

Is your pet included in your Disaster Plan?

Being a responsible pet owner means providing for your pet as well as your family. In the event of a disaster where you are required to evacuate, the best thing you can do for your pet(s) is to bring them with you. Pets left behind are liable to be injured, lost or worse. Is your pet's collar fastened securely and your contact information on the tags up to date?

Do you have a safe place to take your pet in the event of a disaster?

Most shelters do not accept pets due to health and safety regulations. Keep lists of "pet friendly" places outside your immediate area including up to date phone numbers. Include family and friends as a resource. Check with local Animal Shelters, veterinarians and boarding facilities to see if they offer 24 hour assistance in an emergency situation. Do they have 24 hour emergency numbers?

Do you have a Pet Disaster Kit?

Like the disaster kit you prepare for your family, your pet has special needs as well.

Include the following:

- Fist Aid kit
- Pet carrier(s)
- Food, water, bowls, cat litter and pan – include a can opener if needed
- Pet bedding and a few favorite toys to help ease the transition
- Current photo and brief biography of your pet listing any behavior problems or medical issues
- Leash and collar

Pet First Aid Kit: (kits can be purchased at any pet supply store or online)

- Your veterinarian's phone number (include an emergency number if possible)
- Medical records and medications
- Scissors
- Eye wash
- Gauze to wrap wounds or muzzle animal
- Adhesive tape for bandages
- Nonstick bandages, pads, towels and cloths to protect wounds or control bleeding
- Hydrogen peroxide (3 percent) or alcohol wipes
- Antibiotic ointment, antibacterial soap and shampoo
- Milk of Magnesia or activated charcoal to absorb poison (Be sure to get the advice of your veterinarian or local poison control center before inducing vomiting or treating an animal for poisoning.)
- Large syringe without needle or eyedropper (to give oral treatments)
- Muzzle (soft cloth, rope, necktie or nylon stocking) or use a towel to cover a small animal's head. Do not use in case of vomiting.
- Large towel or blanket

Remember:

Much like people, animals react differently under stress. They may panic, run away, hide or even bite.

For more information on Pets and Disasters:

American Red Cross: http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/0,1082,0_604_00.html

Pet First Aid: <http://www.redcross.org/services/hss/courses/pets.html>

The Humane Society of the United States: <http://www.hsus.org/>

The American Veterinary Medical Association: <http://www.avma.org/vmat/disasterbrochure.asp>