

Prepare your Pets for Disasters

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- Check with animal refuges, animal boarding facilities, vets and Council on whether they can provide accommodation for your pets in the event of an evacuation.
- Contact hotels and motels outside of the threat area and check on their policies for accepting pets and any restrictions on size, species etc. Ask if pet policies can or will be waived during disaster events.
- Make arrangements to board your pets at an animal boarding facility for the duration of the event.
- Check with vets, RSPCA, animal welfare groups and Council to identify if any Emergency Pet Shelters are to be established during disaster events. Add the contact details to your emergency contact list.
- Ask friends or relatives outside of the affected area to house and care for your pets. Preferably this should be the place to which you and your family have self-evacuated.
- Buy a pet carrier that allows your pet to stand up and move around. Make sure your pet is comfortable with the carrier by training them to enter and spend time in it.

Need a pet carrier?

- If you do not have a pet carrier, small to medium animals can be carried in their cages, pillowcases or in secure boxes with air holes.
- Check with your local pet store for a small tank with an attached battery operated aerator to transport your fish. A battery operated aerator, and bucket, of the type used by fisherman to keep live bait alive will also be adequate. If you have no other option, put your fish into a large wide necked jar, two-thirds filled, with a secure lid and aerate by gently blowing through a straw. Remove the lid when stationary to allow for some air saturation.
- Frogs need a small covered container with 2.5cm of water in the bottom and air holes in the top.
- Snakes and lizards need to be put in a container with a secure lid and air holes, or a sack/pillowcase.

Before an event

- If your pet is on medication, ensure you have an adequate supply to cover a disaster event.
- Have your pet wear an identification tag listing your name, address and telephone number.

- If your pet normally wears a choker collar have a separate leather or nylon collar available for disaster events. This is to ensure no injury is caused to your pet during stressful conditions.
- Keep your pet's immunisation shots up to date and have all records available to take with you if you have to evacuate. Boarding facilities, emergency animal shelters, etc will not take
- pets without records of immunisations.
- In your family emergency kit have extra supplies of dry pet food, kitty litter, food and water feeders/containers and extra medication.
- Consider a muzzle for your dog, as the stress of disaster events will affect animals as well leading to normally placid animals becoming aggressive.
- Have recent photos of pets available to help with identification in the event that you become separated from them.

Leaving your pets behind

- If you have to leave pets behind when you evacuate consider the following:
- Place each pet in a separate room. Even pets that normally get on well together may become aggressive towards each other under the stress. Do not tie them up.
- Leave their normal bedding with them as well as any favourite toys to help control any anxiety being felt by your pets.
- Small rooms, without windows, which are easy to clean such as toilets and bathrooms, are most appropriate. If there is a threat of flooding or storm surge leave chairs, tables, benches etc which will allow your pet to gain height.
- Leave enough dry food for two or three days in a large heavy container that is difficult to knock over.
- Leave water in a sturdy container that is difficult to knock over. A tap left slowly dripping can replenish water supplies in a container and large dogs may be able to drink from a partially filled bathtub.
- Birds must eat daily to survive. Check with your vet on suitable food dispensers that regulate supply.
- Leave a notice on the outside and inside of your door advising emergency services personnel of which animals they are likely to encounter and in which rooms. Also leave the details of where you can be contacted.

After an event

- After the event, if you cannot return to your home, contact Council to find out what arrangements have been made to reunite pets with owners.
- If you have to leave the area after a disaster event take your pets with you, as they cannot survive without you.
- Keep them leashed and in close contact with you for a period after the event until they settle into their new surroundings and routine.
- The behaviour of pets can change remarkably after a disaster event. Be alert to changes and seek advice from the vet as necessary.