

NO PET LEFT BEHIND

Before the evacuation order is issued . . .

1 Secure pet identification.

Make sure that all dogs and cats have a collar with ID tags attached. For a more enduring solution, have your pet microchipped for permanent identification. Verify that your current emergency phone and cell phone numbers are listed on the ID tag or registered with the microchip-monitoring agency. If you adopted your pet and he was already chipped, you can transfer his microchip registration to your name by providing his adoption contract.

2 Vaccinate and spay/neuter.

In an emergency, your pet may need to be housed with other animals in crowded conditions; most shelters that accept pets require that they're up-to-date on all vaccinations. If you have not already done so, spay or neuter your pet as well. Fixing your dog or cat is not only vital to her long-term health and to reducing pet overpopulation—many emergency shelters require that animals be fixed.

3 Proof of ownership.

If you become separated from your pet, you may be required to show proof of ownership to re-claim it when the evacuation is over. Keep a copy of your pet's license registration, vaccination record or similar documentation with you. To help prove ownership, keep a picture of you with your pet that is focused on your her identifying characteristics.

4 Medical records.

If you have a dog or cat with special needs or a medical condition, obtain copies of relevant medical records from your veterinarian—particularly prescriptions—to provide to a temporary caretaker. Keep all current medications and records in an easily accessible, waterproof container or bag.

5 Evacuation plan.

Where will you go with your pet when disaster strikes? American Red Cross shelters do not allow animals except for certified service dogs. Check beforehand whether friends, family, veterinarians or kennels outside your area will temporarily house your pet. You can find pet-friendly hotels on the internet at PetTravelCenter.com or Pet Friendly Hotels. Ask your local animal control agency or FEMA office where dogs and cats can be housed safely during an evacuation.

6 Contingency plan.

Let your landlord or trusted neighbors know that you have a pet and ask if they will help care for it if you are not home when the disaster strikes. Leave emergency contact and cell phone numbers for the caretaker. Consider purchasing and posting an emergency decal on the front window or door of your home to alert any first responders that an animal may have been left inside.

7 Practice beforehand.

In an emergency, you may have to temporarily confine your pet in a crate or carrier. If your pet is unused to such confinement, practice placing your pet in the crate or carrier a few times each month so that your he will cooperate in an emergency. Consider EvacSaks for your smaller pets instead of a crate or carrier, which saves space when you have to pack up and leave.

CREATE A PET EMERGENCY KIT

FOOD & WATER

Two weeks' worth of your pet's food. For canned food, purchase single-serving pop-top cans in case refrigeration is not available during or after the disaster. For kibble, place in an airtight container or watertight bag so that it doesn't get wet and spoil.

FEED BOWLS & CLEANING SUPPLIES

Pack collapsible or disposable bowls, as well as dish soap and towels for cleaning.

MEDICATION

At least two weeks' supply of prescription medications and preventatives (e.g., flea, heartworm).

SANITATION

Two weeks' worth of kitty litter and a scoop, or poop bags and a pooper scooper. Include disposable gloves, rags or towels and disinfectant to clean out your pet's crate or kennel.

COMFORT

Don't forget bedding, blankets and toys.

SAFETY

Collar, leash, muzzle, stake out, etc., as applicable.

PET FIRST-AID KIT

Bandages of assorted sizes, cotton swabs, antiseptic, first-aid cream, tweezers and small scissors.

Disaster planning for pets



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