



Don't Forget Your Pets!

Emergency Preparedness for Your Furry Family

By Vanessa Van Dette, CPM, RCM, ACoM, CRP, AIHM, LEED GA

Being caught unprepared during an emergency can feel overwhelming, especially if you have pets. It's crucial to have an action plan that you can initiate at a moment's notice.

Your pets count on you so if it's too dangerous for you to stay in your suite, then it's too dangerous for your pet to stay. In case of an evacuation you'll have no way of knowing how long you'll be kept out of your home and you may not be able or allowed to go back for your pets.

If you are going to shelter-in-place, do it safely. Identify an area in your home where you can all stay together. Close off or eliminate unsafe spaces where frightened animals may hide. Keep your dogs on a leash and cats in carriers.

Preparing in advance will increase the likelihood that your pets will stay safe and healthy during an emergency.

Ensure that your cats and dogs are wearing collars with ID tags that are current. You'll increase your chance of being reunited with your pets if they get lost by having them microchipped; but remember, the average person can't scan your pet for a microchip, although they will be able to read a tag.

Often pets lost during disasters will end up at local animal shelters. Know where to search for lost animals. Keep a list of the names and contact information for shelters in your area in case you need to call or visit one to search for your missing pet.

Be Prepared for Everyday Emergencies

There may be a time when you can't get home to your pet, but you can make sure your pets get the care they need by making arrangements now.

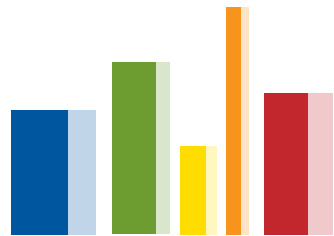
- Find a trusted neighbour or friend and give them a key and make sure your backup caregiver is comfortable and familiar with your pets.

- Make sure the caregiver knows your pet's feeding and medication schedule.

- If you use a pet-sitting service, find out in advance if they will be able to help during an emergency.

It's not uncommon during an emergency evacuation that you won't have time to assemble your pets for evacuation. If you can't take your pets, it's not your fault.

Post a highly visible sign on your window or door to alert rescue workers that there are pets in your home. Pet alert window decals can be found on the Internet, or make your own. If time allows, write "EVACUATED" across the decal if you were able to evacuate with your pets.



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Pet Emergency Survival Kit Checklist

Pets are members of your family so when developing your family emergency plan make sure you include your pets by assembling an emergency survival kit for yourself as well as your pet.

- ☐ Food, water, bowls, manual can opener and spoon
- ☐ Up-to-date ID tag
- ☐ Current photo of your pet
- ☐ Emergency contact list of pet friendly hotels/motels outside of your area, friends, relatives and your veterinarian
- ☐ Copies of medical records/vaccinations
- ☐ Information on feed schedule, medical and/or behavioral issues
- ☐ Medications and first aid kit
- ☐ Familiar bedding, small toy and brush
- ☐ Leash, collar or harness and muzzle
- ☐ Litter/pan and scooper for cats or poop 'n scoop bags for dogs
- ☐ Carrier large enough to transport and house your pet

Don't let a disaster come between you and your pets. Pledge to take your pet with you in case of an emergency.



Vanessa Van Dette, CPM, RCM, CRP, ACoM, AIHM, LEED GA is vice president of operations at Whitehill

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