

YOUR PETS AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Animals, like every other member of your family, deserve the protection and security of emergency preparation.

A comprehensive emergency plan includes planning care for your pets before, during and after an emergency.

BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

- If you must evacuate your home, it's always best to take your pets. Pets are vulnerable when an emergency occurs.
- Keep your pet's shots current and know where the records are. Most kennels require proof of current rabies and distemper shots to accept pets. It is a good idea to keep these papers with the other documents you would carry if you need to evacuate (see emergency supply kit below).

Have an emergency supply kit ready that includes:

- **Food and water:** A seven day supply of food and drinking water in an airtight, waterproof container.
- **Current photos of you and your pet:** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you with your pet will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet. Include detailed information about species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics.
- **Important documents:** Up-to-date identification, including an additional tag with the phone number of someone out of the evacuation area in the event the pet becomes lost.
- **Medications, medical records:** Keep an extra supply of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.
- **First aid kit:** A pet first aid kit is the first step in being prepared should an animal emergency happen. Most kits should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors, antibiotic ointment, flea and tick prevention, latex gloves, alcohol solution and include a pet first aid reference book.
Also, you may talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs.
- **Collar/harness, ID Tag, and leash:** Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times, Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag in your pet's emergency supply kit.

- **Crate or other pet carrier:** If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation take your pet and animals with you in a carrier including blankets or towels for bedding and warmth. Carriers should be large enough to comfortably house your pet for several hours or even days. Familiar items should be included as this can help reduce stress for your pet.
- **Sanitation:** Include pet litter, a litter box, paper towels, plastic trash bags and a container of household bleach to provide for pet sanitation.
- Contact motels and hotels in communities outside of your area to find out if they will accept pets in an emergency.

If you have made plans to evacuate to the home of a friend or family, ask if you can bring your pets. It is also a good idea to ask your veterinarian if he/she will take your pets in an emergency.

When you are moving your pets, move them in a pet carrier that allows them to stand up and turn around inside. Train your pets to become comfortable with a carrier by putting food or a favorite toy or blanket in the carrier.

Special Considerations for Birds

- Birds should be transported in a secure travel crate or carrier
- In cold weather, make certain you have a blanket over your pet's cage. This may also reduce the stress of traveling.
- In warm weather, carry a spray bottle to periodically moisten your bird's feathers
- Have recent photos available, and keep your bird's leg bands on for identification.
- If the carrier does not have a perch, line it with paper towels that you can change frequently.
- Keep the carrier in as quiet an area as possible
- It is imperative that birds eat on a daily basis, so purchase a timed feeder. If you need to leave your bird unexpectedly, the feeder will ensure his daily feeding schedule.
- Items to keep on hand: Catch net, heavy towel, blanket or sheet to cover cage, cage liner.

Special Considerations for Small Animals

- Small animals, such as hamsters, gerbils, mice and guinea pigs, should be transported in secure carriers with bedding materials, food and food bowls. Items to keep on hand: Salt lick, extra water bottle, small hide box or tube, a week's worth of bedding.

DURING AN EMERGENCY

- Bring your pets inside immediately. Animals sometimes sense severe weather changes and might run away to hide.
- Never leave pets outside or tied up during a storm.
- If you must evacuate, take your pets, activate your emergency plan, and bring your emergency supply kit.
- Separate pets for their safety.
- Cover bird cages with cloth.

AFTER AN EMERGENCY

- In the first few days after the event, leash your pets when they go outside and always maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may get confused or lost. Dangerous animals may be brought into the area with floods, and the stress can make wild animals dangerous. Downed power lines are also a hazard for pets.
- The behavior of your pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become aggressive or defensive. Watch your animals closely.
- For more help in managing your pet's behavior during this transition time, you can contact your veterinarian or Humane Society/SPCA.

Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected. Those who take time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

Emergency Preparedness

Check out the Government of Canada's "Get Prepared" website for information on being prepared in the event of any type of emergency. There is information on:

- Hazards and emergencies
- How to create an emergency plan
- Emergency preparedness guide
- Emergency preparedness for children
- Emergency Kits
- Resources
- And much more

<https://www.getprepared.gc.ca/>