

# Planning for Emergencies

## *Pets and livestock*

### **Prepare a disaster plan**

The best way to protect your family from the effects of a disaster is to have a disaster plan. If you are a pet owner that plan must include your pets; being prepared can save their lives. If you must evacuate in the event of a disaster the most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to evacuate them too. Leaving pets behind, even if you try to create a safe place for them, is likely to result in their being injured, lost, or worse. So prepare now for the day when you and your pets may have to leave your home.

Pets have a positive role to play in flood evacuation. Flooding is an enormously stressful event and pets evacuated with family members have a stress relieving effect and it avoids any additional worry over abandoned animals.

The most common reason for non-evacuation of pets is a lack of suitable carriers particularly for cats. In households with multiple pets it is common to have a single carrier for veterinary visits but in an evacuation a carrier is required for each pet. Ensure that you have enough carriers constructed of wire mesh or plastic. Obviously cardboard carriers will disintegrate in a flood.

Some emergency shelters cannot accept pets. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to find shelter for your animals in the midst of a disaster, so plan ahead. Do not wait until disaster strikes to do your research.

## *Evacuation tips for pets*

### **Take your pet with you**

Many people mistakenly leave their companion animals behind when they evacuate during an emergency, thinking their pet's instincts will prevent them being harmed. This is not so; companion animals depend on us for their survival, much as children do.

### **Identify your pet**

Securely fasten a current identification tag to your pet's collar. If you face evacuation, it is a good idea to attach to the collar the phone number of a friend or family member who knows how to contact you.

### **Photograph your pet**

Carry a photo of your pet with you in case there is a need to identify them.

### **Transport your pet safely**

Use secure pet carriers and keep your pet on a lead or in a harness. Ensure you have enough carriers for all of your pets.

### **Foster your pet**

If you and your pet cannot stay together, call friends, family members, veterinarians, or boarding kennels in a safer area to arrange safe foster care.

### **Have supplies on hand**

Be sure to have a week's worth of food, water, medication, cat litter, or any other supplies your pet needs on a regular basis.

### **Leave in plenty of time**

Plan your evacuation and do not wait until the last minute to evacuate. When rescue officials come to your door, they may not allow you to take your pets with you.

Carry a list of emergency telephone numbers with you. This should include your vet and any other individuals or groups you might need to contact during the disaster.

## ***Evacuation tips for livestock***

- Evacuate animals as soon as possible.
- Be ready to leave once the evacuation is ordered.
- Arrange your evacuation route in advance.
- Arrange for a place to house your animals.
- Plan an alternative evacuation route.
- Alternate routes should be mapped out in case the planned route becomes inaccessible.
- Set up safe transportation. Make sure that you have available trucks, trailers, or other vehicles suitable for transporting farm animals.
- Arrange to have experienced animal handlers and drivers to transport them.
- Take your supplies with you.
- At evacuation site you should have, or be able to readily obtain, food, water, veterinary care, handling equipment and generators if necessary.

## **Equine evacuation tips**

The list below will help you prepare for your animal in the event of a disaster:

- Bandanas to use as a blindfold
- Blankets
- Emergency contact list
- Heavy gloves
- Hoof pick
- Hoof nippers
- Wire cutters
- Leather/cotton halters and leads