

## **IT'S NOT "WHAT IF," BUT "WHEN?"**

### Disaster Info for You and Your Pets

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The world is made up of two types of people: those who are convinced that they will never be involved in a disaster, so don't get prepared; and those who prefer not to take the chance. In recent years the media has been filled with disasters—terrorism, hurricanes, floods and mud slides, fires, tornadoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, and even threats of biological and nuclear warfare. My goal is to help you to not be consumed by fear during a disaster, but be confident that you have considered the worst and are prepared. In today's world, families are defined to include pets and even livestock. Advance planning is essential—it could save your companion animal's life and make yours easier during an emergency.

Bring your companion animals with you—do NOT leave them to fend for themselves; do NOT tie them up in the back yard or lock them in a stall. Remember, they are counting on you for their support and survival!

The following should be in your Pet Disaster Preparedness Kit:

1. Emergency Contact Info (incl. your Vet's info).
2. Portable radio and extra batteries (Listen to EAS, Emergency Alert System)
3. Pet carrier or portable cage for each pet; also incl. stake-out chain for your dog to be used to give him fresh air when fences and walls are down. Snakes can be transported in a pillowcase; be sure and tie the ends (only 1 snake per pillowcase).
4. One week's supply of dry food and water (if pet only eats canned food, bring flip-top cans plus can opener for others you might buy).
5. Non-spill food and water bowls (water buckets for livestock).
6. Medications, dosing instructions and medical records in waterproof containers.
7. Pet first-aid kit appropriate for each type pet.
8. Vaccination and medical records (may not be able to board them without this).
9. Cat litter box and litter.
10. Newspaper, paper towels and towlettes.
11. Plastic bags for waste disposal, cleanser and disinfectants.
12. Current photo of each pet (may be necessary to reclaim or find pet).
13. I.D. tag (also on horse halter); incl. home AND cell phone no., rabies and license tags. Bring adhesive tape to write temporary address and phone on tags; birds should have leg ring with I.D. It's best to have animals microchipped. Use spray paint or fingernail polish to write on the side of the animal if you have nothing else.
14. Leashes for each pet and collars (No choke collars--consider a harness); lead ropes and halters (not nylon) for livestock (and bandanas to cover eyes of terrified horses and Vick's vapor rub to put in stallion's nostrils).
15. Duct tape and scissors/knife and rope.

16. Votive candle and water-proof matches.
17. Flashlights and extra batteries.
18. Blanket (to carry injured animal, cover bird cage if cold, etc.). In hot weather, carry a plant mister to cool down birds.
19. Cash, credit card and your drivers' license—be sure it has your current address or you may not be allowed to return to your home to retrieve your pets.
20. Tranquilizers, if possible.
21. Book or list of motels that accept pets; fairgrounds have stalls for livestock; ask feed stores for contact info for helpful ranchers for horses
22. Toys to distract them (they are even more terrified than you are).
23. Be sure your car/van is full of gas and that it can hold all your crates, cages and pets. If not, consider purchasing a horse trailer to have on hand to haul everything (enclosed with roof and ventilation). Don't forget good walking shoes for you, layered clothes incl. hooded Gortex jacket, cell phone and address book, your medicines, your food and water and perhaps a tent and camp stove, and some form of protection (knife, crowbar or gun).

Shut, but do not lock, doors and gates to your home (emergency crews or volunteers may need to enter). Never believe that a friend, relative or employee will come to your premises and save your animals; emergency crews cannot and will not allow people who can't show a drivers' license with an address within the distressed area to enter—regardless of the reason. (They can request that a certified disaster volunteer rescue the animals if they can be spared.)

After the disaster, your home may not look or smell the same to your companion animals; confine them until you are sure they have adapted. Check fences and pastures for damage, debris, downed power lines, wildlife or snakes that could injure your animals.

Helpful websites:

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| <a href="http://www.petswelcome.com">www.petswelcome.com</a>                           | Red Cross shelters can't accept animals; use this website to search for a pet friendly hotel in your area.  |
| <a href="http://www.1888PETS911.org">www.1888PETS911.org</a>                           | 24 hour service to unite a found pet with its guardian during emergencies.  |
| <a href="http://www.hsus.org/disaster/index.html">www.hsus.org/disaster/index.html</a> | The U.S. Humane society has an online pamphlet with disaster preparedness tips.   |
| <a href="http://www.uan.org/ears">www.uan.org/ears</a>                                 | Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS), the only organization that recruits and trains volunteers on a national level to help animals during disasters. |
| <a href="http://www.noahswish.org">www.noahswish.org</a>                               | Noah's Wish is an animal welfare organization dedicated exclusively to rescuing animals after disasters.  |

[www.SearchDogFoundation.org](http://www.SearchDogFoundation.org) For information about the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation.

Your First Aid Kit Should Contain:

First Aid Book for people and pets  
Kerlex, Kling or any other brand of roller/wrapping bandage – min. of 2 rolls (Learn how to muzzle a dog with this.)  
4 x 4 inch gauze pads (for lacerations)  
Sanitary napkins (to control excessive bleeding)  
Adhesive tape (to secure dressings and bandages)  
Band-Aids  
Antiseptic wipes  
Chemical Ice Pack  
Sterile water (to flush wounds)  
Triangular bandage (to secure broken arms, legs, shoulder dislocations, sprains)  
Scissors, tweezers and sterile needles for splinters  
Ace bandage  
Aspirin/pain relief tablets  
Aluminum space blanket  
Pocket mask (for CPR on other person—due to HIV inf., etc.)  
Pen light or mini flashlight  
Latex gloves  
Antibiotic ointment  
Ophthalmic ointment

Be sure you have Bleach to purify water. (Use only household liquid bleach to kill micro-organisms. Use bleach that contains 5.25% sodium hypochlorite—don't use scented bleaches, color-safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners.) Add 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water; stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water doesn't have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes.

If you have the ability to boil water, it is the safer way to purify it. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes.

Remember to comfort your companion animals during a disaster. They are as frightened as you are, and having you near to give them a hug will help keep them calm—and probably help you too!