

*Female:* All of you are watching this video because of your concern for the safety of your animals during an emergency in your community. This presentation will give you information on how to plan for your animals if there is a need to evacuate or to shelter them in place. And how to find resources in your community to help you with your planning.

As an owner, you know your animal's health and safety rely entirely on you, especially in an emergency. As you probably know, the need for this information is huge. Our animals are a very important part of our lives. For people whose animals are trained service animals, they allow their owners an independence they could not receive elsewhere. Animal ownership is extensive. It's estimated that the average American household has 1.2 pets, not including wild or exotic animals or animals of market or food value.

Because animals can influence your decision to take protective actions, it's important you understand the steps to protect your animals if you're told by emergency officials to evacuate or shelter in place. A hazardous chemical release from a train derailment or a flood can prevent you from caring for your animals for days if animals are not evacuated with you. Should a major event such as a devastating hurricane or earthquake occur, animals may go unattended for weeks if owners do not take their animals with them or shelter them in a safe environment.

*Male:* For the most part, people do a good job as far as planning for themselves and preparing their homes. Again, it's just leaving the animals out of the loop and spending some time and thinking about the animals' needs in a time of crisis. A little bit extra food, a place to – space in their cars or transportation lined up ahead of time, whether it's by relative or local transport. I just think they need to spend more time working on that aspect and treating their pets more like family.

*Female:* As an owner, you hold the key to your animal's health and welfare. As you probably know, animals left behind may be found dead or never found at all. At best, they may need to be rescued, decontaminated, vaccinated and treated for injuries before being returned to you and this can be very traumatic for you and your animals. Highly valued animals may be stolen and sold before you can return home. And left without food and water, normally docile animals can become vicious and be killed by law enforcement or wildlife officials to protect emergency responders or returning evacuees.

This video will enable you to identify hazards that could impact your animals and to develop a basic emergency supply kit for animal care. During the video, animal care experts and veterinarians will explain why having recent photos of your animals and copies of identification and vaccination records are important in emergencies. How microchips work and how to plan to protect animals if you're away from home. Why animals may have to be decontaminated after a hazardous event, and some basic precautions to take when animals return home.

Evacuation planning for animals is often and overlooked item in community emergency plans. Although some states are starting to develop certified disaster animal care response teams to help counties cope with animal populations in major emergencies. One recent change in preparedness occurred when the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act was signed into law in September of 2006.

*Male:*

Nationally the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of the PETS Act has provided an incentive for local communities to comply with the requirements of that act. And the requirements of that act are for communities to have plans to deal with household pets and service animals during evacuation to be able to evacuate, transport and shelter those animals and provide services that are related to those issues.

*Female:*

This does not mean that public shelters must allow pets other than service animals to remain with owners, but that reasonable efforts must be made to accommodate the needs of individuals with animals when evacuations occur. Because of the potential cost and extra burden to communities to implement these requirements, having your own emergency plan that considers your animal's specific needs remains the best policy for you and your animals. Emergency plans are important for all types of animals from household pets and trained service animals to highly valued or exotic animals – horses, poultry and livestock.

American Humane encourages responsible pet ownership, regardless of what kind of pet. So while most companion animals or pets are traditionally dogs or cats, many families choose some other pet and often exotic animals such as snakes or alligators or iguanas or whatever. But regardless of the choice of the kind of pet, it's the pet owner's responsibility to plan for the care of that pet, both during normal times and during emergencies.

Planning is especially important if you have multiple animals or the animals are highly valued. Animals with medical problems or that need special care or food or trailers or other large vehicles for transport. You should also be aware that some states forbid trailers on official evacuation routes during an emergency to make sure passenger vehicles are given maximum leeway to leave an area. While this video touches on some issues associated with protecting large animals and livestock, commercial farm operators or people with large herds or highly valued stock or who manage zoos or aquariums should work with their state and local emergency officials and veterinarians to develop their specific emergency plans.

*Male:* If you look across our country, we have a lot of zoos. We have exhibitions like aquariums and we have wildlife sanctuaries, wildlife rehabilitation facilities. We have a lot of different animal facilities out there that may need some assistance if they get a fairly major emergency. The first thing that those facilities need to is they need to have their own contingency plan for emergencies.

*Female:* Indigenous wild animals being the property of the state are generally the concern of Fish and Wildlife Management agencies and are not considered pets in this video. Owners should always remember that unvaccinated wild animals can transmit rabies to their domesticated animals and themselves through an infected animal bite and all wildlife should be considered potentially dangerous, especially if the wild animal is behaving abnormally.

The problem is whenever you take a population of animals, whether it be companion animals, wildlife laboratory animals, livestock, you're changing the dynamics of the system. So say there's a wildfire and wildlife are affected. Then those animals move into the general population and can commingle with domestic animals, increasing the likelihood of say rabies or other types of diseases.

Planning to evacuate with animals is important because it will make sure your animals are as protected as you are. Most agencies now recommend taking household animals when residents are told to evacuate. While most public shelters do not allow animals other than service animals inside for health and safety reasons, some jurisdictions allow crated animals with current vaccination and medical records to be sheltered outside public shelters. Others offer separate or adjacent facilities such as fairgrounds for sheltering animals.

Many hotels and motels will waive pet exclusion restrictions during major disasters. You can usually obtain a list of pet friendly motels and hotels through your state or local emergency management agency. Such information will allow you to leave with your pets knowing you can assure both their safety and your own.

Some people think confining pets in vehicles outside shelters is a viable option but the practice should be avoided. You can place yourself and your pet in danger when caring for them during stormy weather or other hazardous events. And vehicles are not safe places for animals during severe storms where flooding or downed trees or structures are potential risks, in hazardous material releases where protection offered by a vehicle is minimal because of the high air infiltration rate or in extreme heat or cold.

After finding out what your emergency management agency plans for animals in emergencies, it's time to develop your specific plan for protecting your own animals. Usually this includes selecting a destination site, adding animal care and food supplies to your emergency kit. Having appropriate carriers and restraints for each animal and taking additional water, bedding and cleanup materials such as paper towels and trash bags.

If you know your animals dislike vehicles or going into crates, taking time to familiarize them with the routine by setting up the carrier and placing treats and familiar bedding inside so they can get used to it over time. If your community does not have an emergency plan that includes animals, you have a bigger job because you have to identify the hazards and their associated risks that could affect your animals.

Understanding what the local risk is for a disaster is very important. It's really key to understand what that possible hazard would be and to plan for it.

Most year-round residents are familiar with hazards that periodically occur in their community such as hurricanes and floods. But a newcomer or a visitor may be unfamiliar with the specific risks of a hazard or what actions to take in emergencies. People may reside for several months in an area for seasonal employment or vacations or for educational studies but remain unaware of the hazards to their animals at their temporary home. It's important that you learn about potential hazards wherever you take or house your animals.

Other hazards that you should prepare for are potential train derailments or hazardous releases from industrial facilities or semi trucks along major roads and highway if your animals are located nearby. Although such events have a low probability of occurring, a general evacuation plan for your animals can often be quickly adapted to meet such emergencies. Your local emergency management agency will often have maps locating flood zones or other hazards such as earthquake faults and areas subject to wildfires that you can view or copy.

Some communities near nuclear power plants or military installations with highly toxic chemicals publish maps in telephone books, calendars or brochures, outlining the emergency planning zones where a hazardous release could occur. Your local emergency management department can also tell you how to contact your local emergency planning committee, your citizens emergency response team or your citizen's core if they exist in your area for advice on hazards that could affect you and your animals.

Generally people start by planning for weather related emergencies such as floods or wildfires that could affect their animals. Having a person plan can reduce the chance of injury and loss of animal life in fast moving events and also aid recovery efforts.

*Male:* If you look at general preparedness planning for families, you have to have your general family plan built and a kit build. And as part of that plan, not as a separate plan but as part of that plan, you need to decide how are you gonna take care of your pets and your livestock. So it's not a family plan and an animal plan. It's a plan.

*Female:* Some of you viewing this video have livestock, horses and highly valued market animals. They present unique problems in emergencies because many farms are vulnerable to natural disasters because of their location near ponds and rivers or in remote areas.

*Male:* Certainly the economical implications of a disaster for our livestock producers is significant during a disaster and so we must have plans in place for evacuation, response to the injuries, the difficulty that animals may be getting into as far as the livestock are concerned

*Female:* Take time to find out where animals are usually located or areas they usually roam through. Knowing this will help you provide the information to emergency response or rescue personnel. It's

critical to quickly locate animals after severe storms or an event such as an earthquake or flood because animals can be placed at further risk if electrical lines, trees or fences are down or debris is scattered through areas they normally frequent. Emergency sirens and responders dressed out in protective clothing or unfamiliar odors can also upset or spook normally calm animals.

There are things you can do if not at home when the emergency occurs. One is to designate a willing neighbor or friend to care for your animals. If you think there may be occasions when you'll be unable to provide for animals because you work or because of physical impairments or not having access to a vehicle to transport animals, you should make sure your plan includes a designated caretaker who can help you and your animals in an emergency.

*Male:* It's important for people to understand that not everybody is going to be home during every emergency and be able to implement their plan like they would have hoped to be able to. I think coordinating with friends and neighbors so that, for instance, if you live in a rural area and something happens and you're not at home, that your neighbors have some ability to help you out with your animal issues when possible.

*Female:* The person should have a key to animal's quarters, be familiar with the animals, know your plan sheltering animals, understand your evacuation plans and destinations. Know where evacuation supplies are stored and know which animals should be evacuated. To clarify that such as person is the designated choice, you should sign a form designating that person and the animal care provider and releasing him or her from responsibility should one of the animals be injured or require medical treatment during or after the evacuation.

Another option is to place stickers or placards on front and back doors, barn doors or pasture entrances to notify neighbors and response personnel that the animals are on the property. The sign should state where you can be reached and where evacuation supplies are located. You should also provide a list near the evacuation supplies about the number, type and possible location of all animals on the property, their names and preferences and how the animals can be identified.

Sometimes you may be forced to shelter your animals in place. This is because a fast-moving hazard such as a passing toxic chemical cloud may require people and animals to shelter in place before evacuating. Officials in communities with large chemical

complexes often instruct residents to immediately shelter when hearing an alert siren and to wait inside for further information.

Some disasters require that you must take care of yourself, sometimes without heat or running water for some number of days and that sort of way of taking care of yourself with a disaster means that you're not evacuating but rather your stuck.

Emergency officials may also stage evacuations and direct one part of the community to shelter and another part to evacuate to allow those most at risk to leave first or to reduce traffic volume on vulnerable highways or bridges. Once you choose a place to shelter your animals, practice bringing them into an enclosed space.

When evacuating to another state, you should be aware of potential problems on returning home if proof of ownership, licenses, proof of rabies vaccination or a recent health certificate for your animals are missing. All animals should always be clearly identified with readily visible tags or collars and with the same visible identification on crates or vehicles.

If you plan to evacuate by commercial plane, bus or rail, you should contact the carrier for their policies on animal transport. The ADA requires all public and private ground transportation services to accommodate service animals. Dogs, cats, birds or other animals will not be allowed to be transported by rail or bus.

Airlines must permit guide dogs or other service animals with appropriate identification to accompany an individual with a disability on a flight. Identification may include cards or other documentation, presence of a harness or markings on the harness tags or the credible verbal assurance of the passenger using the animal. Some airlines allow service animals as small as an infant to be held but larger service animals must have their own seat. Some airlines allow a small number of ticketed passengers to carry a cat, dog, bird or other small warm-blooded animal on board on a first come, first serve basis providing the kennel containing the animal fits underneath the seat in front of the passenger and the owner has a health certificate signed by a licensed veterinarian within 10 days of departure.

The animal must remain inside the kennel in the boarding area and during the flight with the door securely close. Airlines also transport animals as checked baggage or as air cargo for a fee. Because some cargo space is not temperature controlled, some

airlines refuse to transport animals below or above certain temperatures to protect the animal. If your plan includes evacuating with animals to a friend's or a family member's residence, you should try to be as self-sufficient as possible by having adequate food and water, bedding, medications and cleanup supplies for all animals for at least three days.

Oftentimes distribution networks for food and supplies are disruptive for several days following a disaster. If the animal is unfamiliar with children or other animals, you should make sure the animal is always restrained. Service animals are generally allowed into public shelters with proper identification, although such an environment can be confusing and stressful for both the animal and the owner. You should find out if your community's emergency plan includes protocols for keeping service animals with their owners throughout an evacuation, and what officials will provide for you once at the shelter. For example, some shelters may provide kennels and some may not. You should remember that strange odors and people may distract service animals used to normal routines and trained to respond only to their owner. And you should be prepared to handle those extra burdens.

Service animals in a disaster have to be looked at in a different light than a general companion animal. When a person comes into a human shelter, emergency planners and shelter planners have to realize that that is not just their pet. That is an animal that aids them in some way for some kind of disability that they may have. Service animals, by law in many states, have to be accommodated in a public premise. The same is going to be true in a disaster shelter situation.

If you have a service animal, you should always carry proof from your doctor that the animal is needed for medical reasons and what the medical condition entails. This is in addition to the animal's current vaccination record and license.

Planning an evacuation kit for animals should include the basics. Food, proof of ownership and vaccinations, licenses and medications. Of great benefit is a recent photograph that can also be used for posters or on the Internet if animals become separated from you. You should remember that unlike humans, most animal medications are supplied by individual veterinarians who may be unavailable during an emergency or not able to prescribe across state lines. Have enough medication on hand or keep what your animals may need in your emergency kit.

Many people say it's the animal owner's responsibility to evacuate their pet and we believe by all means at the American Veterinary Medical Association that when you own an animal, you should take the responsibility of preparing an evacuation kit and a first aid kit for your animal. Emergency medical supplies for pets are similar to those you likely have in your own disaster preparedness bag. Besides bottled water, detergent, soap and towels for cleaning, basic medical supplies for animals would include a tube of triple antibiotic ointment, ACE bandages, two inch tape, gauze rolls, boric acid ointment, small cosmetic sponges and sterile sprays to clean animals' eyes, surgical scissors and a splint easily obtained from hiking or sports stores.

Many animal owners include a deterrent like Tabasco sauce or a commercial spray so an animal won't lick a wound unnecessarily. Liquid bandages can also be helpful for severe cuts until the animal can be treated by a veterinarian. Consult your veterinarian when developing a first aid kit for equine and livestock or for exotic animals. There are also a number of sources on animal care that can be found on the Internet or at local libraries.

Having current rabies or license tags on animals can help you reunite with your animals if you become separated because such records are public and can be traced. For small animals, a collar tag or tape placed inside the collar can provide information on animal's name, your name, address and telephone number and out of state telephone number or contact and the animal's veterinarian name, location and phone number. These can also be placed on a temporary neckband in emergencies.

*Male:* When you look at animal identification methods, there's a lot people can do ahead of time to identify their animals in a permanent manner. Collars and tags are good but they can be lost. Probably the best method of identifying companion animals is through microchips, little radio frequency identification devices implanted under the skin that allow animal control or animal sheltering personnel to scan that animal and be able to trace that chip number back to that owner.

*Female:* However, you should be aware that in the chaos following many disasters, emergency response personnel and animal care managers as well as veterinarians may be overwhelmed and unable to systematically check for such records. Thus, it is recommended that a visible means of identification be placed on any animal evacuated. Permanent identifiers for larger animals such as horses or livestock include microchips, tattoos, ear tags or notches or

branding. Halter tags and neck chains with identification are also used in emergencies.

Temporary measures include livestock marking crayons, non-toxic non-soluble spray paint or magic markers to write on the animal's side or to mark the hooves. Keeping these in your disaster supply kit means you can have them readily at hand when preparing your animals or if they lose their ID during transport.

During transport, each animal should have its own leash, collar or harness. Small animals should have separate collapsible or airline approved carriers with bedding for transport. For extended stays, cat carriers should be large enough to hold a small litter pan and non-spill water bowl with room for the animal to lie down comfortably. Dog kennels or crates should be large enough for a non-spill water bowl and to allow the animal to stand up and turn around. All transport carriers should clearly identify the animal, its special needs including medications and common foods, the owner's name, home address and telephone contact as well as similar information of an alternative contact.

Writing directly on the kennel or providing information on duct tape on the animal's collar will help identify animals when stickers or placards are lost or destroyed. Identification, medical records and proof of ownership are equally important for small animals such as hamsters, gerbils, birds, reptiles and amphibians. Birds should be transported in small secure covered carriers and not allowed out in unfamiliar surroundings. A spray bottle for misting birds in hot weather and a heating pad or lamp to provide warmth in cold weather can help reduce stress at the evacuation site.

Using appropriate carriers helps avoid stress-induced illness. Transporting horses, livestock or large animals such as llamas or emus can be difficult. You can familiarize your animals with traveling in trailers by periodically leading them into the vehicle in providing treats to reward them. If not enough trailers are available to evacuate all of your animals, you should establish a network of contacts consisting of neighbors, local haulers, farmers, producers or other transportation providers to evacuate in a disaster. You should always try to keep your animals separated from other animals whenever possible to avoid spreading diseases. This is important for small animals as well as large ones.

Animal shelters are set up so that species tend to stay with their own species, so dogs will stay in the dog area, cats will hopefully be in cat area, exotics skin and exotic area. You want to try to

minimize the comingling of species because anything you can do to decrease the amount of stress for the animal is what you want to do.

Sometimes veterinarians and commercial kennels can provide safe lodging during or after extreme events. Other housing such as race tracks, fairgrounds, extension service facilities or even veterinary colleges may be available for your larger animals. If you think you might need their resources, you should get in touch with them prior to an event so you'll have a better chance to use them in a major emergency.

After flooding, manure and waste lagoons can overflow, potentially contaminating ground and surface waters. Emergency officials, owners and farm managers may have to work closely with environmental and health departments to avoid this impact. After floods, animals that have stood in contaminated water may be at increased risk for skin infections or toxin-induced diseases. Animals which have been in floodwaters can also suffer hypothermia, sometimes irreversibly. Cuts from debris also make your animals more susceptible to tetanus infection. Decontamination with detergent, soap and water may be necessary for all animals exposed to hazardous chemicals or contaminated floodwaters.

If you have a reptile or other animal that needs to keep essential bacteria on its skin, only water should be used. Because decontamination is often very stressful on animals, it's generally performed by trained emergency response or veterinary personnel who will likely tranquilize the animals and who are wearing the appropriate level of personal protective equipment to protect both the animals and the person decontaminating them. They also know the regulations regarding proper disposal of the cleansing solution because it is often considered hazardous waste. You should not attempt to decontaminate animals yourself unless you are very sure the contaminant will not harm you or you can wear appropriate protective clothing and breathing apparatus that you've been trained to use and maintain.

Returning home may place additional stressors on your animals. You should check all fences and buildings to make sure they are intact and structurally sound. If temporary paddocks are used, ensure animals are properly confined with adequate supplies of food and water.

When bringing your animals back into a disaster affected area, they're going to be disoriented. They're going to be confused because the landmarks are going to have changed, the smells are going to change, the area is going to be changed. So it's important to not push the animal back into normalcy too fast, so introduce food slowly. Let the animal rest a lot. Help those animals on the back of their situation and become comfortable in the area that's been affected by the disaster.

You should also survey for wild animals, rats or poisonous snakes that that may have taken up residence in your animal's quarters during the evacuation. Unfamiliar scents can also confuse animals. If possible, initially release animals into enclosed areas. Household pets should be kept indoors until you can supervise them outside to prevent them from encountering wildlife or debris.

Flooding or hazardous releases can leave harmful substances on forage materials in paddocks or contaminate food or water supplies. Any food or bedding materials that have been contaminated or which show evidence of being damaged should be discarded. Contaminated debris in areas normally used by animals can be harmful if eaten or provide venues for cuts or bruises. It is critical that you check all areas for potential hazards before allowing animals to roan freely.

You should also know how to obtain alternative food and water supplies for your animals, as normal sources may be contaminated or disrupted during a disaster. You should not allow your pets to drink water from toilets or faucets if emergency officials recommend boiling all drinking water. If water sources are contaminated, that means boiling water for your pets consumption as well.

Animals very difficult time adjusting to life after a disaster has struck. Again, because they're creatures of habit and creatures of familiarity. So when things have changed and the smells of changed and the sites have changed, that's gonna stress an animal out and so it's going to take a while for the animal to feel comfortable and safe in an area again.

Many states are now setting up programs for credentialing animal care workers to assist with animals in disasters. Some areas have excellent resources like livestock oriented search and rescue teams, horse search and rescue teams. In various states we have SARTS,

State Animal Response Teams or CARTS which are County Based Animal Response Teams.

You can find out more about these teams through your State Emergency Management Agency. In the future, it is unlikely volunteers will be able to work with or help rescue animals unless they have taken the training.

*Male:* I think it's important to establish a system so that when we have an incident of national significance such as Hurricane Katrina and a lot of people that want to come in and help, that we can somehow pre-identify those people that are truly qualified to do some of the specific tasks that are needed.

*Female:* If animals left behind are lost or unaccounted for, you should physically check animal control and animal shelters daily, post-lost animal notices and alert veterinarians and neighbors of lost animals. Trained and certified disaster animal response teams may be able to assist in getting animals to safety after major disasters or in caring for lost animals.

The ability to go in and help people at probably some of the most chaotic instances in their life, the ability to go out in the field and find an animal and reunite it with its owner is probably one of the most fulfilling experiences I think that anybody in the animal welfare world or even in the first responder world could possibly have.

Animals deserve our attention in good times and bad. Be prepared. Have a plan. Involve your veterinarian if animals will require special care and know how to protect your animals in and after an emergency. Your care is critical to your animals health and well-being. Don't wait until it's too late to help them or yourself.

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