°F (15 - 22°C), the surface of the heat mat is 90 to 100°F (32 - 38°C) without any temperature control. Under the same conditions, Nursery Heat Mats operate at 80 - 90°F (27 - 32°C).

Ambient air temperature, type of flooring material, and even the number and species of animal using the heat mat influence exact surface temperatures. A variety of power controls specifically designed for temperature control are available and are always recommended for optimum performance and economy. Allow about one hour after power is applied to measure the surface temperatures accurately.

2 SHOULD I USE BEDDING OR OTHER COVERING MATERIALS WITH A STANFIELD HEAT PAD?

No. Coverings of any sort are not recommended or needed. Covering a heat mat with bedding materials or residues will usually result in inefficient, improper, and even unsafe operation. Stanfield Heat Mats are durably designed for direct contact with animals and eliminate the need for bedding and the cost and work associated with the maintenance of bedding.

3 SHOULD I PROVIDE OTHER HEAT IN THE BARN IN ADDITION TO A STANFIELD HEAT MAT?

Stanfield Heat Mats do not produce enough heat to warm an entire barn or room. They attract pigs and other juvenile animals because they provide a warm area for resting. If the air temperature drops too low (e.g. less than 60°F [15°C]), then chilling is possible, especially if the laying area permits drafts.

4 HOW DO NEWBORN ANIMALS FIND THE HEAT MAT IN THEIR PEN OR ENCLOSURE?

While exploring their surroundings, animals usually find the heat mat without assistance. For farrowing pigs, added radiant warmth of a heat lamp may be used immediately after birth to help dry piglets. Positioning the lamp over the heat mat after parturition is complete helps draw piglets to the heat mat. Remember to remove the lamp after a few hours to save energy and experience the full benefits of the heat mat.

5 CAN I USE A STANFIELD HEAT MAT ON ANY KIND OF FLOOR/SURFACE?

Yes. Stanfield Heat Mats can be safely secured to a variety of surfaces, including wire-mesh, plastic, concrete, and wood. In farrowing barns, excellent results are obtained on wire-mesh floors because the heat mat eliminates drafts and contact with cold metal. Updrafts from below are also eliminated with heat mats.

For surfaces like wood and concrete, ensure floors drain well so excess moisture doesn't collect under the mat. Prolonged exposure to liquids can shorten the life of the heat mat. Remember to always use a power control on solid floors to set and maintain a safe and comfortable operating temperature based on floor type.

6 DOES THE STANFIELD HEAT PAD HAVE AN INTERNAL THERMOSTAT?

No. Stanfield Heat Mats are designed to provide a constant amount of heat. An internal thermostat is not a reliable way to control heat mat temperature. First, an internal thermostat samples the temperature in only a very small region, and second, such a thermostat is inherently less durable than the heat mat itself. The use of a rheostat or power control is a better alternative and recommended for reliable and economical control of heat mat surface temperatures.

7 HOW DO I CHOOSE BETWEEN THE DIFFERENT MODELS OF HEAT MATS?

A heat pad shape and size exists for every application and type of animal: for piglets in farrowing and nursery, for starting pigs in wean-to-finish barns, for reptiles, turtles and tortoises, for puppies, and many other species. Contact customer service about your application and let us help you choose the best model to fit your need.

8 SHOULD HEAT MATS BE ANCHORED DOWN? IF SO, HOW ARE THEY ANCHORED?

Fastening heat mats to the floor, draft barrier, or wall helps prevent accidental access by adult animals. Securely fasten using the predrilled holes around the perimeter of the mat using fasteners like cable ties or bolts. If additional fastening points are needed, drill holes at the predimpled location within the one-inch (25 mm) border area.

9 DOES THE POWER SUPPLY CORD OF MY HEAT MAT NEED TO BE PROTECTED?

Yes! Install heat mats so the power cord is not accessible to animals, particularly adult animals. Although each heat mat power cord has plastic conduit installed around the cord, the use of extra protection is always encouraged. Power cord protectors are available from Osborne, or plastic conduit may be used. Installation must ensure that rodents do not use this conduit as a protected hiding place. Such rodents could damage or destroy the power cord insulation.

10 ARE THERE ANY SPECIAL ELECTRICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR USING HEAT MATS?

No special requirements, other than normal practice used with any electrical device, are needed to use Stanfield Heat Mats. Always use a properly fused electrical system. Ensure a positive ground of all metal in contact with heat mats to avoid electrical shock if a power cord or heat pad is accidentally damaged. The use of a Ground Fault Interrupting (GFI) circuit connected in series with the heat mats is highly recommended, especially when heat pads are used on metal floors or in wet conditions. Ask your electrician to inspect your system for safety.

11 HOW MUCH ELECTRICITY DOES A STANFIELD HEAT PAD USE?

Stanfield Heat Mats are designed to minimize power consumption. Their low power rate is a strong reason to choose heat mats over expensive alternatives such as heat lamps. Check out Osborne's Energy Saving Calculator online to compare savings with heat mats over lamps. You will discover that virtually no other method is more efficient than electric heat mats.

12 ARE OTHER BRANDS OF HEAT MATS MORE EFFICIENT THAN THE STANFIELD BRAND?

Minor differences in efficiency and heat distribution are possible with alternative designs, but none of these differences are significant enough to merit the cost in safety, reliability, or initial cost that go with these designs. After testing many alternative designs, our 50 years of success with millions of animals show that the Stanfield design is the safest, most reliable, and most durable solution available.

13 WHAT ELECTRICAL STANDARDS DO STANFIELD HEAT MATS MEET?

Stanfield Heat Mats are certified to virtually all globally-recognized standards for electrical safety: UL, CSA, CE, IEC, and PSE. They are also non-burning and flame-resistant, so electrical fires are prevented. The non-porous fiberglass-reinforced composite material fully encapsulating the heating element resists the entry of moisture and water, allowing them to easily exceed the rigorous CSA water immersion test.

14 WILL ANIMALS BE ABLE TO CHEW, SCRATCH, OR OTHERWISE ABUSE A HEAT MAT?

If fastened securely, the thin profile of the Stanfield Heat Mat makes damage incurred by animals very difficult. The surface texture is a good compromise between smoothness (for ease of cleaning and to avoid abrasions) and roughness (to give foot traction) to prevent animals from chewing or scraping. The wear-resistant, fiberglass-reinforced composite construction stands up to juvenile livestock animals as well as the abuse from the claws of large reptiles like giant tortoises. The most susceptible part of the heat mat to damage is the power cord. Always protect the power cord from access, especially from adult animals.

15 HOW DO I KNOW THE HEAT MAT IS AT THE RIGHT TEMPERATURE FOR MY ANIMALS?

Animal behavior is the best thermostat for monitoring acceptable heat mat temperatures. If the animals leave the heat mat to rest in another location, check the heat mat. If it is too cool, increase the surrounding air temperature or increase the setting on the connected power control.

If the animals lie around the edge of the mat rather than directly on it, or if they defecate on it, the heat mat is likely is too warm. When heat mat surface temperatures are too high, do one of the following:

1. Reduce room temperature (68°F [20°C] is best for newborn mammals like pigs).
2. Reduce setting on the connected power control.
3. Unplug the mat and use only as draft barrier.

16 WHAT IS THE WARRANTY FOR A STANFIELD HEAT PAD?

For 50 years, Osborne has offered a one-year limited manufacturer's warranty against defects in materials and workmanship on the heating element of Stanfield Heat Mats. Protection of the power cord is the responsibility of the user, but our reinforced power cord bushing and conduit are very durable. Consult Osborne Customer Service for warranty details or a copy of our Warranty Statement.

17 WHAT IS THE BEST SIZE FOR NEWBORN LITTERS OF SEVERAL ANIMALS?

To avoid crowding out of the smallest, most vulnerable animals, the recommended sizes, based on the number of newborn animals (especially pigs and puppies), are:

- Up to 9 animals: 3-ft long (0.92 m) mat minimum
- Up to 12 animals: 4-ft long (1.22 m) mat minimum
- Up to 15 animals: 5-ft long (1.52 m) mat minimum