

Step 7: Make a plan for protecting your PETS in a disaster or emergency!

We live in an area that is prone to certain natural catastrophes, such as fires, extreme heat, wind storms, power outages, earthquakes, and floods. We need to plan accordingly.

Emergencies like these may require anything from a brief absence from your home to longer term evacuation. Below are recommendations designed to keep your pets safe during a disaster or other emergency. The best thing you can do for yourself and your pets is to be prepared. Start getting ready now.





ID your pet Make sure that your pet is wearing a collar and identification that is up to date and visible at all times. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) recommends microchipping your pet as a more permanent form of identification. A microchip is implanted in the animal's shoulder area, and can be read by scanner at most animal shelters. Also, consider a tag with your contact information on your pet's collar.

Get a Rescue Alert Sticker Order an easy-to-use sticker from the ASPCA OR make one of your own! It will let people know that pets are inside your home. Make sure it is visible to rescue workers, and that it includes 1) the types and number of pets in your household; 2) the name of your veterinarian; and 3) your veterinarian's phone number. If you must evacuate with your pets, and if time allows, write "EVACUATED" across the stickers.

For a free emergency pet alert sticker go to, <https://www.aspca.org/form/free-pet-safety-pack>













Find/Arrange for a safe place to stay ahead of time








Find a safe place for your pets IN ADVANCE — a place your pets can go in the case of an evacuation. Red Cross shelter facilities do not accept pets but ideally a pet shelter will be set-up nearby so you can care for your animals. It is extremely important that you have determined ahead of time where you will bring your pets. You will also want to consider the possibility of needing alternate evacuation routes when you arrange for pet shelter. Suggestions include:

-  Contact your veterinarian for a list of preferred boarding kennels and facilities.
-  Ask your local animal shelter if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets.
-  Identify hotels or motels outside of your immediate area that accept pets.
-  Ask friends and relatives outside your immediate area if they would shelter your pet.

Create an Emergency Supplies and Traveling Kit for your Pets

Assemble and keep a basic disaster and supplies kit handy for your pets. Make sure that everyone in the family knows where it is. This kit should be clearly labeled, easy to access and carry. Items to consider keeping in or near your kit include:

-  5-7 days' worth of food (be sure to rotate every two months)
-  If you use canned food, be sure to include a manual can opener in your pet kit
-  Bottled water, at least 5-7 days' worth for each person and pet (store in a cool, dry place and replace every two months)
-  Pet food and water dishes
-  Disposable litter trays (aluminum roasting pans are perfect)
-  Litter or paper toweling
-  Liquid dish soap and disinfectant
-  Disposable garbage bags for clean-up
-  Extra collar or harness as well as an extra leash
-  Photocopies of medical records and a waterproof container with a two-week supply of any medicine your pet requires
-  (Remember, food and medications need to be rotated out of your pet's emergency kit—otherwise they may go bad or become useless.)
-  A traveling bag, crate or sturdy carrier, ideally one for each pet

-  Flashlight
-  Blanket (for scooping up a fearful pet)
-  Recent photos of your pets (in case you are separated and need to make "Lost" posters)
 -  Consider a photo with you and your pets
-  Especially for cats: Pillowcase or EvacSac, toys, scoopable litter
-  Especially for dogs: Toys and chew toys, a week's worth of cage liners
-  Pet first-aid kit and guide book. Purchase a kit online or assemble your own. A pet first aid kit is very similar to first aid kits for humans! Consider augmenting yours!

You should also have an emergency kit for the human members of the family. Refer to the modules in this program to prepare yourself and your household for an emergency and/or disaster.

If you evacuate, take your pet If it isn't safe for you, it isn't safe for your pets. Even if you think you will only be gone for a few hours, take your pets. When you are told to evacuate from your home you need to plan for the worst-case scenario. If you think you may be gone for only a day, assume and prepare to be away for several days to several weeks. Consider your evacuation route and call ahead to your predetermined emergency pet evacuation location to let them know you are on your way with your pet.

Evacuate early Do not wait for a mandatory evacuation order. Some people who have waited to be evacuated by emergency officials have been told to leave their pets behind.

If you stay home, do it safely If your family and pets must wait out an emergency situation or disaster at home, identify a safe area where you can all stay together. Make that safe area is animal friendly.









Be ready for every day emergencies We live in an area that is prone to certain natural catastrophes, such as fires, extreme heat, wind storms, power outages, earthquakes, and floods. There may be times when you are not able to get home to your pet. Plan for this uncertainty to ensure your pets are taken care of.

Extreme Heat High temperatures can be dangerous. Never leave your pets in a parked car: Not even for a minute. Not even with the car running and air conditioner on.




According to FEMA, extreme heat causes more deaths than hurricanes, tornadoes, floods and earthquakes combined. Heat related illnesses occur when the body is not able to compensate and properly cool itself. The great news is extreme heat is preventable primarily by staying indoors, drinking plenty of water.

When the electricity goes out If you're forced to leave your home because you have lost electricity, take your pets. If it's summer, even just an hour or two in the sweltering heat, whether outdoors or inside, can be dangerous. Find a pet friendly hotel. If it's winter, don't be fooled by your pets' fur coats; it isn't safe to leave them in an un-heated house.



Special Considerations for Birds

-  Birds should be transported in a secure travel cage or carrier.
-  In cold weather, make certain you have a blanket over your pet's cage. This may also help reduce the stress of traveling.
-  In warm weather, carry a spray bottle to periodically moisten your bird's feathers.
-  Have recent photos available, and keep your bird's leg bands on for identification.
-  If the carrier does not have a perch, line it with paper towels that you can change frequently.
-  Keep the carrier in as quiet an area as possible.
-  It is particularly imperative that birds eat on a daily basis, so purchase a timed feeder. If you need to leave your bird unexpectedly, the feeder will ensure his daily feeding schedule.
-  Items to keep on hand: Catch net, heavy towel, blanket or sheet to cover cage, cage liner.

Special Considerations for Reptiles

-  A snake may be transported in a pillowcase, but you should have permanent and secure housing for him when you reach a safe place.
-  Take a sturdy bowl that is large for your pet to soak in. It is also a good idea to bring along a heating pad or other warming device, such as a hot water bottle.
-  Lizards can be transported like birds (see above).

Special Considerations for Small Animals

-  Small animals, such as hamsters, gerbils, mice and guinea pigs, should be transported in secure carriers with bedding materials, food and food bowls.
-  Items to keep on hand: Salt lick, extra water bottle, small hidebox or tube, a week's worth of bedding.

Disaster plans are not only essential for the safety of pets. If you're responsible for other kinds of animals during natural disasters, **disaster plans for feral or outdoor cats, horses, and animals on farms can be life-savers.**

This information is from the ASPCA, FEMA, The Humane Society and Guide Dogs of the Desert.

Be ready for everyday emergencies if you cannot get home to your pet As part of your preparation, find a trusted neighbor, friend, or family member and give him or her a key to your house and instructions for caring for your pet.

This step will take considerable time and thought. When choosing a temporary caregiver, consider someone who lives close to your residence. He or she should be someone who is generally home during the day while you are at work or has easy access to your home. A set of keys should be given to this trusted individual. This may work well with neighbors who have pets of their own—you may even swap responsibilities, depending upon who has accessibility.

When selecting a permanent caregiver, you'll need to consider other criteria. This is a person to whom you are entrusting the care of your pet in the event that something should happen to you. When selecting this "foster parent," consider people who have met your pet and have successfully cared for animals in the past. Be sure to discuss your expectations at length with a permanent caregiver, so he or she understands the responsibility of caring for your pet.

Let's get ready Palm Springs! Step by step, house by house, neighborhood by neighborhood!