SET YOUR CLOCKS CHECK YOUR STOCKS

Preparedness tips: Emergency supplies for your pets

It's important to remember your whole family when preparing for an emergency and that includes your furry and feathered family members. Your pets need supplies too, and they can't pack their own. A little planning can help your pets remain safe and happy until an emergency is over.

American Public Health Association

How can pet owners be prepared for emergencies?

Prepare a stockpile of at least three days of food and bottled water for your pet. When choosing food to pack in the supplies, include your pet's usual, everyday food — the last thing you want to deal with during an emergency is your doggie's upset stomach. It's also important to keep a two-week supply of your pet's medicines on-hand. Store the supplies in a watertight and pest-proof container and place it in an easily accessible location. Check on the supplies twice a year when you change your clocks for daylight saving time to keep your pet's food and medicine fresh.

If you are told to stay in your home, keep your pets with you at all times. That way if you have to suddenly evacuate, you won't have to spend precious time trying to locate them under the bed.

What should I do if we have to evacuate?

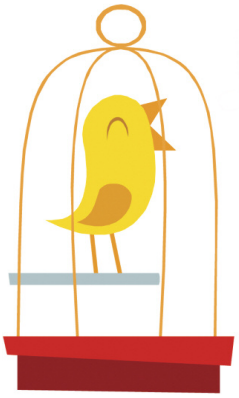
The best thing for your pets is to bring them with you every time you evacuate. Even if you are only planning to be gone for a few hours, emergency conditions can prevent you from returning for days or weeks. Prepare an evacuation kit that includes your pet food and water stockpile. Don't forget to bring food and water bowls, along with garbage bags for clean-up. Pack a few photos of your pets in case you become separated and need help locating them.

Bring a separate cage for each pet. When animals are stressed or scared, they can become aggressive toward each other, even when they are usually the best of friends. For smaller pets, consider a collapsible cage, as it will be easier to handle when it's not being used.

Certain types of pets require additional items. If you have a cat, try this trick: Instead of lugging around your cat's litter box, pack an aluminum roasting pan. It is

easier to carry and can be thrown away after use. When packing your supplies for kitty, don't forget extra litter and a scoop.

For dogs, bring an extra-long leash. This will allow them to get some exercise without being out of your control. If you have a bird, include a blanket in your supplies so that you can drape it over the cage. Small pets such as hamsters are easy to evacuate, but don't forget fresh bedding and other supplies. If you have fish, set aside a small lidded and vented fish-safe container that can be used to transport them quickly, and put together an emergency supply of water conditioner and food.



If you live in an area that is frequently evacuated, such as in areas that are prone to hurricanes or wildfires, consider keeping some supplies in your car. This will allow you to evacuate as quickly as possible.

What arrangements should I make ahead of time?

Artwork courtesy Microsoft Clip Art Gallery

Many emergency shelters don't accept pets. Plan ahead of time and locate facilities that will allow you to board your pet. Contact friends, family members and kennels located 60 miles to 90 miles away from your home. Bring a copy of your pet's medical history and vaccine records, as many kennels require proof of health.

Some motels also allow guests to bring pets, but you should check ahead first. You can find lists of motels that allow pets online, but call them directly to make sure the information is accurate. Prepare a list of possible places to stay with your pet long before you evacuate so that you won't be scrambling during an emergency.

For more tips on preparing your pet for an emergency, ask your veterinarian for advice.

For more tips on creating your emergency preparedness stockpile, visit www.getreadyforflu.org/clocksstocks

Get Ready
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