

SAVE MY PET!

NCWR'S Guide to Emergency Planning for Your Pets



No one wants to imagine what might happen to their pets in the event of an emergency or disaster, but planning ahead for yourself and your pets can help keep everyone safe if an emergency strikes. Much of what we know about emergency preparedness was learned as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Clearly, most emergencies that occur are not of the magnitude of Katrina. However, the same principles for preparation apply. The ASPCA, American Red Cross and the CA Governor's Office of Emergency Services provide the following tips to create an emergency plan for your pets.

ASSEMBLE AN EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT FOR YOUR PET, TO INCLUDE:

1. A means of restraining your pet, such as a crate, leash, and collar or harness.
2. Copies of county licensure, veterinary records (especially vaccinations), and a list of any health conditions/concerns.
3. Medications your pet might need or takes regularly.
4. At least a week's worth of food and a non-breakable bowl for food and one for water, as well as enough water for your pet.

5. Bedding, blanket, and toys your pet will need to make him or her feel comfortable and secure. Not all humane shelters allow animals, so there is a chance you will be separated from your pet, so a piece of your clothing with your scent on it might prove invaluable to your pet. (If your dog is crated and you could be separated, put a tag on the crate with the dog's name and your contact information.)

ACTIONS TO TAKE AHEAD OF & DURING A DISASTER:

1. The American Red Cross offers a "Dog and Cat First Aid" class, that focuses on creating a first aid kit and protecting yourself and your pet from further harm during emergencies by teaching prompt, effective first aid care.
2. Make sure nothing can fall on your pet's crate or dog bed (or where ever he tends to nap.)
3. Search in advance for out-of-area pet-friendly dog sitter or kennel, or make a housing exchange agreement with an out-of-area friend or relative.
4. In the wake of the Hurricane Katrina, thousands of pets were left stranded or separated from their owners and shipped thousands of miles away for their own safety. A large number of those pets were never reunited with their families. Make sure your pet has identification: A microchip is the best form of identification, but be sure it is registered with your current phone number. And be sure your pet has a tag with a current phone number, and consider adding a back up phone number for someone outside the area.
5. The ASPCA recommends using a rescue sticker alert to let people know that pets are inside your home. Make sure it is visible to rescue workers, and that it includes the types and number of pets in your household and your veterinarian's phone number.
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7. Do not try to hold onto your pet during the shaking of an earthquake or explosion. Animals will instinctively protect themselves and hide where they are safe. Do not get in their way.
8. If you evacuate with your pets (and if time allows) write **"EVACUATED"** across the stickers so rescue workers don't waste time looking for them.