



## **PETS AND LIVESTOCK**

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### **Taking care of and evacuating pets and livestock**

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This brief outline addresses the needs of pets and livestock prior to and in response to disaster.

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# Information for Pet Owners

- [Plan for Pet Disaster Needs](#)
- [Prepare to Shelter Your Pet](#)
- [During a Disaster](#)
- [After a Disaster](#)

If you evacuate your home, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND!** Pets most likely cannot survive on their own; and if by some remote chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return.

For additional information, please contact [The Humane Society of the United States](#).

## ***Plan for Pet Disaster Needs***

- Identifying shelter. For public health reasons, many emergency shelters cannot accept pets. Find out which motels and hotels in the area you plan to evacuate to allow pets -- well in advance of needing them. There are also a number of guides that list hotels/motels that permit pets and could serve as a starting point. Include your local animal shelter's number in your list of emergency numbers -- they might be able to provide information concerning pets during a disaster.
- Take pet food, bottled water, medications, veterinary records, cat litter/pan, can opener, food dishes, first aid kit and other supplies with you in case they're not available later. While the sun is still shining, consider packing a "pet survival" kit which could be easily deployed if disaster hits.
- Make sure identification tags are up to date and securely fastened to your pet's collar. If possible, attach the address and/or phone number of your evacuation site. If your pet gets lost, his tag is his ticket home. Make sure you have a current photo of your pet for identification purposes.
- Make sure you have a secure pet carrier, leash or harness for your pet so that if he panics, he can't escape.
- [Animals in Emergencies for Owners](#) This video, developed by the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) /FEMA, is intended to help pet and livestock owners prepare to protect their animals during emergencies.

## ***Prepare to Shelter Your Pet***

- Call your local emergency management office, animal shelter, or animal control office to get advice and information.
- If you are unable to return to your home right away, you may need to board your pet. Find out where pet boarding facilities are located. Be sure to research some outside your local area in case local facilities close.
- Most boarding kennels, veterinarians and animal shelters will need your pet's medical records to make sure all vaccinations are current. Include copies in your "pet survival" kit along with a photo of your pet.

- **NOTE:** Some animal shelters will provide temporary foster care for owned pets in times of disaster, but this should be considered only as a last resort.
- If you have no alternative but to leave your pet at home, there are some precautions you must take, but remember that leaving your pet at home alone can place your animal in great danger! Confine your pet to a safe area inside -- NEVER leave your pet chained outside! Leave them loose inside your home with food and plenty of water. Remove the toilet tank lid, raise the seat and brace the bathroom door open so they can drink. Place a notice outside in a visible area, advising what pets are in the house and where they are located. Provide a phone number where you or a contact can be reached as well as the name and number of your vet.

### ***During a Disaster***

- Bring your pets inside immediately.
- Have newspapers on hand for sanitary purposes. Feed the animals moist or canned food so they will need less water to drink.
- Animals have instincts about severe weather changes and will often isolate themselves if they are afraid. Bringing them inside early can stop them from running away. Never leave a pet outside or tied up during a storm.
- Separate dogs and cats. Even if your dogs and cats normally get along, the anxiety of an emergency situation can cause pets to act irrationally. Keep small pets away from cats and dogs.
- In an emergency, you may have to take your birds with you. Talk with your veterinarian or local pet store about special food dispensers that regulate the amount of food a bird is given. Make sure that the bird is caged and the cage is covered by a thin cloth or sheet to provide security and filtered light.

### ***After a Disaster***

- If after a disaster you have to leave town, take your pets with you. Pets are unlikely to survive on their own.
- In the first few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside. Always maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost. Also, snakes and other dangerous animals may be brought into the area with flood areas. Downed power lines are a hazard.
- The behavior of your pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become aggressive or defensive. Watch animals closely. Leash dogs and place them in a fenced yard with access to shelter and water.

# disaster preparedness

Visit [www.avma.org](http://www.avma.org) for the most current information and for links to additional Web sites.



## Do Not Wait Until It Is Too Late

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Countless times people have been told to leave their homes for a "short time," only to find that they cannot return for days or weeks. Even disasters like gas leaks and minor flooding can keep you from tending to your animals for extended periods of time. To prevent situations such as these **take your animals with you**.

It is best to be overly cautious during a disaster warning. Preparing ahead of time and acting quickly is the best way to keep you and your family, including your animals, out of danger.

- Familiarize yourself with each type of disaster that could affect your area, not forgetting a hazardous materials spill.
- Be prepared for the possible disruption of services for extended periods of time, including electric, phone, and local food and water sources.
- having a plan in place and practicing the plan prior to a disaster will help you accomplish a successful evacuation and maintain the safety of your animals.

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## Preparing a Disaster Plan

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Setup an appointment to talk to your **veterinarian** about disaster planning.

- Assemble an animal **evacuation kit**.
- Develop an evacuation plan for all of your animals and practice the plan.
- If you live in an apartment, make sure your animals are on record with management and are able to evacuate via the stairwell. Dogs should be taught to go up and down stairs to better assist rescue personnel.
- Keep written directions to your home near your telephone. This will help you and others explain to emergency responders exactly how to get to your home.
- Identify alternate sources of food and water.
- Have well maintained backup generators for use in food-animal production operations.
- Keep all vehicles well maintained and full of gas.
- Keep emergency cash on hand.
- If you have horses or livestock, good barn and field maintenance can reduce danger. Decide on the safest housing location if evacuation is impossible, realizing that the situation is still life threatening. Assess the stability and safety of barns and other structures, promptly remove dead trees, and minimize debris in the fields and immediate environment.

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## In Case You Are Not At Home

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Preplace stickers on front and back house doors, barn doors, and pasture entrances to notify neighbors, fire fighters, police, and other rescue personnel that animals are on your property and where to find your evacuation supplies.

- Provide a list near your evacuation supplies of the number, type, and location of your animals, noting favorite hiding spots, in order to save precious rescue time.
- To facilitate a successful rescue, provide muzzles, handling gloves, catch nets, and animal restraints where rescue personnel can find them. Keep in mind that animals may become unpredictable when frightened.
- Designate a willing neighbor to tend to your animals in the event that a disaster occurs when you are not at home. This person should have a key to your home, be familiar with your animals, know your evacuation procedures, and know where your evacuation supplies are kept.
- In your evacuation kit, keep a pre-signed letter that releases your neighbor from responsibility if one of your animals becomes injured during the evacuation.
- You may also want to have a pre-signed veterinary medical treatment authorization with your Evacuation kit – this will aid your veterinarian if your animal must be treated during your absence.

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## Identification

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Having identification on your animals, including rabies and license tags, if applicable, may help reunite you with your animal(s) in the event that you are separated. Identification should provide your name, home address, a phone number where you can be reached, and an out-of-state phone number of someone with whom you will be in contact during or soon after the disaster/evacuation. If possible, include your veterinarian's name, location, and phone number. Examples of some forms of identification are listed below.



### Small Animal

- collar tag (*a piece of tape applied to the back of the collar tag can provide evacuation site information – use waterproof ink*)
- microchip
- tattoo
- temporary neckband
- waterproof pouch attached to collar with identification information inside
- many reptiles may be marked with a permanent felt-tipped marker
- clear identification on cage/housing for confined animals



### Equine

- microchip
- tattoo
- halter tag
- neck collars
- leg band
- brand
- mane clip
- luggage tag braided into tail or mane
- clipper-shaved information in the animals' hair
- livestock marking crayon, non-toxic, non-water-soluble spray paint, or non-water-soluble markers to write on the animals' side
- permanent marker to mark hooves



## Livestock

- neck chain
- ear notches
- leg band
- ear tag
- brand
- livestock marking crayon, non-toxic, non-water-soluble spray paint, or markers to write on the animals' side
- wattle notching
- ear tattoo
- back or tail tag

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## Transportation/Housing

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It is important to separate animals from different households as much as possible and to maintain the best possible hygiene to decrease disease transmission.

### Small Animal:

- Leash, collar, and/or harness for each pet.
- Collapsible cage or airline approved carrier should also be available for each pet, and bedded properly, for transportation and housing purposes - owning enough carriers to accommodate your pets facilitates a speedy evacuation and may mean the difference between the life or death of your pet.
- Familiarize your animals with evacuation procedures and cages/carriers. Take the cage/carrier out several times a year and put dog or cat treats inside with blankets and toys. By doing this, you hope to reinforce positive feelings associated with the animal carrier.
- Cat carriers should be large enough to hold a small litter pan and two small dishes and still allow your cat enough room to lie down comfortably or stand to use the litter pan.
- Dog kennels or collapsible cages should be large enough to hold two no-spill bowls and still allow enough room for your dog to stand and turn around.
- For added assurance, clearly label each carrier with your identification and contact information.
- locate and **prearrange** an evacuation site for your family and animals outside your immediate area. Ideally, this will be a friend/relative or a pet-friendly hotel that is willing to let your family and animals stay in the event of a disaster. Other possible animal housing options include veterinary hospitals, boarding kennels, and animal shelters.

### Equine/Livestock:

Equine/livestock evacuation can be challenging

- Develop an evacuation plan and make sure that animals are familiar with being loaded onto a trailer.
- Premises with facilities that are specifically designed to load and handle livestock will be much more successful in evacuating and relocating livestock.
- Locate and prearrange an evacuation site for your animals outside your immediate area. Possible sites include:
  - veterinary or land grant colleges
  - racetracks
  - show grounds
  - pastures
  - stables
  - fairgrounds
  - equestrian centers
  - livestock corrals
  - stockyards or auction facilities
  - other boarding facilities
- If you do not have enough trailers to transport all of your animals to an evacuation site quickly, contact neighbors, local haulers, farmers, producers, or other transportation providers to establish a network of available and reliable resources that will provide transportation in the event of a disaster.



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## Veterinary Records

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Make photocopies of important veterinary documents to store in the evacuation kit.

### Vaccination records

- Vaccination type and date
- Rabies certificate, if applicable

### Medical history

- Important test results, such as Feline Leukemia/Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (*FelV/FIV*), heartworm, equine infectious anemia (*Coggins test*), tuberculosis, and brucellosis
- Medical conditions and medications (*including drug name, dosage, and frequency of dosing*)
- If your animal has a microchip, a record of the microchip number
- For cattle: if an individual animal is or has been medically treated *and* is still under a withdrawal period, a treatment record *must* be maintained. The record must include animal's ID or group ID, date of treatment/s, the drug used and the drug manufacturer's serial or lot number, dosage of drug administered, route and location of administration, and the person administering the drug. The earliest date the animal could clear the withdrawal period for the administered drug should also be listed.

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## Proof of Ownership

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Make copies of registration information, adoption papers, proof of purchase, and microchip information to store in the evacuation kit. List each one of your animals and their species, breed, age, sex, color, and distinguishing characteristics.

Keep current photographs of your animals in the evacuation kit for identification purposes. Include yourself in some of the photos to help you reclaim your lost animal(s). Consider preparing waterproof "Lost Pet" signs with your animal's photo attached, your name, and your contact information to use in case your animal is lost. If your pet has a microchip, call the company to register your pet's information and make sure to keep that information updated.

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## List of Important Emergency Contacts

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Prepare this list now before a disaster strikes. Include addresses and 24-hour contact numbers, if available. These contacts can be used by rescue personnel responding to a disaster affecting your animals or by you during a disaster or an evacuation. Keep one copy near your telephone and one copy in your animal evacuation kit.

- Numbers where you may be reached (*pager, cell phone, work phone*)
- Your prearranged evacuation site
- Local contact person in case of emergency when you are not available
- Out-of-state contact person
- Your veterinarian's name, clinic name, and phone numbers
- Alternate veterinarian (*30-90 miles away, provides boarding*)
- Boarding facility (*local*)
- Boarding facility (*30-90 miles away*)
- Hotels that allow pets (*90 mile radius*)
- Local Animal Control
- Local Police Department
- Local Fire Department
- Local Public Health Department
- Local animal shelter
- Local Red Cross chapter
- Local humane society
- Local Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (*SPCA*)
- List of internet "lost and found" animal sites

#### **Additional contacts for equine/livestock owners:**

- State veterinarian
- State veterinary colleges or land grant colleges of agriculture
- Private stables/farms
- County Extension office; this is especially important for livestock owners
- Brand inspector, if applicable
- Applicable state and county livestock associations
- Racetracks
- Fairgrounds
- Show grounds
- Stockyards
- Equestrian centers
- Local haulers or neighbors to help with transportation
- Feed distributor
- American Association of Equine Practitioners ([http://aaep.org/emergency\\_prep.htm](http://aaep.org/emergency_prep.htm))
- American Association of Bovine Practitioners (<http://www.aabp.org/>)
- American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners (<http://www.aasrp.org/>)
- American Association of Swine Veterinarians (<http://www.aasp.org>)
- USDA-APHIS Veterinarian-in-Charge (<http://www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/nvap/vsoffice.html>)
- USDA-APHIS Area Emergency Coordinator

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## **Evacuation Essentials**

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- [Small Animal Evacuation Kit](#)
- [Small Animal First Aid Kit](#)
- [Livestock Evacuation Kit](#)
- [Equine Evacuation Kit](#)
- [Equine First Aid Kit](#)
- [Evacuating Other Types of Pets](#)
- [An Evacuation Order Has Been Issued...Now What Do You Do?](#)

The following lists will help you prepare for your animal(s) in the event of a disaster. The evacuation kit should be assembled in easy-to-carry, waterproof containers. It should be stored in an easily accessible location away from areas with temperature extremes. Replace the food, water, and medications as often as needed to maintain their quality and freshness and in accordance with the expiration dates. Indicate, if applicable, medications that are stored elsewhere due to temperature requirements such as refrigeration.

Consult your veterinarian for advice on making an animal evacuation kit and first aid kit that is appropriate for your individual animals. It is important that you become familiar with the items in your kit and their uses. Your veterinarian may recommend an animal first aid book to include in your kit. Consult your veterinarian regarding emergency first aid procedures and administration of any medications.

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## Small Animal Evacuation Kit

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2-week supply of food (*dry & canned*)  
2-week supply of water in plastic gallon jugs with secure lids  
Batteries (*flashlight, radio*)  
Cage/carrier (*one for each animal, labeled with your contact information*)

- Can opener (*manual*)
- Cat/wildlife gloves
- Copies of veterinary records and proof of ownership
- Emergency contact list
- Familiar items to make pets feel comfortable (*favorite toys, treats, blankets*)
- First aid kit (*see next page*)
- Flashlight
- Instructions
- **Diet:** record the diet for each individual animal, including what not to feed in case of allergies.
- **Medications:** list each animal separately, including dose and frequency for each medication. Provide veterinary and pharmacy contact information for refills.
- Leash and collar or harness (*for each animal*)
- Litter, litter pan, litter scoop
- Maps of local area and alternate evacuation routes (*in case of road closures*)
- Muzzles (*dog or cat*)
- Newspaper (*bedding, litter*)
- No-spill food and water dishes
- Paper towels
- Radio (*solar and battery operated*)
- Spoon (*for canned food*)
- Stakes and tie-outs
- Trash bags

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## Small Animal First Aid Kit

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Consult your veterinarian when developing the first aid kit. The items below serve only as examples of what may be included in a small animal first aid kit.

- Activated charcoal (*liquid*)
- Anti-diarrheal liquid or tablets
- Antibiotic ointment (*for wounds*)
- Antibiotic eye ointment
- Bandage scissors
- Bandage tape
- Betadine® (*povidone-iodine*) or Nolvasan® (*chlorhexidine*), scrub and solution
- Cotton bandage rolls
- Cotton-tipped swabs
- Elastic bandage rolls
- Eye rinse (*sterile*)
- Flea and tick prevention and treatment
- Gauze pads and rolls
- Ice cream sticks (*which may be used as splints*)

- Isopropyl alcohol/alcohol prep pads
- Latex gloves or non-allergenic gloves
- Liquid dish detergent (*mild wound and body cleanser*)
- Measuring spoons
- Medications and preventatives (*such as heartworm prevention*), minimum 2-week supply, with clearly labeled instructions. Provide veterinary and pharmacy contact information for refills.
- Non-adherent bandage pads
- Saline solution (*for rinsing wounds*)
- Sterile lubricant (*water based*)
- Styptic powder (*clotting agent*)
- Syringe or eyedropper
- Thermometer (*digital*)
- Tourniquet
- Towel and washcloth
- Tweezers

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## Livestock Evacuation Kit

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7-10 day supply of feed and water  
 Batteries (*flashlight, radio*)  
 Copies of veterinary records and proof of ownership  
 Cotton halter  
 Duct tape

- Emergency contact list
- Flashlight
- Heavy gloves (*leather*)
- Instructions
- **Diet:** record the diet for your animals.
- **Medications:** record the dose and frequency for each medication. Provide veterinary and pharmacy contact information for refills.
- Knife (*sharp, all-purpose*)
- Maps of local area and alternate evacuation routes (in case of road closures)
- Nose leads
- Plastic trash cans with lids (*can be used to store water*)
- Portable livestock panels
- Radio (*solar and battery operated*)
- Rope or lariat
- Shovel
- Water buckets
- Whip, prods
- Wire cutters

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## Equine Evacuation Kit

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7-10 day supply of feed, supplements, and water  
 Bandannas (*to use as blindfolds*)  
 Batteries (*flashlight, radio*)  
 Blankets  
 Copies of veterinary records and proof of ownership

- Duct tape
- Emergency contact list
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Fly spray

- Grooming brushes
- Heavy gloves (*leather*)
- Hoof knife
- Hoof nippers
- Hoof pick
- Hoof rasp
- Instructions
- **Diet:** record the diet for your animals.
- **Medications:** record the dose and frequency for each medication. Provide veterinary and pharmacy contact information for refills.
- Knife (*sharp, all-purpose*)
- Leg wraps and leg quilts
- Maps of local area and alternate evacuation routes (*in case of road closures*)
- Non-nylon halters and leads (*leather/cotton*)
- Paper towels
- Plastic trash cans with lids (*can be used to store water*)
- Radio (*solar and battery operated*)
- Rope or lariat
- Shovel
- Tarpaulins
- Trash bags
- Twitch
- Water buckets
- Wire cutters

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## Equine First Aid Kit

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Consult your veterinarian when developing the first aid kit. The items below serve only as examples of what may be included in an equine first aid kit.

- Antibiotic ointment (*for wounds*)
- Antibiotic eye ointment
- Bandage scissors
- Bandage tape
- Betadine® (*povidone-iodine*) or Nolvasan® (*chlorhexidine*), scrub and solution
- Cotton bandage rolls
- Cotton-tipped swabs
- Elastic bandage rolls
- Eye rinse (sterile)
- Gauze pads and rolls
- Isopropyl alcohol/alcohol prep pads
- Latex gloves or non-allergenic gloves
- Medications (*minimum 2 week supply, with clearly labeled instructions*)
- Non-adherent bandage pads
- Saline solution (*for rinsing wounds*)
- Sterile lubricant (*water-based*)
- Thermometer (*digital*)
- Tincture of green soap
- Tourniquet
- Towel and washcloth
- Tweezers

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## Evacuating Other Types of Pets

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kinds of pets as for the aforementioned animals. Transportation of these species may require additional attention and care in order to decrease chances of stress-induced illness and death. It is important to keep pets from different sources as separate as possible and maintain the best possible hygiene in order to decrease disease transmission.

## Birds



- Transportation of pet birds is best accomplished using small, secure, covered carriers to avoid injury.
- If traveling in cold weather, always warm the interior of your vehicle before moving your bird(s) from the house to the vehicle.

- Transfer your bird(s) to a standard cage upon arrival at the evacuation site; covering the cage may reduce stress; this transfer should occur in a small, enclosed room to reduce the risk of escape.
- Birds should be kept in quiet areas and not allowed out of the cage in unfamiliar surroundings. Fresh food and water should be provided daily.
- If your bird appears ill, be sure to lower the cage perch, food dish, and water bowl and consult a veterinarian as soon as possible.
- In addition to the pertinent items listed under small animal evacuation kit, include:
  - necessary dietary supplements
  - plant mister for cooling birds in hot weather
  - hot water bottle for warming birds in cold weather
  - materials to line the bottom of the cage
  - cage perch
  - toys

## Reptiles



- Transportation of small reptiles can be accomplished using a pillowcase, cloth sack, or small transport carrier.
  - If possible, promote defecation before transporting the animal (*for example allow tortoises, lizards, or snakes to soak in a shallow water bath before bagging or caging*).
- Transfer your pet to a secure cage at the evacuation site as soon as possible and if appropriate.
  - In addition to the pertinent items listed under small animal evacuation kit, include:
    - essential dietary supplements
    - water bowl for soaking
    - spray bottle for misting
    - extra bags or newspapers
    - heating pad
    - battery-operated heating source or other appropriate heat source
    - extra batteries
    - appropriate handling gloves/supplies
  - Since most reptiles do not eat daily, feeding during evacuation circumstances may increase stress. Determine if feeding is in the animal's best interest, especially if the container may become fouled.
  - Housing at the evacuation facility should be consistent with that required by the reptile. The enclosure should, if possible, be placed in a controlled environment, away from areas of heavy traffic, loud noises, and vibrations.
  - Make sure that the container housing the reptile is escape proof. Nonetheless, plan for escapes.

## Amphibians



- Transportation of amphibians can be accomplished by using watertight plastic bags, such as the ones used for pet fish transport, or plastic containers, such as plastic shoeboxes or plastic food containers with snap-on lids.
- It is best to place only one species or if possible only one animal per container.

- Small ventilation holes should be placed in the upper wall or plastic lid. Smooth the inner surface of the holes with a file or sandpaper to prevent injury to the animal.
- For terrestrial or semi aquatic amphibians use a tiny amount of water, or moistened paper towels, clean foam rubber, or moss as a suitable substrate.
- For aquatic species, fill the plastic bag one third full of water, then inflate the bag with fresh air and close with a knot or rubber band. It is best to use clean water from the animal's enclosure to minimize physiologic stress.
- Care must be taken to monitor water and air temperature, humidity, lighting, and nutrition during the time that the animal will be in the evacuation facility.
- Housing at the evacuation facility should be consistent with that required by the amphibian.
- The enclosure should, if possible, be placed in a controlled environment, away from areas of heavy traffic, loud noises, and vibrations.
- Make sure that the container housing the amphibian is escape proof. Nonetheless, plan for escapes.
- Take an extra container of water, clean moist paper towels or clean moss as is appropriate in case any of your pet's containers break or leak.
- Feeding during evacuation circumstances may increase stress so it may not be in the animal's best interests to supply food, especially if the water may become fouled.

### Other small animals



- Transportation of most small mammals (*ferrets, hamsters, gerbils, rats, mice, guinea pigs, etc.*) is best accomplished using a secure, covered carrier or cage to reduce stress.
- In addition to the pertinent items listed under small animal evacuation kit, include:
  - necessary dietary supplements
  - extra bedding materials
  - appropriate exercise equipment

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## An Evacuation Order Has Been Issued... Now What Do You Do?

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Evacuate your family, including your animals, as early as possible. By leaving early, you will decrease the chance of becoming victims of the disaster.

- Bring your dogs, cats, and other small animals indoors.
- Make sure all animals have some form of identification securely fastened to them (*or their cage, in the case of smaller, caged pets*). The utilization of permanent identification is encouraged.
- Place all small pets, including cats and small dogs, inside individual transportable carriers. When stressed, animals that normally get along may become aggressive towards each other.
- Secure leashes on all large dogs.
- Load your larger animal cages/carriers into your vehicle. These will serve as temporary housing for your animals if needed.
- Load the animal evacuation kit and supplies into your vehicle.
- Call your prearranged animal evacuation site to confirm availability of space.
- Implement your equine/livestock evacuation plan.
- If evacuation of horses/livestock is impossible, relocate them to the safest place possible based on the type of imminent disaster and your environment, realizing that the situation could be life threatening.
  - Make sure that they have access to hay or an appropriate and safe free-choice food source, clean water, and the safest living area possible including high ground above flood levels.
  - Do not rely on automatic watering systems, because power may be lost.
  - The decision to leave your horses/livestock in the field or in the barn should be based on the risks of injury resulting from the disaster as well as from the horse's/livestock's immediate environment during that disaster.
  - Factors to consider include the stability of the barn, the risk of flooding, and the amount of trees and debris in the fields.
  - If time permits, secure or remove all outdoor objects that may turn into dangerous flying debris.

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## After the Disaster

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- Survey the area inside and outside your home to identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, dangerous wildlife, contaminated water, downed power lines, or other hazards.
  - Examine your animals closely, and contact your veterinarian immediately if you observe injuries or signs of illness.
  - Familiar scents and landmarks may have changed, and this can confuse your animals.
  - Release equine/livestock in safe and enclosed areas only. Initial release should take place during daylight hours, when the animals can be closely observed.
  - Release cats, dogs, and other small animals indoors only. They could encounter dangerous wildlife and debris if they are allowed outside unsupervised and unrestrained.
  - Release birds and reptiles only if necessary and only when they are calm and in an enclosed room.
  - Reintroduce food in small servings, gradually working up to full portions if animals have been without food for a prolonged period of time.
  - Allow uninterrupted rest/sleep for all animals to recover from the trauma and stress.
  - If your animals are lost, physically check animal control and animal shelters **daily** for lost animals.
  - Post waterproof lost animal notices and notify local law enforcement, animal care and control officials, veterinarians, and your neighbors of any lost animals (*utilize online resources for lost and found animals*).

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## The American Veterinary Medical Association

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The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) disaster preparedness and response efforts resulted from an agreement between the AVMA and the office of Emergency Preparedness of the U.S. Public Health Service. With the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in May 1993, veterinary services became incorporated into the Federal Response Plan, now known as the National Response Plan, for disaster relief as part of the National Disaster Medical System (NDMS). The completion, in August 1994, of an MOU between the AVMA and the United States Department of Agriculture/Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA/APHIS) made it possible for the VMAT to assist the USDA in the control, treatment, and eradication of animal disease outbreaks. Such a response would occur under the direction of the USDA. In 1998, the AVMA and American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) signed a statement of understanding (SOU) with The American National Red Cross (ARC). In the SOU, the ARC recognizes the AVMA/AVMF as the only national organizations representing the entire profession of licensed veterinarians solely responsible for the diagnosis, treatment, health and well-being of all animals, including during periods designated as disaster relief.

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## The American Veterinary Medical Foundation

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Founded in 1963, the American Veterinary Medical Foundation (AVMF) is a 501(c)(3) organization that raises and disburses funds for initiatives supporting its mission statement, "Advancing the care of animals with an emphasis on disaster preparedness and response, and animal health studies". Contributions made to the AVMF are tax deductible. The AVMF Animal Disaster Relief and Response Fund provides support for emergency veterinary aid for the health, safety, and welfare of animals affected by disasters at the local level, emergency



preparedness at the state level, and the Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams at the national level.

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## Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams

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Some disasters create a need for additional veterinary assistance. The Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT) treat animals that are affected by or injured in disasters when the local veterinary community is overwhelmed. They are deployed when their assistance is requested by state or local officials and authorized by federal authorities.

**The VMAT Mission:** To assist with the care of animals, animal related issues and public health during a disaster following a request from an appropriate agency

The VMAT consist of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and other veterinary and non-veterinary support personnel who are capable of responding within 24-48 hours of notification. The VMAT are capable of addressing veterinary and public health issues associated with a disaster, and they can establish a field veterinary hospital if requested to do so. They coordinate the animal relief efforts in cooperation with emergency management, the state veterinarian, state and local veterinary medical associations, state and local officials, the local veterinary community, animal control officials, and responding humane organizations. They operate as part of the National Disaster Medical System within the National Response Plan.

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## Contact & Contribution Information

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*For additional information about the AVMA disaster relief efforts:*

### **AVMA**

1931 N. Meacham Rd., Suite 100  
Schaumburg, IL 60173-4360  
847/925-8070, ext. 6632  
[www.avma.org/disaster](http://www.avma.org/disaster)

*To contribute to the AVMF Disaster Relief Emergency Fund, please mail your check to:*

### **AVMF**

Department 20-1122  
P.O. Box 5940  
Carol Stream, IL 60197-5940  
or call: 847-285-6689  
[www.avmf.org](http://www.avmf.org)

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## Acknowledgements

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- The American Association of Equine Practitioners  
[http://aaep.org/emergency\\_prep.htm](http://aaep.org/emergency_prep.htm)
- The American Association of Bovine Practitioners  
<http://www.aabp.org/>
- The Association of Reptilian & Amphibian Veterinarians  
[www.arav.org](http://www.arav.org)
- Association of Avian Veterinarians  
<http://www.aav.org>
- American Association of Avian Pathologists  
<http://www.aaap.info>
- Dr. Kimberly May, AVMA Medical/science writer

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*As the winds blow on  
And the waters rise deep  
You can hear their cries  
You can hear them weep  
Those you have brought into your home  
Those who are loyal, caring and warm.  
You feed them each day, and tell them to stay  
And now when they need you, don't turn them away.  
When you vowed to love, when you vowed to care  
You vowed to sacrifice, and vowed to prepare.  
So now in times of trouble and strife  
You are responsible for more than one life.  
You need to plan, think, and prepare  
For all those who need you  
Those who depend on your care.*

— Cindy Swancott Lovern

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