

Pet Emergency Preparedness Plan



Whether you have one pet, several pets or if your animals are on the larger size, evacuating your home or property can be challenging and reinforces the need to develop your pet emergency preparedness plan.

There are two key guidelines to follow when developing your pet emergency preparedness plan.

1. Take the time to identify how you can safely evacuate all your pets in a safe manner.
2. Identify an emergency shelter and know in advance where you can temporarily house your pets.

Depending upon the emergency or disaster there can be little or no advanced warnings to get you and your pets to a safe location. If a voluntary evacuation order is issued by your local public safety officials, it's time for you to activate your emergency preparedness plan.

Your Pet Emergency Kit

The first step in preparing an emergency kit for your pet is to ensure that you have an emergency plan for you and your household. When you are prepared and have a plan in place to be self-sufficient for at least 72-hours, you are in a better position to be prepared to take care of your pets.

Preparing an emergency kit for a family pet is very similar to an individual's emergency kit. It is recommended to have the basic supplies to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours and pet owners should also consider the following four guidelines:



1. Have an "Animals Inside" sign in your window so first responders are able to take the necessary steps to help you with your pets. You do not have to purchase a sign and can easily make one by printing on a single sheet of paper and displaying in a window that is readily visible for the first responders. If you have taken your pets with you during an evacuation, you need to write on your sign "Animals Removed" with the date.
2. Prepare a pet emergency kit that includes food, water, medicine, portable kennel and other supplies to last for at least 72 hours.
3. Pre-arrange lodging for your pet with a family member, friend, kennel, or with your local SPCA. It would also be a good practice to identify the local hotels that are pet friendly.

4. In your pet's emergency kit, ensure you have copies of your pet's vaccinations and veterinarian records.

In some cases it will be safe to leave your pet alone and the following precautions are recommended:

- Make sure the area the pet is left in is free from hazards and if the pet is left outdoors, the area should be fenced.
- Ensure a good supply of dry food and water.
- If the pet is in a cage, make sure the cage is secured properly.
- Leave a note on the door identifying the location and contact information of the pet owner, the pet names and the veterinarian contact info.



Here are some great safety tips for transporting your pets:

- **Birds:** use their own cage whenever possible. If it is too large to move or transport use a smaller secondary cage.
- **Cats:** use a pet carrier
- **Dogs:** use a pet carrier or a leash
- **Fish:** use their own bowl or tank if it is small enough to move.
- **Pocket Pets** (gerbils, guinea pigs, etc.): use their own cage.
- **Rabbits:** Use a transport cage or pet carrier.
- **Reptiles:** use their own cage or an appropriate pet carrier.
- **Turtles:** use their own container when applicable.

References

Justice Institute of British Columbia

<http://www.petdisasterplan.com/>

<http://princealbertspca.com/index.html>