



# **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS GUIDE**

## **FOR PET OWNERS**

*Developed by National Association of Professional Pet Sitters  
Disaster Preparedness Committee  
October 2005*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Foreword.....	3
II. Four Phases of Emergency Management.....	3
1. Mitigation.....	3
2. Preparedness.....	4
3. Response.....	4
4. Recovery.....	5
III. Tornadoes and Thunderstorms.....	7
IV. Hurricanes.....	8
V. Floods.....	9
VI. Winter Storms.....	10
VII. Extreme Heat and Wildfires.....	11
VIII. Earthquakes.....	12
IX. Tsunamis.....	13
X. Volcanoes.....	14
Appendix 1: Pet Identification Form.....	15
Appendix 2: Disaster Supply Kit.....	16
Appendix 3: Disaster Preparedness Quiz, Microchips.....	17
Appendix 4: Special recommendations for birds, reptiles, and other small animals.....	18
Disclaimer.....	19
References.....	19

## I. FOREWORD

We typically think of disasters as cataclysmic events such as floods, hurricanes, or earthquakes. Although we all like to think, “It will never happen to me,” disasters can strike anyone at any time. It is estimated that the United States suffers more than 150,000 household fires; 10,000 violent thunderstorms; 5,000 floods; 800 tornadoes; and numerous forest fires, hurricanes, and earthquakes every year. Each year, two to three million people are affected by disasters. Many of these people own animals and must provide care for their animals and themselves.

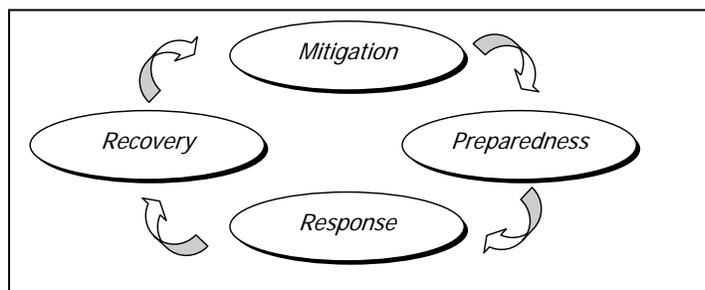
Often you cannot prevent a disaster from occurring, but you *can* reduce the impact of a disaster. A little planning may reduce injuries or death, and even prevent the suffering many pets and pet owners might otherwise experience. It can even be the difference between life and death. You and the pets will need shelter, water, and food, should a sudden disaster strike. Undoubtedly, the aftermath of a disaster will bring stress to pets and yourself.

Part of being a responsible pet owner is to be prepared for possible emergency situations affecting you and your pets. Your pet sitter might be ultimately responsible for the survival and well being of themselves, their own pets, and your pets. The purpose of this plan is to assist you in developing your own Disaster Preparedness Plan, as well as to advise you on how to work with your pet sitter to be prepared for, mitigate, and recover from both natural and man-made disasters.

We encourage you to use this guide to develop your own emergency response plan and have readily accessible kits with provisions for your pets, pet sitters, and emergency pet guardians.

## II. FOUR PHASES OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), there are four main stages of disaster management: Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.



### 1. MITIGATION

*Preventing lost pets in a disaster*

With unfamiliar sounds, smells, and sights that follow a disaster, pets can easily become confused and get lost.

- Each pet owner should supply appropriate identification, such as tags with the owner’s name, address, and phone number. Examples of appropriate identification for birds include: leg bands, microchips, or tattoos.
- A Pet Identification Form (Appendix 1) is highly recommended for each pet in the household.
- Pet owners are advised to send photos of their pets to their out-of-state friends or relatives, in case pictures at home are destroyed during a disaster.
- Each pet owner should know their pets’ favorite hiding places and make sure to communicate this information to their pet sitter.

## **2. PREPAREDNESS**

*Develop an emergency plan and practice it*

How can you get started with emergency preparedness? The following are some guidelines for a successful preparedness plan. You should start by thinking of the possible disasters that could hit your area.

- When developing your family plan add specific plans for your pets.
- Assign each family member a pet to locate and care for.
- Decide where you will go and pick a meeting place for your family in case of separation.
- Think of whom you can call outside your area. An out-of-state contact can be helpful if communications are down in a disaster zone. Let this contact know your disaster plan and family meeting place should you be evacuated.
- The best emergency plans include many people and systems that can back each other up. Please include family, friends, neighbors, your veterinarian, and pet-sitter.
- Contact hotels and motels in advance to check which ones accepts pets as well as local humane societies and emergency clinics.
- Build a phone tree. One person phones two people to see if they need help. Those two people each phone two more and so on.
- Prepare a Disaster Supply Kit (Appendix 2)
- Stay current on vaccines
- Make your home safe (or have a safe zone in your home), for your pet in a disaster
- Accustom your pets to sudden actions as would be needed in a disaster
- Check with your pet sitter to see what their emergency plan is for your pet. Most sitters already have emergency plans in place. Make sure you have your pet disaster kit ready and let the sitter know exactly where it is. Make sure the sitter has all your emergency information as well as your emergency contacts, so in case you are not reachable they can let someone know your pet is safe. Your pet sitter is your most valuable resource in emergency situations. The sitter can secure your home and let your neighbors know where your pets will be. Most sitters keep keys to their clients' homes so if you are not traveling but cannot get to your home due to work or road conditions, your pet sitter may be able to secure your pets when you cannot.
- The care of birds in disasters requires special consideration – see Appendix 4.

## **3. RESPONSE**

Several actions will help ensure a safe response to a disaster.

- Stay calm and assess the situation.
- Never put yourself or others at risk. Do not attempt to rescue your pets if your life or health (or that of others) may be placed in danger.
- Crate pets immediately. If you do not, the pets may sense danger. This will make them want to hide and they may become more difficult to catch and crate.
- Listen to the emergency alert system on your radio or television for instructions on what you should do and whether special arrangements have been made for people with pets. Follow these guidelines and incorporate them into your actions.

- If your pet has been exposed to chemicals, get information on how to handle it without harming yourself. You should have identified sources of veterinary care and other information in your emergency plan.
- ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is the best resource for any animal poison-related emergency, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Their number is (888) 426-4435. A \$50 consultation fee may be applied to your credit card.

*IF YOU EVACUATE:*

- The best thing is to evacuate early, if possible. This increases the likelihood that you will be able to find pet friendly arrangements. You should keep a list of pet friendly hotels/shelters in different geographic areas in order to expedite your evacuation.
- Take your pets with you. Animals left behind can easily be injured, lost, or killed. Animals left in a house can escape through broken windows or storm-damaged areas and if turned loose are left to fend for themselves, which could be fatal. Additionally, it can be weeks from the time of evacuation until the time you are allowed back in the area. Find your pet relocation options. Contact your veterinarian and pet sitter to help you. They are going to be your best resource for your pets' safety.

*IF YOU DON'T EVACUATE:*

- Identify a safe area in your home. Keep all dogs on leashes and cats in carriers to ensure their location. Also make sure they have their ID tags on and have your pet disaster kit with them. Let your emergency contacts know you will be in your home and let them know where your safe room is. Get a rescue sticker so that rescue workers know there are pets in the home. This can be obtained online from the ASPCA or some local fire departments.
- In some situations, circumstances may force you to leave your pet behind. **Leaving your pet behind is only a last resort.** If you must leave without your pet, you should leave them in your home. **Leaving your pet behind in a disaster may decrease its chances of survival.**
- Under *no* circumstances should you *ever* leave a pet tied up outside or let them loose to fend for themselves. Do not leave unfamiliar foods and treats for your pet. They may overeat which leads to intestinal problems. Provide water in a heavy bowl that cannot be tipped over.

#### **4. RECOVERY**

When the disaster has passed, it is not uncommon to find that once familiar surroundings have been rearranged. Pets that rely on visual and olfactory (scent) cues may become disoriented.

- Check your pet for injury and exposure to chemicals. If you have any concerns about the health of your pet or their exposure to hazardous materials, contact a veterinarian before you attempt to treat them.
- If you have to move to new surroundings, do not remove your pet from its crate until it is calm. Do so only in a closed room.
- Be careful in allowing your cat or dog out after a major disaster. Follow the recommendations of any emergency management personnel as to whether the environment is safe for you and your pet.
- Let your pet have plenty of uninterrupted sleep. If you still have your pet's favorite toys, encourage them to play. This will allow them to recover from stress and trauma.
- Avoid unfamiliar activities with your pet, such as bathing, excessive exercise, or diet supplements. Try to avoid diet changes.
- If you and your pet are separated, pay daily visits to local shelters, animal control facilities,

veterinary offices, and kennels until you have found it. A phone call is often not as effective as a visit. You can also post photos of your lost pet. If your pet has tattoos, a microchip or other permanent identification, this will increase the chances of finding it. Be aware that collars and tags are sometimes lost.

- If you find a stray animal, take it to a shelter or other facility set up for lost and found animals. Place an advertisement in the local newspaper to inform the owner where the pet was taken. Often newspapers run found ads for free.
- Share your experiences with friends and family. Talking about your experiences will help you deal with them and will offer you great stress relief.
- Consider seeking professional counseling, as recovery is aided when guided by professionals experienced in dealing with disasters.

### III. TORNADES AND THUNDERSTORMS

<b>Severe thunderstorm watch</b>	<p>Conditions are right for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lightning or damaging winds greater than 58 mph</li> <li>• Hail that could reach a diameter of 0.75 inches</li> <li>• Heavy rain</li> </ul> <p>A thunderstorm watch indicates that you should take action to protect yourself and your pets.</p>
<b>Severe thunderstorm warning</b>	<p>Severe thunderstorms have been sighted in your area.</p> <p>Animals, especially dogs, can often hear thunderstorms before humans and may show this by becoming anxious, hiding, and vocalizing. Horses will sometimes run frantically around their pasture.</p>
<b>Tornado watch</b>	<p>Conditions are right for a tornado to develop and the sky should be watched.</p>
<b>Tornado warning</b>	<p>A tornado has been sighted or is spotted on radar. Warnings will give the location of the tornado and the area immediately affected by the warning.</p>

There are several steps that you can take to keep yourself, and your animals safe during thunderstorms and tornadoes. Preparedness actions are listed below.

*Tornado warning networks save many lives each year. Each community in high and moderate risk tornado areas should have a group of volunteer spotters who watch the sky during threatening weather and report signs of a tornado to local emergency management officials, the regional office of the National Weather Service, and local farmers.*

- Designate a safe area in or near your home to shelter your family and animals in a severe thunderstorm. Teach family members what to do in a storm if they are at home, outside, or in a car, including how to relocate animals to safe locations.
- If you have animals that get nervous and pose a safety risk in thunderstorms, contact your veterinarian for advice on how to mitigate this situation.
- The best preparation for a tornado is to designate a tornado shelter for yourself and your animals. Tornado shelters are safest if they are underground — a storm cellar or basement away from windows offers the best protection.
- If your home has no basement, stay in the center of the house away from the windows or in a small room on the ground floor that is away from outside walls. Take cover under solid furniture or mattresses. Protect your head.
- Do not drive. If you are driving and spot a tornado, get out of your car and go into a nearby building or ditch and take your animals with you. Protect your head and stay low to the ground.
- Know the location of the designated shelter where you work or go to school. If you frequently travel with your dog in the car, keep a leash in the vehicle at all times in case you have to vacate the car during a tornado.

## IV. HURRICANES

<b>Hurricane advisory</b>	Tells where the storm is located, the intensity of wind speeds, and the direction of movement.
<b>Hurricane watch</b>	Issued for a coastal area when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 24 to 36 hours. In vulnerable areas, actions for protection of life and property should begin at this point. This includes animal evacuations. If you have cats, put them in transport cages early on. Cats often sense an approaching storm and search for a hiding spot. However, never depend on behavior changes to indicate the severity of storms.
<b>Hurricane warning</b>	Issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less. Hurricane conditions include winds of 74 mph (64 knots) and dangerously high tides and waves. Final actions for protection of life and property should be completed as quickly as possible before high winds and heavy rains arrive.
<b>Storm surge</b>	A dome of water that may cause flooding up to 20 feet above normal sea level along major stretches of coastline where the eye of the hurricane makes landfall. The surge of water is topped by battering waves, and incredibly strong winds. Nine out of 10 hurricane-related fatalities are caused by the storm surge.

Hurricanes usually strike coastal areas, but may also affect inland regions. They begin as tropical depressions (low-pressure center), progress to become tropical storms and finally hurricanes. Tornadoes may develop as a hurricane passes.

- Determine sheltering options for you and your animals — consider the following in your area and within a 100 mile radius:
  - motels/hotels/shelters that allow pets,
  - boarding kennels,
  - veterinary offices with boarding facilities,
  - grooming shops,
  - dog or horse race tracks, and approved areas at fairgrounds or parks.
- Set up a buddy system with friends or relatives that live outside your area, where an animal can be safely evacuated.
- Do not leave animals behind, even if you are not sure where to take them.
- Do not attempt to evacuate **during** a hurricane — stay indoors, in windowless rooms or hallways. Keep your small animals in carriers or confined areas.
- After the hurricane, dispose of perishable, contaminated, or water-soaked pet foods. This will ensure that stray or wild animals are not attracted.
- If there is a “boil water order” in effect, do not drink or give animals tap water unless you know it is safe. Official notices will be given about the safety of the water supply.
- Avoid loose or dangling wires, and report them to the power company. Inspect areas where animals are kept for loose wires.
- Make any temporary repairs necessary to prevent further losses, including repair to fencing needed to keep animals confined. Ensure that substantially damaged structures are elevated above the base flood elevation or relocated when reconstructed.

## V. FLOODS

Floods are classified according to whether they are slow- or fast-rising. Slow-rising floods typically occur as floodwaters move down a river or stream and can often be predicted to reach a certain height.

Flash floods are usually the result of extremely heavy rain or melting snow and occur suddenly. They can also result from a dam or levee failure.

<b>Flash flood watch</b>	Issued when flash flooding is possible within the designated watch area: be alert. Listen to your radio for flood forecasts and prepare for evacuation with your animals.
<b>Flash flood warning</b>	Issued when a flash flood has been reported or is imminent: take necessary precautions.
<b>Flood warning</b>	Issued as an advance notice that a flood is imminent or is in progress at a certain location or in a certain river basin. Take precautions as directed. Start to relocate large animals that are in danger.

Preparing for floods includes actions such as stockpiling and replenishing emergency supplies, planning evacuation routes, and ensuring that equipment and vehicles are in proper working condition.

- If you live in a flood prone area you may want to purchase your cats and dogs pet safety flotation halters, or vests. These can be obtained online thru [www.WestMarine.com](http://www.WestMarine.com) or your local marine store. These are sold mostly for dogs, but the small dog vest would fit a cat.
- Keep your car, truck, or other vehicles fueled. If electric power is disrupted, gas station pumps may be out of operation for several days.
- Make family and animal evacuation plans. If you are in a flash flood area, have several alternate routes to ensure rapid evacuation. Start moving animals in advance of any danger. Even if the evacuation turns out to have been unnecessary, at least you have practiced for the time when it might be.
- Maintain a Disaster Supply kit (Appendix 2)
- You should have a way to keep animals safely confined when you have evacuated and are living in a temporary setting.
- Ensure that animals are properly identified — keep a collar and identification tag on pets at all times.
- Store drinking water in jugs, bottles, and pans. Be sure to include enough water for the animals in your household.
- Maintain your animal's vaccinations.
- If you hear a flash flood warning, or hear the roar of approaching waters, act immediately. Head for the nearest high ground without hesitation, bringing with you animals in danger.
- Even if you are not sure where to take your animals, do not leave them behind (unless it would compromise your safety).
- If you must leave an animal behind, ensure that it always has an easy escape route. Never tie an animal up if floods are pending. Many animals have died during floods when owners left them confined.
- If your car stalls while in flowing water, abandon it immediately, taking with you any animals (unless it would compromise your safety). Cars may only serve as traps in the face of a raging flood.

## VI. WINTER STORMS

Be familiar with winter storm warning messages and program your local weather/radio stations into your cellular phone or keep them on a card with you. You may wish to obtain a NOAA Weather Radio to monitor severe weather. Know how the public is warned (siren, radio, TV, etc.) and the warning terms for each kind of disaster in your community:

<b>Blizzard</b>	The most dangerous of all winter storms. It combines low temperatures, heavy snowfall, and high winds that blow the snow into drifts and reduce visibility.
<b>Heavy snowstorm</b>	Drops four or more inches of snow in a 12-hour period or six or more inches in a 24-hour period. High winds may blow snow into drifts and cause poor visibility.
<b>Ice storm</b>	Occurs when moisture falls from clouds and freezes immediately upon impact. Ice storms can make driving (and even walking) impossible or extremely hazardous, and can lead to large fallen trees and/or several days without power while downed lines are being repaired.
<b>Winter storm watch</b>	Severe winter weather may affect your area.
<b>Winter storm warning</b>	Severe winter weather conditions are expected.
<b>Ice storm warning</b>	Significant, possibly damaging, ice accumulation is expected.
<b>Heavy snow warning</b>	A snowfall of at least four inches in 12 hours or six inches in 24 hours is expected
<b>Blizzard warning</b>	Large amounts of falling or blowing snow and winds of at least 35 mph are expected for several hours.
<b>Severe blizzard warning</b>	Considerable falling or blowing snow, winds at least 45 mph, and temperatures of 10F or lower are expected for several hours.
<b>High wind warning</b>	Winds of at least 40 mph are expected to last at least one hour.
<b>Traveler's advisory</b>	Ice and snow are expected to hinder travel but the anticipated weather conditions are not serious enough to require warnings.

*Know the signs of typical winter related issues, such as hypothermia, for pets and keep a first aid manual for animals with you or directly with your portable first aid kit.*

- Stock an emergency supply of food and water for yourself and your pets. If you or your pets are on continual medications, be sure to always have at least a two-week supply on hand.
- Be prepared for isolation at home, particularly if you live in a rural area. It is highly possible that a severe winter storm could isolate you for one or two weeks.
- Avoid leaving animals outside or confined to hard surfaces (e.g., in garages).
- Keep your car winterized with antifreeze. Carry a winter care kit that includes food and water, a windshield scraper, a flashlight with extra batteries, a tow chain or rope, a shovel, tire chains, a blanket, a bag of sand, a fluorescent distress flag, and an emergency flare. If you have to travel, keep a supply of high-energy foods, candles, and matches with you. Keep extra mittens, hats, boots, socks, and outerwear in the car. If you routinely take your dog in the car, be sure to keep a leash in the car. Put extra blankets in the car to keep the dog warm.

- After the storm, check on your neighbors and their animals. Be sure they have proper heating and sufficient supplies to get them through the emergency.

## **VII. EXTREME HEAT AND WILDFIRES**

Extreme heat is defined as temperatures 10 degrees or more above the average high temperature, lasting for several weeks.

All family members should learn to recognize heat impairment symptoms and administer appropriate first aid for animals. Causes of heat stroke or hyperthermia in pets are:

- Being left in parked cars (the most common reason) on a hot day, even with the windows open, a parked automobile can become a furnace in no time, and heatstroke can develop.
- Lack of appropriate shelter for an animal outdoors.
- Animals not acclimated to the heat.
- Excessive exercise in hot and humid weather.

The signs of heat stress in animals are identified below.

- Excessive panting or difficulty breathing.
- Body temperature 104 F or above.
- Collapse.
- Increased heart and respiratory rate.
- Salivation.
- Depression, stupor.

In addition to recognizing the signs of heat stress in animals, follow these guidelines when responding during periods of extreme heat.

- Keep animals in areas where they have access to shade.
- Provide animals with plenty of water. Hosing off an animal periodically will also help it to cool.
- Do not exercise animals when it is especially hot outside, e.g. playing frisbee, jogging, or riding. If you have to work with animals, provide regular rest periods. This allows the body's natural cooling system to work. A few minutes of sweat-free rest every hour will help restore physical and mental energy. Remember, animals often are willing to please their owners to the point of endangering themselves.
- Since dogs don't sweat, they must be allowed to pant to dissipate heat. Do not encourage them to carry objects in their mouths if they are hot.
- Do not dress animals with vests, blankets, and other clothing-type materials that would prevent them from sweating.
- Animals in cages require special attention because the ventilation may not be very good. Provide caged animals with extra ventilation.
- Provide plenty of fresh, cool water for all animals to drink. Offer it in a shady place as some species may not venture into the sun if it is very hot.
- Be sure to provide salt licks for animals that require them regularly.
- Plan several evacuation routes with your animals in case fires block your escape. If you have horses or livestock, make arrangements ahead of time for a place to temporarily relocate them. Fairgrounds, parks, racetracks, large animal shelters, or with family or friends may be options available to you.
- The most common cause of death in fires and in the days afterward are complications from smoke inhalation. All animals exposed to fire should be monitored for smoke inhalation pneumonia. A veterinarian should be consulted immediately for any burn injuries. Burn injuries can be difficult and expensive to treat. They often require intensive care.
- Care must be taken in re-entering burned areas. There may be hot spots that could flare up without warning. Partially burned structures and trees can be very unstable, and may suddenly fall over. Do not tie animals to burned trees. Don't allow animals into areas where there may be ash pits (root systems that have burned underground).

- Debris from burned buildings should be removed before animals re-enter the area. Metal pipes heated during a fire may be coated with toxic residues from the heat damaged galvanized components.

## **VIII. EARTHQUAKES**

Earthquake monitoring is conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and universities throughout the United States. The exact time and place an earthquake will occur still cannot be predicted.

- Do not place dog runs or other animal enclosures underneath things that might fall on them during an earthquake, such as a chimney or a heavy retaining wall. Include a pair of bolt cutters in your disaster kit. Gates can sometimes become damaged and unable to be opened.
- Prepare a family earthquake plan and conduct family earthquake drills. Include animals in these exercises.
- Be prepared to survive for 72 hours without any assistance. Remember to include supplies for your animals.
- If you take your dog or cat to a boarding kennel or have a pet sitter come to your home in your absence, make sure they are familiar with your earthquake preparedness plans.
- Earthquakes usually occur without warning. If an earthquake is occurring in your area, you may recognize one of the following signs:
  - Trembling in the ground or floor
  - Hanging lights or planters starting to sway
  - Slightly dizzy feeling
  - Very nervous and apprehensive animals (biting, kicking, or scratching)
- Check to make sure that fences used to confine animals are intact. If animals have escaped, they will often return to their regular feeding site at mealtime and may be recaptured.
- Keep animals safely confined until debris is removed.
- Do not eat or drink from open containers near shattered glass and do not offer these to animals either. Remove any contaminated sources of food or water so that animals cannot get to them. If there is a “boil water order” in effect, do not drink or give animals tap water until the officials announce that it is safe to do so. Let water from pipes run several minutes once the boil water order is lifted.
- Be prepared for additional aftershocks. While the aftershocks are usually smaller than the main shock, some may be large enough to cause additional damage.
- Do not go sightseeing. Stay away from beach and waterfront areas where seismic sea waves (tsunamis) may strike.

## **IX. TSUNAMIS**

A tsunami is a series of giant ocean waves produced by a major underwater or coastline disturbance such as an earthquake or volcanic eruption. A series of waves sometimes lasts several hours, with 20 or 30 minutes between waves. Areas thousands of miles from an earthquake can be struck by a resulting tsunami. The waves appear to be normal ocean waves until they approach the coastline, where a gigantic wall of water can build on the ocean surface. Tsunamis reaching heights of more than 100 feet have been recorded.

- If you live near a coastal area and have experienced or heard of a recent earthquake or volcano, listen to your radio for a tsunami warning.
- If you hear of a tsunami warning, do not go to the beach to look for the tsunami. If you can see it, you will be too close to escape it.
- Adequately identify all animals so that if they are separated from you, they can be traced and returned.
- Plan several escape routes to high ground. Your primary escape route might be damaged or destroyed if a local earthquake strikes.
- Be prepared to evacuate low-lying coastal areas immediately. Evacuate all animals that you can.
- If you must leave animals behind, do not confine them.
- Keep a collar and an identification tag on dogs and cats at all times in case they get lost.
- Since a tsunami is not a single wave but a series of waves, stay out of dangerous areas until an all clear is issued.
- After the tsunami, check for injuries and seek medical help if necessary for humans and animals.

## **X. VOLCANOES**

Volcanoes form where weak spots or breaks in the earth's crust allow the magma to push toward the surface. When the pressure of gas and magma becomes too great, the volcano erupts. Magma may pour through the vent opening in lava flows or shoot into the air as dense clouds of gas and dust (ash) fall. Volcanic eruptions can generate mild to moderate earthquakes, mudflows, flash floods, tsunamis, and huge ash clouds that can create intense lightning storms.

Because areas far from the volcano may be affected, you should listen for advisories as to whether your area will be impacted. Warnings include information about the approximate time, place, and extent of the effects as well as the uncertainties involved in making the prediction. Evacuation routes for yourself and your animals should be determined in advance.

- Contact your local emergency management office to learn about methods of protecting your family, animals, and home from ash fall. The U.S. Geological Survey assesses all information related to the development of impending geological disasters and informs the public.
- If told to evacuate, do so immediately.
- During ash fall, close all windows, doors, and dampers in your home and where your animals are housed. Bring animals inside. Stay indoors until the ash has settled.
- If caught outside during ash fall, keep your mouth and nose covered to avoid inhalation of ash. Cover your eyes and keep your skin covered to avoid irritation or burns. Do the same for animals where possible and practical. Respiratory diseases can develop in any persons or animals that are exposed to the fumes and fine ash suspended in the air.
- Hazards within the immediate vicinity of the volcano come from heavy ash fall, which can darken the sky as if it were nightfall. The increased demand for lighting could result in power failures. Ash may be carried by winds for thousands of miles and affect distant areas long after the eruption. Secondary eruptions and lava flows can occur in the days, weeks, or months after a volcanic eruption.
- The ash is actually pulverized rock. A one-inch layer weighs ten pounds per square foot. Ash can clog waterways, reservoirs, and machinery and its weight can cause roofs to collapse.
- Throw away any food or water, for both humans and animals that have been contaminated by the ash. Ash is commonly contaminated with heavy metals that are toxic to humans and animals. In addition, pyroclastic material contains glass-like particles that can cut or irritate lungs and intestines.

Appendix 1. **PET IDENTIFICATION FORM**

**Owner's name:** \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Work #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Emergency Pet Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Home #: \_\_\_\_\_ Cell #: \_\_\_\_\_ Work #: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Pet's name:** \_\_\_\_\_  Dog  Cat Other \_\_\_\_\_

Breed: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex:  Male  Female Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Spayed/Neutered:  Yes  No County Tag ID: \_\_\_\_\_

ID Microchip:  Yes  No If yes, Microchip #: \_\_\_\_\_

Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Eye color: \_\_\_\_\_ Tail: \_\_\_\_\_

Hair color: \_\_\_\_\_ Hair length: \_\_\_\_\_

**Veterinarian office:** \_\_\_\_\_

Vet's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of last vaccinations: \_\_\_\_\_

Any medical conditions/allergies? \_\_\_\_\_

Any special medications? \_\_\_\_\_

General disposition: \_\_\_\_\_

Is your pet good around children?  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Is your pet good around dogs?  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Is your pet good around cats?  Yes  No \_\_\_\_\_

Specific identifying marks and/or features  
that would help to ID your pet: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

List of people who could identify your pet:

1. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

2. Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Notes \_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 2. **DISASTER SUPPLY KIT**

**Designated Emergency Pet Guardian:**

**Home # :** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell # :** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Secondary Emergency Pet Guardian:**

**Home #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Crate or carrier for each pet large enough for the pet to turn around in and cat carriers large enough for a small litter box
2. Pet Identification Forms for each pet with photos attached
3. Collar and leash for all pets (including cats) with ID and rabies tags on all collars
4. Vaccination records of each pet
5. Three-week supply of each pets medications
6. Sedatives for pets that frighten easily
7. Disposable litter boxes and scoop
8. Extra cat litter
9. Plastic bags, paper towels, and cleaning supplies
10. Three-week supply of food for each pet
11. Manual can opener
12. Food and water bowls for each pet
13. Supply of drinking water
14. Toys or blankets your pet will find familiar
15. Towels
16. Grooming items
17. Detailed instructions for animal care and rescue workers
18. Copy of emergency numbers and family evacuation plan
19. Copy of veterinarian's information
20. Flashlight and batteries
21. Pet first aid kit: include bandaging material, antiseptic ointment, alcohol, gloves, tweezers, muzzle, and gauze
22. List of all hotels accepting pets in the area
23. First aid books for pets and humans

### Appendix 3. **DISASTER PREPAREDNESS QUIZ**

Imagine a police officer knocks at your door and tells you that you have to evacuate and that you only have 30 minutes. Are you prepared?

1. Do you have carriers for all your pets?  
Cardboard carriers are not a good choice since your pet may need to stay confined for extended periods. A plastic kennel that is large enough for your pet to stand, turn around, and lie comfortably is appropriate. Ideally, you should have a separate carrier for each of your pets.
2. Can you gather all your pets and put them into carriers in time?
3. Are all your pets wearing collars with ID tags as well as rabies tags?
4. Do you have a photo of each pet in case they become lost?  
If you and your pet are separated, you need a photo of you with your pet in order to claim them at an animal shelter.
5. Do you know where your emergency shelters are? Many shelters will not accept pets, so make sure you know which ones will.
6. Do you have your veterinarian's information? To make things easier, in the case of an evacuation, keep all of the records in a large waterproof bag. It will be easiest to remember if you keep it in the carrier that will be used during evacuation.
7. Do you have a copy of your pet's vaccinations? These should be in the waterproof bag.
8. Do you have a three-week supply of food, water, medications, and sedatives? If you feed your pet canned food, make sure you have a can opener if they do not have flip tops.
9. Do you have disposable litter boxes and cleaning supplies?
10. Have you alerted friends and family where you are going?
11. Do you know the evacuation route(s)?
12. Do you know what hotels in the evacuation area accept pets?
13. If you have a cell phone, is your charger with you?

#### **Microchips**

While dogs and cats wear collars, they can be easily broken or removed. A microchip is a permanent device that can identify your pet in the event that the pet becomes lost or stolen. A microchip is a rice-sized capsule encoded with a unique number. The microchip is painlessly injected (much like a vaccination) between the shoulder blades of a pet. Most pets do not react at all when the chip is inserted. The chip remains inactive until read with a hand-held scanner. The scanner reads the microchip to identify the lost pet by sending a low frequency radio signal to the chip that then transmits a code to the scanner. The microchip distributor is then contacted with the identification number encoded on the microchip, which is linked to your personal information. The cost of the microchip differs from brand to brand but usually runs around \$25, which is well worth the security of your pet and your piece of mind.

If your animal has a microchip, make sure you keep your address and contact information updated with your vet and the microchip company. Consider including a non-local emergency contact since communication within the local area may become difficult.

## Appendix 4. SPECIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BIRDS, REPTILES, AND OTHER SMALL ANIMALS

The care of birds, reptiles, and other small animals in disasters requires special consideration.

### **Birds:**

- Determine if your birds need a continuous supply of power to keep a certain air temperature. Purchase a generator to meet your facilities' needs. Make sure your generator is in good running condition by starting it monthly.
- Make sure you have a sufficient water supply. Large water containers with chlorinated water (10 drops of chlorine bleach to each gallon of water) can be used to store water that prohibits bacterial growth. Store water away from sunlight.
- Aviaries should be equipped with an overhead sprinkler system. This will be very important to minimize smoke inhalation, cool the air, and reduce the chance of burn injuries.
- Aviculturists should have enough carriers on hand to evacuate all birds. Many birds will run into their nest boxes during a crisis. Nest boxes should be equipped with quick-release latches and a hinge-type cover over the entrance to enable you to remove the nest box and use it as a pet carrier. Flights should be constructed with easy access into and out of them.
- Birds often require specialty foods. Make sure you know what these are and where you can get them. Although surplus food can often be refrigerated, this may not be possible in a disaster, when the power supply is out.
- If vaccinations are appropriate for your bird, be sure they are up-to-date. Consult your veterinarian to learn which vaccinations are appropriate.
- Birds should be tested and free of psittacosis and tuberculosis. These are serious diseases and are transmissible to many other animals and people.
- Do not leave your birds where they can be exposed to fumes from fires or chemicals. Since birds are sensitive to smoke and fumes, they succumb more quickly to smoke than most other animals.
- Check your bird for injury and exposure to chemicals. If you have any concerns about the health of your birds, contact a veterinarian. If you think or know that your bird has been exposed to chemicals, contact your veterinarian before treating it yourself.
- Many avian and exotics will show signs of disease (respiratory, gastrointestinal, etc.) several days after a stressful episode. This is very common in birds. A veterinarian should evaluate any bird showing signs of lethargy, loss of appetite, injury, or depression.
- If the bird is bleeding, apply direct pressure with a small piece of cotton cloth until you can get help. Do not remove the cloth as this may start the bleeding again.
- If you have to move to new surroundings, do not remove your bird from its cage. When birds are frightened, they may become aggressive or fly away.
- If electricity is available, many birds benefit from having a heating pad under their cage in times of stress. Blankets placed over the cage can also minimize stress.

### **Reptiles:**

- Snakes can be transported in a pillow case
- Take a sturdy container, a heating pad, and some water for the reptile to soak in

### **Other small animals:**

- Hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, rabbits, etc., need to have carriers for transporting. Make sure to bring food that meets their special dietary requirements, and remember to consider their water requirements when calculating your three-week supply.
  - *Always keep exotic pets in separate rooms. Many exotic pets can be very dangerous to disaster personnel and other animals not familiar with them or who encounter them unexpectedly. Leave warnings and handling instructions for all exotics, especially poisonous ones.*

**DISCLAIMER:**

NAPPS has prepared this document to assist their members' clients in developing personalized disaster plans to put in place in their businesses/households. We believe the information provided to be very valuable in preventing, mitigating, and responding to many types of disasters. We have great confidence that if these procedures are properly implemented, they will produce the type of results best hoped for in disaster situations, but we make no claim as to the absolute thoroughness for every situation described. There is no guarantee that following these instructions will prevent unfortunate or even fatal outcomes. It is the responsibility of every business or individual to evaluate the thoroughness and level of preparedness they find appropriate for their household.

**REFERENCES:**

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency, [www.fema.org](http://www.fema.org)
2. The Humane Society of the United States, [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org)
3. American Humane Society, [www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org)
4. American Red Cross, [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
5. Professional Pet Sitting, [www.propetsitting.net](http://www.propetsitting.net)