

“IN THE KNOW” - TIPS ON PREPAREDNESS FOR CITIZENS WHO PLAN AHEAD

Protect Your Pets During Emergencies

Consider your pets when planning for emergencies. Know where to take your pets in an emergency and remember their needs when creating your family preparedness kit.

Before the disaster

- Find a safe place for your pets to stay. Emergency pet shelters, animal control shelters, veterinary clinics or friends and relatives out of harm's way are all possible choices. Some hotels and motels may allow you to bring pets; others may suspend their "no pet" rules during an emergency. Check ahead to make sure you can bring your pet.
- Make sure your pets wear current ID tags all the time, and that carriers for each pet are labeled with contact information.
- Make sure your pets are current on their vaccinations. Pet shelters may require proof of vaccines.

During a disaster

- Keep pets in the house as emergency situations develop so you can locate them.
- Don't wait until the last minute to get ready. Warnings may be issued hours or days in advance.
- Pet shelters will be filled on a first-come first-serve basis. Call ahead to check availability. Bring the items in your pet's emergency supply kit.

If you evacuate, take your pet

- If it's not safe for you to stay in the disaster area, it's not safe for your pets. Don't leave animals inside your home, chained outside or roaming loose. They can easily be injured, lost or killed.
- If you leave, take your pet even if you think you'll be able to come home in just a few hours.
- Leave early — if you wait for an evacuation order, you may be told to leave your pets behind.

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If you don't evacuate

- Keep your pets with you in a safe area of your home.
- Keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers, and make sure they are wearing identification.
- In case you're not home during a disaster, arrange well in advance for a trusted neighbor to take your pets. Be sure the person is comfortable with your pets, knows where to find them and your pet emergency supplies, and has a key to your home.

After the disaster

- Don't allow your pets to roam loose. Pets can get lost if familiar landmarks and smells are gone.
- For a few days, keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers inside the house. If your house is damaged, they could escape and become lost.
- Be patient with your pets. Re-establish their routines as soon as possible. Be ready for behavioral problems. If problems continue, or if your pet is having health problems, talk to your veterinarian.

Emergency supply list for pets

Have everything ready to go. Store supplies in sturdy easy-to-carry containers. Include:

- Medications and medical records stored in a waterproof container, and a first-aid kit.
- Sturdy leashes and harnesses. A secure carrier large enough for your pet to stand comfortably, turn around and lie down. Add blankets or towels for bedding.
- Photos to help identify lost pets and prove ownership.
- Food and water for at least seven days for each pet.
- Bowls, cat litter and litter box, and a manual can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian.
- Pet beds and toys, if you can easily take them.
- Newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grooming items and household bleach.