



# Disaster Preparedness for Your Dog

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**D**isaster preparedness for you and your dogs is important all year round. Natural disasters such as wildfires, hurricanes and tornadoes are often more seasonal events, but disasters such as hazardous material spills, gas leaks and sinkholes can occur at any time. There is no time like the present to prepare you and your pets with an emergency plan in the event you need to evacuate for a period of time.

Make sure your pets are microchipped and that their ID tags are current in addition to wearing their county license tags. Proper ID will help reunite you with your pets in the event that you are separated. ID tags should be simple with your pet's name & your current phone number(s).

Make sure you have a leash, collar, and/or harness. If you have more than one dog make sure you have enough for each of them. Use a collapsible crate or airline approved carrier for each pet. Dog crates should be large enough to hold two non-spill bowls and still allow enough room for your dog to stand and turn around. Look for bowls that can attach to the door of the crate to prevent spilling over. Inside your carriers you can include bedding, for transportation & comfort. Having enough carriers for each of your pets is critical for a speedy evacuation.

Familiarize your dogs with their carriers regularly so that they'll feel comfortable with them when it comes time for you to evacuate. You can start by placing treats inside with blankets and some safe durable toys.

For added assurance, clearly label each carrier with your identification and contact information. You'll want to make sure that you locate and prearrange an evacuation site for your family and pets outside of your immediate area. Ideally, this will be with a friend or relative or perhaps a pet-friendly hotel that is willing to let your family and dogs stay in the event of a disaster. However, other possible pet housing options may include veterinary hospitals and boarding kennels outside of evacuation zones.

## **Veterinary Records**

Make photocopies of important veterinary documents to store in the evacuation kit. Include your pet's vaccination records and medical history

## **Proof of Ownership**

Make copies of registration information, adoption papers, proof of purchase, and microchip information to store them in your evacuation kit. List each one of your dogs and their breed, age, sex, color, and distinguishing characteristics.

Keep current photographs of your pets in the evacuation kit too for identification purposes. Include yourself in some of the photos in case you become separated from your pet and need help reclaiming him.

## **List of Important Emergency Contacts**

Prepare this list now before a disaster strikes. Include addresses and 24-hour contact numbers, if available. These contacts can be used by rescue personnel responding to a disaster affecting your pets or by you during a disaster or an evacuation. Keep one copy near your telephone and one copy in your pet evacuation kit.

- Numbers where you may be reached (pager, cell phone, work phone)
- Your prearranged evacuation site
- Local contact person in case of emergency when you are not available
- Your veterinarian and an alternate veterinarian about 30-90 miles away who provides boarding
- Boarding facility (local) and a Boarding facility (30-90 miles away)
- Hotels that allow dogs (90 mile radius)
- Local Animal Services Department, Local Police Department, Local Fire Department
- Local Public Health Department, Local Animal Shelters, Local Red Cross Chapter

## Your Pet Evacuation Kit

- A 2-week supply of food
- A 2-week supply of water in plastic gallon jugs
- A crate or carrier for each pet, labeled with your contact information
- A manual can opener if you use canned food
- Copies of your veterinary records and proof of ownership
- Your Emergency contact list
- Familiar items to make pets feel comfortable (favorite toys, treats, blankets)
- Written Instructions for
  - o **Diet:** Record the diet for each individual pet, including what not to feed in case of allergies.
  - o **Medications:** List each pet separately, including dose and frequency for each medication. Provide veterinary and pharmacy contact information for refills.
  - o Leash, collar, harness and id tag for each pet
  - o Maps of local area and alternate evacuation routes (in case of road closures)
  - o Muzzles
  - o Non-spill food and water dishes
  - o Paper towels
  - o Spoon (canned food)
  - o Trash bags

Evacuate your family, including your pets, as early as possible. Make sure all pets are wearing collars and some form of external identification securely fastened.

Place your pets inside individual transportable carriers. When stressed, animals that normally get along may become aggressive towards each other. Load your dogs' carriers into your vehicle. These will serve as temporary housing for your dogs if needed.

Load your dog's evacuation kit and supplies into your vehicle.

Call your prearranged evacuation site to confirm availability of space.