

Plan For Your Pets

The single most important thing that you can do to protect your pets if you evacuate is to take your pets with you! If it's not safe for you to stay in the disaster area, it's not safe for your pets.

- Evacuate early. If you are evacuated by emergency officials at the last minute then you may be forced to leave your pets behind for various reasons.
- No matter how long you think you will be gone, take your pets with you. Disasters can easily take a turn for the worst and you may end up away from home longer than expected.
- Pets do not do well on their own in times of disaster as they are dependant on humans for everything. They can easily become lost, injured or even killed if they are left to fend for themselves. Chaining pets up outdoors or letting them loose is not a safe option for the pet or the surrounding community.

KNOW YOUR PET'S NEEDS

Each pet is unique and only you as the owner knows what they do and do not need in times of great distress. Below is a guideline for a disaster kit for your pet. Add and eliminate as needed for each pet.

- Medications and medical records (stored in a waterproof container) and a first aid kit. A pet first aid book is also good to include.
For information about the Humane Society of the United States' (HSUS) book, *Pet First Aid: Cat and Dogs*, call (202) 454-1100.)
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses and/or carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure that your pets cannot escape. (Carriers should be large enough for the animal to stand comfortably, turn around, and lie down. Your pet may have to stay in the carrier for hours at a time.)
- Current photos of your pet for identification in case your pet gets lost.
- Food, water, bowls, cat litter and litter box, and a manually-operated can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to board your pets or place them in foster care.
- Pet beds and toys, if you can easily take them.
- Other useful items include newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grooming items, and household bleach.

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

Before a disaster research the different shelters that are available in your community where you can place your pets during a disaster. Learn any rules or restrictions that they may have and adjust your Disaster Kit accordingly. Always remember that most shelters do not allow animals, so you must plan ahead.

Here are some preferred options for providing for your pets in a disaster outside of an emergency shelter: Hotels/motels, friends, kennels, local animal shelter, veterinarian clinic and family outside of the impacted community.

DON'T FORGET I.D.

Your pets should be wearing up-to-date identification at all times. It's a good idea to include a number of a friend or relative outside your immediate area. If possible, have your pets micro-chipped as it is the most effective form of identification for lost pets.

For more information on micro-chipping, please visit:

http://www.hsus.org/pets/issues_affecting_our_pets/common_questions_about_microchips.html

REMEMBER!

Keep physical control of your pet at all times. Pets can become very confused and hard to handle during times of disaster and may not respond to voice commands no matter how well they are trained!

For a complete brochure on Pets in Disaster please check out Ready.gov at

<http://www.ready.gov/america/downloads/pets.pdf>

Another good resource for pet disaster information can be found at the HSUS website: www.hsus.org/hsus_field/hsus_disaster_center/