



Disaster Preparedness for your Pets

Emergencies come in many forms, and they may require anything from a brief absence from your home to permanent evacuation. Each type of disaster requires different measures to keep your pets safe, so the best thing you can do for yourself and your pets is to be prepared. **Here are simple steps you can follow now to make sure you're ready before the next disaster strikes:**

Step 1: Get a Rescue Alert Sticker

This easy-to-use sticker will let people know that pets are inside your home. Make sure it is visible to rescue workers (we recommend placing it on or near your front door), and that it includes the types and number of pets in your home as well as the name and number of your veterinarian. If you must evacuate with your pets, and if time allows, write "EVACUATED" across the stickers. Your local pet supply store may sell stickers.



Step 2: Arrange a Safe Haven

Arrange a safe haven for your pets in the event of evacuation. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND.** Remember, if it isn't safe for you, it isn't safe for your pets. They may become trapped or escape and be exposed to numerous life-threatening hazards. Note that not all shelters accept pets, so it is imperative that you have determined where you will bring your pets ahead of time:

- Contact your veterinarian for a list of preferred boarding kennels and facilities.
- Ask your local animal shelter if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets.
- Identify hotels or motels outside of your immediate area that accept pets.
- Ask friends and relatives outside your immediate area if they would be willing to take in your pet.

Step 3: Choose "Designated Caregivers"

This step will take considerable time and thought. When choosing a temporary caregiver, consider someone who lives close to your residence. He or she should be someone who is generally home during the day while you are at work or has easy access to your home. A set of keys should be given to this trusted individual. This may work well with neighbors who have pets of their own—you may even swap responsibilities, depending upon who has accessibility. When selecting

a permanent caregiver, you'll need to consider other criteria. This is a person to whom you are entrusting the care of your pet in case something should happen to you. When selecting this "foster parent," consider people who have met your pet and have successfully cared for animals in the past. Be sure to discuss your expectations at length with a permanent caregiver, so he or she understands the responsibility of caring for your pet.

Step 4: Prepare Emergency Supplies and Traveling Kits

If you must evacuate your home in a crisis, plan for the worst-case scenario. Even if you think you may be gone for only a day, assume that you may not be allowed to return for several weeks. When recommendations for evacuation have been announced, follow the instructions of local and state officials. To minimize evacuation time, take these simple steps:

Make sure all pets wear collars and tags with up-to-date identification information. Your pet's ID tag should contain his name, telephone number and any urgent medical needs. Be sure to also write your pet's name, your name and contact information on your pet's carrier. The ASPCA recommends microchipping your pet as a more permanent form of identification. A microchip is implanted under the skin in the animal's shoulder area and can be read by a scanner at most animal shelters. Always bring pets indoors at the first sign or warning of a storm or disaster. Pets can become disoriented and wander away from home in a crisis. Store an emergency kit and leashes as close to an exit as possible. Make sure that everyone in the family knows where it is, and that it clearly labeled and easy to carry.

Source: ASPCA

www.asPCA.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/disaster-preparedness

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