

This information was developed by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security in consultation with:

- The American Kennel Club
- The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- The American Veterinary Medical Association
- The Humane Society of the U.S.



## Your Guide to Pets & Emergencies



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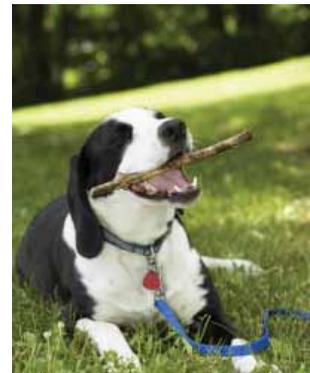
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Blackfoot, Id 83221  
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## Preparing for Your Pets

If you are like millions of animal owners nationwide, your pet is an important member of your household. The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a fire, flood, tornado, or terrorist attack depends largely on emergency planning done today. Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an animal emergency supply kit and developing a pet care buddy system, are the same for any emergency. Whether you decide to stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a different location, you will need to make plans in advance for your pets. Keep in mind that what's best for you is typically what's best for your animals.

If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if possible. However, if you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that animals may not be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets.

Make a back-up emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends, and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer.



*"Make a back-up emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself."*

# 1 Prepare

## *Get a Pet Emergency Supply Kit*

Consider two kits. In one, put everything you and your pets will need to stay where you are. The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you and your pets have to get away. Review your kits regularly to ensure that their content, especially foods and medicines, are fresh.

**Food.** Keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container.

**Water.** Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets in addition to water you need for yourself and your family.

**Medicines and medical records.** Keep an extra supply of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.

**First aid kit.** Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs.

**Collar with ID tag, harness or 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. Talk with your veterinarian about permanent identification such as micro-chipping, and enrolling your pet in a recovery database.



**Crate or other pet carrier.** If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation, take your pets and animals with you provided that it is practical to do so. In many cases, your ability to do so will be aided by having a sturdy, safe, comfortable crate or carrier ready for transporting your pet.

**Sanitation.** Include pet litter and litter box, newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs. You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach), or in an emergency you can also use it to purify water.

**A picture of you and your pet together.** If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet.

**Familiar items.** Put favorite toys, treats, or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.

# 2 Plan

## *What You Will Do In An Emergency*

Use whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and ensure your pet's safety during an emergency. Depending on your circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away. You should understand and plan for both possibilities.

In any emergency, local authorities may or

may not immediately be able to provide information on what is happening and what you should do. However, watch TV, listen to the radio, or check the Internet for instructions. If you're specifically told to evacuate, shelter-in-place, or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.

**Create a plan to get away.** If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if practical. If you go to a public shelter, keep in mind your animals may not be allowed inside. Secure appropriate lodging in advance depending on the number and type of animals in your care.

**Develop a buddy system.** Plan with neighbors, friends, or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.

**Gather contact information for emergency animal treatment.** Make a list of contact information and addresses of area animal control agencies including the Humane Society, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and emergency veterinary hospitals. Keep one copy of these phone numbers with you and one in your pet's emergency supply kit. Obtain "Pets Inside" stickers and place them on your doors and windows, including information on the number and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker where you could be reached in an emergency.

# 3 Stay Informed

## *Know About Types of Emergencies*

It's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region, as well as emergency plans that have been established by your state and local government. For more information about how to prepare, visit [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov) or call 1-800-BE-READY.

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.

**Preparing for the unexpected makes sense. Get Ready Now!**

