

Don't Wait Until It's Too Late



*A Pet Owner's Guide to
Disaster Preparedness*



In a disaster situation (natural or man-made), pets are not allowed inside emergency shelters for people. With a little advance planning for its safety, you could save your pet's life.

IMPORTANCE OF PLANNING

The state of Louisiana is home to several million animals, from household pets to livestock to wild creatures. When disaster strikes, people can rely on state, federal and private humanitarian agencies to provide food, shelter, medical care and rescue assistance. But what about animals?



Unfortunately, disaster assistance groups such as the American Red Cross and the Louisiana Office of Homeland Security & Emergency preparedness (LOHSEP) are not equipped to handle, rescue and care for displaced pets during large-scale emergencies. For safety and sanitation reasons, human disaster shelters cannot accept animals (except service animals).

As a pet owner, it's your responsibility to provide for the safety, shelter and well-being of your animals, even in times of flood, fire, tornado, earthquake or man-made emergencies.

Think it can't happen to you? Don't count on it.

By planning ahead, before a disaster happens, you can ease your worries in a stressful situation and that might mean the difference between life and death for your pet.



BEFORE

Keep your pet's vaccinations current.

Take photos of each animal, including any distinguishing marks.

Store photos and medical records in re-sealable plastic bags with other important papers, including your pet's microchip number.

Compile a Disaster Preparedness Kit for each pet.



Familiarize your pet with the kit's carrier or cage before an emergency.

Keep a properly fitted collar with current license, rabies, and identification tags on each pet – even cats that never go outside. Birds should be leg-banded. Consider permanent microchip identification.

Start a neighborhood "buddy system" to check on one another's pets during disasters. Exchange veterinary information and file a permission slip with your veterinarian authorizing your "buddy" to get necessary emergency treatment for your pet if you cannot be located.

Determine the best place to leave your pet in case of a disaster. Identify a place in your home as well as an off-site location for evacuations.

Disaster Preparedness Kit



- ✓ Pet carrier or cage for each pet
- ✓ Two-week supply of food and water

- ✓ Non-spill food and water bowls
- ✓ Toys and treats
- ✓ Current photos of each pet
- ✓ Medications and dosing instructions
- ✓ Vaccination and medical records
- ✓ Cat litter and shoebox-sized litter pan




DURING

Bring your pet indoors, especially if you cannot evacuate with it. DO NOT leave pets chained outdoors. Position cages off the floor where they won't tip over.

Prepare a pre-selected site indoors for your pet. Leave only dry foods and fresh water in non-spill containers. If possible, open a faucet to let water drip into a large container. Partially fill a bathtub with water.

DO NOT leave unattended vitamin treats, which could be fatal if over-eaten.

Keep bird cages covered with a sheet, away from windows and other pets.

Evacuate your pet early, if possible. 

Take your pet's vaccination and medical records as well as identification photographs with you.

Safe Places in Disasters



At Home

Bring pets inside to a place you can leave them if they cannot evacuate with you. Avoid windows. Consider easy-to-clean places like kitchens, bathrooms, and utility rooms. Keep cats and dogs separately, even if they normally get along.

Away from Home:

Before a disaster occurs, know where you can safely leave your pet. The home of a friend or relative is your best bet. Or contact boarding facilities, as well as hotels outside your area that will allow pets. Contact the local Homeland Security & Emergency Preparedness office to find out if pet shelters will be available during an emergency.



AFTER

Pet behavior may change after an emergency; monitor it closely. Keep pets leashed and maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered, causing confusion and abnormal behavior.

If your pet was lost, contact boarding kennels, humane shelters and veterinary hospitals.



If you find a pet, call animal control or any emergency phone numbers set up during the disaster.

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a disaster occurs...*