

Disaster Preparedness – Protect Your Pets!

If a natural disaster, widespread outbreak of disease (such as pandemic influenza), or act of terrorism occurred, would you be prepared? Many questions come to mind when planning for disasters, such as “What do I pack?” and “Where do I go?” (The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the American Red Cross are excellent resources to help with family disaster planning.) However, few people include the protection and care of pets in their disaster preparedness plans. Please take the following steps to protect pets and other animals during an emergency.

Disaster Preparedness Planning

- 1. Create a disaster preparedness plan** for your family – including your pets.
- 2. Remember the “3Ps” of evacuation—Purses, Pills and Pets.** You may not know how long you will need to be gone; therefore, it is important that you take identification (a photo ID), cash, credit cards and medications. Assemble an animal care pack containing the following items:
 - Identification tags including owner contact information and current photos
 - Current medical and vaccination records. Make sure your pets are up-to-date on all vaccinations.
 - Extra bottles of daily medications or copies of prescriptions with current expiration dates
 - First aid kit
 - Non-perishable food, water, manual can opener and dishes/containers
 - Plastic bags, paper towels, newspaper (when shredded, it can be used as cat litter) and disinfectant
 - Sturdy pet carriers, cages/crates. Allow your pets to become familiar with these forms of transportation well in advance to ease their anxiety.
 - Collars, leashes or harnesses
 - Pet comfort items: towels, blankets and toysMake a list of “pet-friendly” places for families (such as motels and hotels) or places that will temporarily keep pets (such as kennels, vet clinics and animal shelters). Include the following information on your list: name of place, address, directions and phone number. Call ahead to make reservations.
- 3. Plan to shelter-in-place if evacuation is not possible.** This means providing shelter and adequate food and water for your pets in your home.
- 4. Practice your disaster plans** with your pets on a regular basis and update expired food and supplies. Practice your plan at least once per year—preferably every 6 months.

References:
American Red Cross. (2006). Pets and Disaster: Be Prepared.
The Humane Society of the United States. (2001). Disaster Preparedness for Pets.
The Humane Society of the United States. (2001). Disaster Preparedness for Horses.
The Humane Society of the United States. (2001). Disaster Preparedness for Livestock.



Tom Barrett, Mayor
Bevan K. Baker, Commissioner of Health
www.milwaukee.gov/health



Emergency
Preparedness
Cooperative

Funded by the Department of Homeland Security Urban Area Security Initiative for emergency preparedness efforts in Milwaukee, Racine, Waukesha, Washington and Ozaukee Counties.

The City of Milwaukee Health Department in its capacity as an employer and service provider does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, religion, color, gender, national origin, arrest or conviction record, sexual orientation, disability, political belief or affiliation, or military participation. Persons needing disability assistance information, language assistance or interpreter services please call 414-286-3524 or TTY 414-286-2025. Discrimination claims may be filed with the Department's Equal Opportunity Coordinator by calling 414-286-2359.