

Tips for the Pet Owners

Before an Emergency

- Have identification tag, collar, leash and proof of current vaccinations for all pets. Veterinarian records may be required by some locations before they will allow you to board pets. Make sure to have a current photo for pet identification purposes.
- Assemble a portable pet disaster kit. Keep food, water and any special pet needs in an easy-to-carry container.
- Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area to check their policies on accepting pets and restrictions on the number, size and species. Ask if “no pet” policies could be waived in an emergency.
- Make sure to have a secure pet carrier, leash or harness for the pet so if they panic, they cannot escape.
- Ask friends, relatives or others outside of the affected area whether they could shelter your animals. If you have more than one pet, they may be more comfortable if kept together, but be prepared to house them separately.
- Call the local emergency management office, animal shelter or animal control office to get further advice and information.
- Find out where boarding facilities are located. Be sure to research some outside your local area in case local facilities close.
- Make a back-up plan and have an out of town contact just in case.

Pets are a part of the family too. The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a flood or fire, earthquake or man-made disaster depends largely on emergency planning done today:

During and After a Disaster

- Bring your pet inside immediately.
- Have newspapers/disposal bags on hand for sanitary purposes.
- Feed the animal's moist or canned food so they will need less water to drink.
- Animals have instincts about severe weather changes and will often isolate themselves if they are afraid. Bringing them in early can stop them from running away. Never tie up a pet during a storm.
- Separate dogs and cats. Even if the dogs and cats normally get along, the anxiety of an emergency situation can cause pets to act irrationally. Keep small pets away from cats and dogs.
- If you have to leave pets behind, DO NOT TIE THEM UP ANYWHERE.! Confine the pets inside the home in a safe area with plenty of food and water. Remove the toilet tank lid, raise the seat and brace the bathroom door open for access. Place a notice outside in a visible area, describing what type of pets are in the house and where they are located. Provide the name and phone to contact as well as the veterinarian.
- If after a disaster you have to leave town, take the pets with you. Pets are unlikely to survive on their own.
- First few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside. Always maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost. Also snakes and other dangerous animals may be brought into the area with floods.