

Female:

Animals are often an important and very large part of people's lives. Because animals can influence a person's decision to take protective actions, it is important that communities plan for animals in emergency situations to ensure residents comply with their recommendations. Even events such as a hazardous release or minor flooding can keep owners from tending to animals for days if they are left behind and the event lasts longer than expected. If a major event such as a devastating hurricane or earthquake occurs, animals may go untended for weeks if owners do not evacuate their animals or place them somewhere safe during the duration of the event.

When owners who leave without pets return home, they may find the animals dead or never find them at all. While people will always be a priority in emergencies, animals provide substantial livelihood and pleasure to millions of Americans. For many Americans, service animals provide invaluable aid in coping with the every day tasks of living. The average American household is estimated to have 1.2 pets, not including wild or exotic animals. Animals can also affect public health and safety when people refuse to leave without their pets and they must be rescued later under hazardous conditions.

The question of leaving animals behind when fleeing a disaster versus staying with animals under hazardous conditions is a choice no one should have to make. Responders can also be placed at considerable risk when extricating, treating and decontaminating abandoned animals.

Animal issues are actually people issues in disasters so they're one in the same. Because with every animal you have a person that's concerned for their wellbeing and even if the animal doesn't have an owner, you still have animal populations where people are going to be concerned if they're left say without food and water or without adequate shelter. So people will risk their lives as set in statistics to either not evacuate because of having animals or they actually risk their life and go back into a dangerous situation to try and save an animal that's been left behind. It's very important for emergency managers to realize that animal issues are people issues and that their lives are contingent upon making plans so that people can get out with their pets and animals can be evacuated from dangerous areas.

This training will enable planners and public officials working together with relevant stakeholders in public and private organizations to incorporate protection for animals into community

emergency plans. This video discusses some issues that complicate planning for community emergencies such as having to train responders to decontaminate animals, estimating the number of animals and household pets that might be accommodated in emergencies, how to ensure people with certified service animals are protected in an emergency, and what residents should know about sheltering their animals in fast-moving events. The video also discusses the basic precautions owners should take when animals are returned home and how certified animal response teams can aid emergency planners after disasters.

Often resources and personnel to decontaminate animals are lacking because emergency plans do not contain that contingency. This means that the contamination is often ad hoc without people using the appropriate personal protective equipment and being trained to OSHA operational standards for performing decontamination. It's critical that all responders have the appropriate training when working with animals because even normally docile animals can become vicious when left without food or water or confronted by strangers in unfamiliar surroundings.

Using untrained personnel or volunteers to extricate or treat abandoned animals can result in severe bites and other injuries to them or harm to the animal itself. After a major disaster, animal care should be coordinated with local veterinarians to understand the community and with certified animal assistance teams who have the necessary training and protective gear. Every effort should be made to ensure that those not qualified to treat animals are kept away from the area impacted by a disaster, especially if a large number of residents have been displaced or a large area impacted.

Male:

Nationally the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act or the PETS Act has provided an incentive for local communities to comply with the requirements of the act. And the requirements of that act are for communities that 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:

In preparing for emergencies, planners must consider the wide range of animals that could be impacted by a hazard in their community including household pets and service animals, highly valued or exotic animals, livestock, horses and animals located in commercial or recreational facilities such as zoos and aquariums.

You also have to deal with the livestock issues – horses, cattle, pot bellied pigs. You know, there are a lot of other animals that are not necessarily the smaller companion animals that you have to think about. At the emergency services level, it's really key to understand what are your resources in your area for dealing with livestock.

Planners will need to work with local veterinarians, animal control agencies, wildlife resource agencies, nongovernmental and advocacy organizations as well as other relevant local and state agencies and shelter operators. This will ensure the community's plan to protect animals is functional and all memoranda of agreement are in places needed. Then the information about those plans must be provided to the public in a well-publicized campaign through a variety of venues.

Where owners and managers can go for further information about community plans for animals should always be a part of the information provided. Indigenous wild animals being the property of the state are generally the concerned officials and wildlife management agencies and are not considered in this video. Most states do not permit the rescue of wild animals after disasters.

Male: Local jurisdictions may not have tremendous authority for wildlife but typically they have state officials who reside in that community who deal with wildlife on a regular basis. The goal for wildlife planning is to make sure that local emergency management knows who the wildlife professionals are in their state and are able to draw on expertise to help manage any wildlife issues that come up with in that community.

Female: Planning to evacuate animals during an emergency is important because it will insure animals are as protected as their owners. The Department of Homeland Security, FEMA, the American Veterinary Medical Association and the American Humane Association recommend taking pets in companion animals when people are told to evacuate. Some communities now plan to offer places to house family pets near public shelters. This may help avoid residents not leaving out of concern for the animals. Many hotels and motels also waive pet exclusion restrictions during disasters. Most public shelters do not accept animals other than service animals for public health and safety reasons.

In many locale, a service animal is considered attached to the person they're serving. In the case of animals that are serving the

deaf for the blind, usually that's not called into question during evacuation or any shelter situation. But some service animals are assisting a person whose disabilities may not be visible.

Leaving pets in vehicles outside shelters should be discouraged. Others may place themselves in danger when attempting to care for them and vehicles do not provide sufficient protection for animals during heavy storms, hazardous material releases or severe cold or extreme heat. Some emergency officials to allow evacuees to place at carriers and kennels with their animals outside public shelters.

Ensuring animals are vaccinated and registered and thus not a threat to other animals can pose problems for shelter operators if animals arrive without identification, proof of ownership or medical records. Evacuation planning for animals is often overlooked in community emergency plans, although regional efforts to develop certified disaster animal care response teams have been initiated in several states for coping with animal care after major disasters.

While some critics argue it is the individual animal owner who is ultimately accountable for protecting their animals in emergencies, it should be recognized that some people cannot do so because they lack resources or have physical constraints. Others will deny the seriousness of the threat until they are directly affected.

Multiple animals or those that require trailers for transport can present problems and evacuations. Some states forbid trailers on official evacuation routes during an emergency to ensure that passenger vehicles are given maximum leeway to leave the area at risk. Finding out what routes officials will forbid trailers on is important in conveying information to the public, both before and during the evacuation.

Owners of exotic or wild animals should recognize that most emergency responders will not extricate such animals after disasters and animals are at significant risk if found roaming without adequate identification.

The first step and developing a functional index to the jurisdiction's emergency plan that addresses animal issues is to examine potential hazards and the associated risks that could have packed animal populations. If flooding is a problem in your community, your emergency managers likely have used FEMA's flood claim maps and the National Oceanic Atmospheric

Administration SLOSH model. This model is used to determine what areas are likely to be flooded by a storm. Community plans should also consider severe weather or extreme heat or cold events if they are routinely impacting the area.

Male: We've developed a tool for counties to assess their animal emergency needs that is a very basic tool and it looks at hazards out there related to the community, but the vulnerabilities are, in other words what type of animal population do you have. And what are the consequences of those vulnerabilities and threats together? And you can create basic risk management that decides well what is the most important issues that our county has to manage as far as pets and livestock and other animals?

Female: While earthquakes and tornadoes happen quickly and are largely unpredictable, plants can indicate where large animal populations or facilities are located in the area affected so animals can be collected immediately after an event occurs. A major problem with such events is the downing of fences which allow animals to roam freely on adjacent lands and roadways.

Debris and downed electrical lines also place animals at risk. Residents of manufactured homes and their animals are generally at highest risk of injury during an emergency and are often warned to seek more substantial shelter. If animal owners have sought safety elsewhere, planners will need to coordinate resources to ensure that animals left behind are cared for or that owners can return periodically to tend to their pets.

Most residents are familiar with periodic hazards such as spring flooding and summer hurricanes. But newcomers and visitors may not understand the timing or extent of the hazard nor the appropriate protective actions to take in emergencies. Often temporary residents are familiar with only one or two routes for evacuation and this can lead to congested highways and extremely slow exit times.

Often people do not anticipate the length of time to evacuate when everyone in the area is leaving in vehicles at the same time. This is especially important in areas at risk of earthquakes and wildfires where they may be single routes out of canyons, multiple cul-de-sacs or gated communities are roads that are damaged. Moreover, as more wealth moves to coastal areas, people are taking as many cars as there are drivers which also adds to the traffic volume and creates further delays in evacuating.

When animals are in evacuee vehicles and owners have not prepared for extended exit times, water may be in short supply and animals will become quickly dehydrated. Planners may have to have procedures set up for way stations to provide necessary water supplies. Wildfires present unique problems for emergency planners because of their unpredictability and unique issues related to animals. Planners should have working arrangements with State or County wildlife specialists to prevent wildlife from interacting with domestic animals during such events to avoid transmitting diseases from indigenous animals. The same plans can be used for major floods that caused wild animals to move into areas frequented by domestic animals.

The inventory of hazards may include trained derailments or hazardous releases if people or animal populations are located near such facilities. Although such events have little probability of occurring, a general emergency plan for extricating and decontaminating animals can often be adjusted quickly for such conditions.

Understanding what the local risk is for a disaster is very important. The way you deal with the animals, the equipment that you need to effect the rescue are very different between, say, a flood and an earthquake. And so understanding what the possible hazard is and planning specifically for that hazard is really key. Appropriate protocols for protecting both large and small animals from various hazards should be outlined with as much detail as possible.

Plan to organize a committee whose focus will be on issues regarding animals and emergencies. Such a committee should consist of all stakeholders who can contribute information, expertise or resources to protecting animals in emergencies. Having a member of the local emergency planning committee or citizens emergency response committee and local rescue or animal advocacy groups may help spread the information to residents and result in more grounded information and feedback being brought to the table.

Citizen court counsels consisting of community members and organizations working with emergency managers and responders should be involved as well. Emergency operational issues may include coordinating animal shelters with public shelters, educating pet owners and agricultural managers on emergency planning for animals and developing public information and outreach programs.

Emergency management actually doesn't have to understand all animal issues. Emergency management's job, in my opinion, is to do a multi-agency coordination group. And what that means is bringing experts in from all over the area of disaster preparedness and response. So bring veterinarians in who will understand animal issues. Bring laboratory personnel and so they understand laboratory issues. Work with fire and rescue personnel. Work with the local law enforcement, the humane organization. Do a multi-agency coordination so that there are key experts at the table to address the issues that might come up in a disaster. It is key to develop the relationships before a disaster strikes so that people know who should be responding and what their role will be during a disaster response.

Individuals that can be consulted during an emergency or who can act as a responder at the emergency site should be identified. Individuals with specific expertise may include livestock inspectors, game wardens, farmers, kennel or racetrack operators. Phone numbers and pagers and addresses along with a brief summary of the individual's expertise and reason for inclusion should be reviewed annually. Once the list is complete, those individuals should be briefed on their responsibilities and what can be expected from them during an emergency. For complete functionality, a call down list of animal care responders should be available in the 911 emergency phone center.

Male: We have state veterinary associations which are working closely with state government agencies and even local veterinary associations to work with local agencies because at the local level is where the primary response needs to take place and where the preparedness needs to be in place in order to achieve adequate recovery and response. So a great deal of collaboration between these various entities is extremely important.

Female: There should also be a survey done of existing laws and policies on animal care and control to accurately determine the responsibilities of various agencies. Certain agencies or groups are often designated by specific state, federal or local laws to handle various situations. For example, stray animals or removal of carcasses may be the responsibility of the county animal control agencies. Diagnostic tests on animals for rabies from a carcass may rest with the county health department, state health department or state university veterinarians.

State and local laws or regulations regarding adoption of lost or abandoned animals or livestock should also be examined. Natural

resources and wildlife agencies have legal responsibilities for wildlife and should be included when identifying wildlife regulations. Policies concerning evacuation and the location of animal shelters should be reviewed. When functions overlap, written memoranda of understanding should be developed that specifically identifies each agency's function.

Female: We're arriving at some plans to be able to encourage people to plan for and be prepared to be able to transport their pet safely so that it would be in its carry cage or whatever and not bother other people, but able to go along with the family. Once we get to the shelters however, there's much, much planning needs to be put in place in some of the work that American Humane Association has done in partnership with the American Red Cross is a memo of understanding or a memo of agreement so that the people and the pet can stay together during evacuation and then they can be near each other while they are in shelters.

Female: funding for managing animals in emergencies may be problematic for jurisdictions, especially if they are small, largely rural or not incorporated. Funding for equipment such as animal crates and protective clothing, drugs, feed and supplies used during an event should be addressed in the annex along with the personnel designated to distribute those resources. Needed items can be donated by vendors supported by state legislative grants, donations or by building owners.

Male: If you look at how you fund animal response at the local level, I think it's a combination of using governmental resources in conjunction with non-governmental organizations and in partnership with your business community. And between all those entities, you should be able to least make some headway on these issues. But it's not something the government can do alone and it's not something that the private sector can really do alone.

Female: Guidelines for rapid deployment of funds to obtain resources should be established and written into the plan. This should also name the person and an alternate authorized to release these funds. This information should also be communicated to those in charge of setting up animal care or extraction operations in response agencies.

A county and local census of the animal population should be taken to the identify locations, types and numbers of livestock and poultry, zoos and aquariums, laboratory animal facilities, aquaculture or exotic animal facilities and other similar animal

operations. Several methods can be employed including examining the current U.S. census records for your county. If companion animals are licensed, local or state agencies can provide a rough estimate of the numbers of dogs and cats in a community.

Emergency management should know what's in their community, whether it be a large companion animal population, large agriculture population, laboratory animals, and again they don't need to be experts in the field of those various animal populations. What they do need to identify is who is in the community and who are the experts that they can call upon to do disaster planning before disaster strikes.

Planners should remember that a large number of small animals, especially in rural or economically disadvantaged or marginalized communities make up unlicensed, unregulated, without medical examinations and are therefore difficult to count for planning purposes.

If were thinking about some of the logistics for planning for the pets, one of the issues you face is how many pets are there. Most communities expect you to license your pet but as we all know, the compliance varies from community to community. I think if I was a planner in the community, I would go to licensing people and ask them what do they think the percentages are.

We might consider stricter enforcement but that – I think there are always people who don't like licensing their pets. They just don't want to pay the fee or, or, or. But you might get a handle on how many dogs there are. If you figure there's 25% compliance, then you multiply by whatever number. Cats, I think there is probably even lower compliance and then there's the animals for which there are no licensing requirements.

The key to planning for emergency sheltering for animals is the animal population in the area that you are looking at for the risk or the hazard that you gonna encounter in the disaster. The AVMA actually has a really wonderful piece of data. It's quite thick that goes through all the states and all the regions and will give you averages for different types of populations such as dogs, cats, birds and so forth that as an emergency planner, you can take and extrapolate from that and say, "In my area, I have approximately X number of animals of these kinds and types that I would have to accommodate an emergency sheltering situation." From that you can say and you can extrapolate as an emergency manager, "Okay,

I have this many cats, this many dogs, this many birds and they all require different accommodations.”

Using this data for example, in a community of 100,000 households, the number owning dogs is estimated to be 36,500. If each of these households had an average of 1.52 dogs, the total number of dogs in the community would be around 55,480. Once the basic list of privately owned animals is derived, the next step is developed for list of commercial facilities that handle or house small animals. These include public and private animal shelters, veterinary clinics and hospitals, pet stores, groomers with large kennels, boarding kennels, greyhound racetracks and private animal breeders.

Planners can start with a telephone book and then contact the local humane societies, veterinary clinics and hospitals in the local animal control agencies. After identifying them, follow-up should be made to ensure contact names and telephone numbers including cell phones and pagers are accurate. Identify the facility's location, a description of it, the approximate number and types of animals and a [geo-coded base map](#).

The next step is to determine the number and location of agricultural operations such as horse or cattle farms, dairy or poultry facilities, aquaculture or exotic animal operations and other commercial operations such as racetracks or recreational facilities that house large numbers of animals. Planners should remember that petting and local zoos will often have large animal populations that may require help after a major event.

Local cooperative extension services, large animal veterinarians, [farriers](#), feed stores, farm cooperatives, telephone books, Internet searches, veterinary medical schools and farm service agencies serving animal operations can be used for data development. Procedures should be in place to update contact names and numbers of all managers and owners of agricultural operations yearly.

The state's Department of Agriculture can provide information on the number of cattle and horses from records of Coggins registrations. The planner can also access the United States Department of Agriculture national agriculture statistics service to find out the number of various types of animals in the county. Surveillance of infected animals is another good of determining populations of livestock. The U.S. Census also provides a rough estimate of the number of livestock per county based on a sample

of farms which is collected by the Department of Agriculture every five years.

Planners should also recognize that there are many types of animal populations that may or may not be regulated. These may be operations that raise goats, rabbits, geese or ducks are more highly valued animals such as llamas, alpacas, emus, ostriches or alligators. Generally these animal operations are at fixed locations and can be identified readily from telephone books, veterinarians, feed stores and cooperatives.

Other animals to consider are the nontraditional pets such as reptiles, ferrets, pot bellied pigs, various birds and the smaller pets such as gerbils, guinea pigs and hamsters. Local veterinarians and pet stores may be able to help planners estimate how many of these are cared for or sold per year. In an emergency, such pets may require special care and owners should be advised what to do to protect animals in emergency public information announcements. Many states regulate the ownership of exotic animals and have registries of owners that can be tapped to determine the location and numbers of such animals.

Once owners are identified, planners should make efforts to encourage them to develop an emergency protection action plan specifically for their animals. Freed exotic animals may be killed by emergency responders or wildlife managers and owners cannot be readily identified and response personnel feel unsafe handling such animals. Zoos, aquariums and other wildlife facilities should also have their plans to protect or evacuate animals during emergencies that are coordinated with community plans. This is to ensure resources such as large transport vehicles can be supplied to all in need in the event all facilities are impacted at the same time.

Zoos, veterinary medical hospitals and schools and other large animal care facilities should be encouraged to be active partners in emergency planning because of their expertise in handling animals and the resources they can provide in disasters. Encouraging partnerships with local veterinary societies and animal care associations may alleviate the need for outside intervention and help local groups and facilities recover more quickly after a disaster.

Protective action options should include protocols for sheltering animals in place. This is because of fast moving hazard such as toxic chemical release may require sheltering animals before evacuating them. In a phased evacuation, one part of the

community is told to shelter before evacuating and another part to evacuate. This allows those most at risk to leave and eliminate additional traffic to facilitate vehicle flow. Some emergency managers also close bridges or other susceptible roads as routine emergency measures than high winds or bad weather until the danger has passed.

Sheltering in place as an object for animals that can be brought into a structure that can be close to prevent infiltration of outside air. While a residence is the most likely choice for house pets, secure bonds and other outbuildings that have been weatherized and insulated may be used for sheltering larger animals. Sheltering is only recommended for brief periods of time. With large animals, the air quickly become stagnant and disease transmission becomes a risk.

Only in a major event such as a blizzard, nuclear detonation or explosion in which contaminants are spread over large geographic areas with officials recommend sheltering animals for more than three or four hours. What is important is that the animals be secured immediately inside the structure and then taken out once the event is over. This is because infiltrated contaminated air will continue to occupy the structure and needs to be vented once the hazard has passed. Care should be taken to ensure animals are not released into a contaminated environment where contact or ingestion of hazardous substances could occur.

Although most chemicals are not persistent, some substances such as radioactive particles, sulfur mustard chemical agents or anthrax spores can persist in the environment for decades. Identifying alternative food and water supplies for animals is important as normal sources may be contaminated or disrupted during a disaster.

Officials and communities with large chemical complexes that may have a hazardous release often advised residents to immediately shelter when hearing a siren and to wait inside for further information on what to do. Anecdotal evidence from Israel where sirens were frequently sounded during the Gulf War indicate that household pets quickly associated wailing sirens with going into and interior safe room and were often the first ones at its door.

During disaster events that result in shelter in place, people will need to have medications on hand that are current and enough of it to get them through say maybe a two, three week period of time, food and water for themselves and for their animals. And so it's

going to be very important to get information to the people who are sheltering in place so that they know they have not been forgotten, so that their needs can be met and made sure that they have the food and water and medications that they need.

Another issue that recently was raised during the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome or SARS in Canada is that household quarantine to prevent the spread of respiratory and other infectious diseases. Residents were told to remain at home wearing masks and to avoid contact with others to decrease their risk of transmitting SARS. Household quarantine would likely include pets, although the transmission of infections through animals has not been thoroughly examined in such circumstances.

There are options planners can urge residents to take if not at home when a hazardous event occurs. One is to have owners designate a neighbor or other caretaker willing to care for animals. The person should have a key to the animal's quarters, be familiar with animals, know the owner's plans for evacuation procedures and destinations, know where evacuation supplies are stored and know which animals should be evacuated.

Male: If my neighbors are at work and I know their dog is in the back yard and we have an agreement that if we have to evacuate, then I'm to take their dog and contact them later, that's the type of thing that needs to be set up as a community or a neighborhood type plan.

Female: To clarify that such a person is the authorized choice, owners should sign a form designating that person as the animal care provider, releasing him or her from responsibility should one of the animals be injured or require medical treatment during or after the evacuation. The form may also release the surrogate caretaker from litigation in case of injuries to the animal in their care.

If animal owners select a friend's or family member's residence as a destination site, planners should warn owners to be as self-sufficient as possible with animals because of potential disruptions of feed and supplies after a disaster. Generally this is for a 72-hour period but could be as long as two or more weeks if a major disaster occurs.

Another option is to have animal owners place stickers or placards on front and back doors, barn doors or pasture entrances to notify neighbors and response personnel that animals are on the property,

where owners can be reached and where evacuation supplies are located.

Some organizations such as the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the ASPCA, provide examples for actual stickers over the Internet. Owners should also provide a list near the evacuation supplies about the number, type and possible location of all animals on the property. Animal extractions can be facilitated by having appropriate muzzles, handling gloves, catch nets and animal restraints placed where emergency personnel can easily find them.

Planners should consider publicizing possible host destination sites for animals and their owners. Many hotels or motels do not accept pets, even if caged or restrained but some will waive restrictions in emergencies. Planners should work with state tourism offices, welcome centers and the State Emergency Management Agency to provide information on accommodations that accept animals.

When evacuating across state lines, owners should be made aware of potential problems on reentry proof of ownership, licenses or vaccination records of animals are missing. This is especially important if livestock or horses will be transported. Sometimes veterinarians or kennels can provide safe lodging during extreme events. Other housing such as local racetracks, extension service facilities, fairgrounds or even veterinary colleges or hospitals may be available for larger animals or for service animals have special needs owners.

Emergency planners and animal care personnel should have procedures in place to keep service animals with their owners throughout the emergency. Service animals are trained in a number of specialties such as helping the hearing or mobility impaired, alerting owners with epileptic seizures or other medical conditions, and lending support to the mentally challenged. Keeping animals with owners will prevent unnecessary anxiety and stress to the animal and its owner.

Service animals are not pets. The Americans with Disabilities Act, ADA, defines a service animal has any guide dog, signal dog or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability. Although most service animals are dogs, some miniature horses have been trained to guide people who are blind and monkeys assist some people with quadriplegia.

The ADA does not require identification, licenses nor training although all service animals should have collars or other items identifying them as such. All others should routinely carry documentation from their doctors that the animal provides a specific service. This will help ensure that all service animals and their owners are allowed entry to public accommodations including stores, restaurants, transportation systems and public shelters during an emergency.

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. Trying to differentiate between a companion animal and a service animal is not simple.

Owners unable to protect their animals because of mobility or other physical impairments should be encouraged to have designated caretakers or others to help them in emergencies. Emergency officials and responders including ambulance and other service providers are often unable to provide normal services in emergencies and should not be counted on as part of a special needs emergency plan. Persons with special needs should not plan to use emergency officials or responders to provide support for their animals during the initial phases of an emergency. Although all plans should state that owners of certified service animals should be kept with their animals throughout an emergency.

Although service animals must be allowed into shelters, clinics or other facilities related to an emergency such as a federal recovery center, owners are responsible for their animal's behavior and for supplying any food, water or medication it may need even during a disaster. Animals can be excluded if their behavior is a direct threat to people or it becomes a nuisance such as incessant barking.

If plans call for evacuation by commercial plane, bus or rail, local carriers should be contacted for their policies on animal transport. This is because each carrier has its own rules and states have varying requirements regarding entry. For example, Amtrak Railways and the Greyhound Bus Company permit only trained service animals on board as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act or ADA. The ADA requires all public and private ground transportation services to accommodate service animals.

In 1986, Congress passed the Air Carrier Access Act requiring the Department of Transportation to develop new regulations that ensure that persons with disabilities will be treated without discrimination in a way consistent with the safety of all other passengers. Airlines must permit guide dogs or other service animals with appropriate identification to the company and individual with a disability on a flight. Identification may include cards or other documentation, presence of a harness or markings on a harness, tags or the credible verbal assurance of the passenger using the animal.

Carriers must permit a service animal to accompany the traveler with a disability to any seats in which the person sits, unless the animal obstructs an aisle or other area that must remain clear in order to facilitate an emergency evacuation, in which case the passenger will be assigned another seat. Some airlines allow service animals as small as an infant to be held but larger service animals must have their own seat. Dogs, cats, birds or other animals will not be allowed to be transported by rail or bus. However, a service animal trained for the purpose of accompanying a disabled person will be permitted to travel with the disabled person at no additional charge.

If traveling by bus, the animal is generally not allowed to remain in the aisle or occupy a seat. Neighboring states should be contacted to determine entry requirements for animals such as proof of a rabies vaccination or a health certificate. Some airlines allow a small number of ticketed passengers to carry a cat, dog, bird or other small warm blooded animals on board on a first-come, first-served basis providing the kennel containing the animal fits under the seat in front of the passenger and the owner has a health certificate signed by a licensed veterinarian within 10 days of departure.

However, many types of animals are not allowed in the cabin with passengers. Airlines also transport animals as checked baggage or as air cargo for a fee. Because some cargo space is not temperature controlled, some airlines refused to transport animals below or above certain temperatures.

Unlike carry-on pets, dogs, cats and other warm blooded animals transported as air cargo are protected by the Animal Welfare Act. These regulations are enforced by the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service or APHIS and describe what the **consignee** and air handlers are

required to do to protect the animals during the period they are in the airline's control.

Owners and handlers should be encouraged to prepare an emergency evacuation kit that includes supplies for animal care. An evacuation kit for animals should include the basics. Food, proof of ownership and vaccinations, licenses and all medications. Having an ample supply of medications is important because most animal medications are supplied by individual veterinarians, not national pharmacies with network links. And they may be unavailable during an emergency or not able to prescribe across state lines.

Owners should be urged to include a recent photo to use if the animal is separate from them. Emergency medical supplies for animals are similar to those for humans and can be combined with the household emergency medical kit. Besides adequate supplies of 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 sprays to clean eyes, surgical scissors, bandage scissors and a splint.

Some owners include a deterrent like a hot sauce or a commercial spray so an animal won't lick a wound unnecessarily. If owners are trained in medical procedures or very familiar with animal care, the kit may contain dental floss and surgical needle procedures. Liquid bandages can also be helpful in emergencies until the animal can be seen by a veterinarian.

Other supplies include materials and trash bags for cleaning up after animals, appropriate restrains, bedding and blankets if temperatures are extremely cold. How animals will be exercised with adequate supervision and control should also be discussed in your plans.

Detailed lists of animals should be maintained throughout and following the event for health and safety reasons and for reunification purposes if owner and animals are separated.

Male:

One of the key elements of bringing animals into an animal shelter during a disaster is to maintain identification of that animal. And the better your identification methods, the less likely you are to fail to reunite that animal with its owner. In some cases, you may not know who the owner of the animal is, in which case you need to

somehow identify that animal and make sure that you capture as much information as possible as to where it came from.

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.

Female:

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. Temporary measures include livestock marking crayons, non-toxic non-soluble spray paint or permanent markers to write on the animal's side or to mark hooves.

Well, the most important preparedness steps that I think that a planner can take to assure that the community is ready for a disaster is first good public education on how to mark and identify your animals ahead of time. And that includes companion animals as well as livestock.

The AVMA recommends each animal has its own leash, collar or harness and a separate collapsible or airline approved carrier with bedding for transport. 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, 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 in 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 mammals such as hamsters or gerbils, birds, reptiles, amphibians and other exotic animals. Carriers should be identified as previously discussed.

Transportation should be carefully managed using appropriate carriers to avoid stress induced illness. Plans should include procedures to keep animals away from other animals to avoid spreading diseases. Transporting horses, livestock or large animals

such as llamas or exotic pets such as pot bellied pigs may be more difficult.

Several years ago here in Colorado, we had quite a large wildfire called the Hayman fire. There were many, many needs during that fire for getting livestock, primarily horses, out of the incoming fire area. The local folks and the state folks had done a great deal of planning around the idea of a wildfire that would blow up that fast and what the contingencies would be for that. You can never plan 100%. Nobody has a crystal ball. But they had put contingencies in place to get these particular animals out in that kind of situation. And surprisingly, it went pretty well.

Planners must also plan for reentry of owners and their animals because reentry could require additional measures to protect animals after a major disaster. Livestock, horses and highly valued animals present unique problems for emergency planners. This is because many farms are vulnerable to natural disasters and require special considerations. Many large animal operations store large amount of chemical compounds that could be released in a disaster.

Another problem after flooding is the overflow of manure and waste lagoons and the potential contamination of ground and surface waters. Emergency officials, owners or 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 toxins. Cuts from disaster debris may also make animals more susceptible to tetanus. Rabies is also possibility if animals were in contact with wildlife.

When an area has been impacted by a disaster, it's important to survey the area for things like contaminated floodwater, hazardous materials that might be around, downed power lines, sharp objects. When bringing your animals back into a disaster affected area, they're going to be disoriented. They're going to be confused because landmarks are going to have changed, the smells are going to change, the area is going to be changed. So it's very important for people when they go back into an areas that's been affected by the disaster to survey the site very carefully and only let their animals out under supervision so that they can see where they're going and what they've gotten into.

Owners should be made aware that flooding or hazardous releases can leave harmful substances on forage materials, paddocks or

contaminate normal water supplies. Degree in pastures or areas normally used by animals can be harmful if eaten or cause cuts or bruises. It is critical that owners check all areas where animals will be located for potential hazards before reintroducing animals to evacuated areas.

Male:

If you've got animals that are chemically or radiologically contaminated and alive, really the question is two things. One is the outlook for the animal. In other words, if they're contaminated with a chemical that is probably going to kill them and be very painful and a lot of suffering, then maybe euthanasia is appropriate. If they can recover, the question is what type of a health risk does that present to the general population. Whether that's a pet animal or whether that's a feed animal is probably a very significant issue.

Animals that are producing meat or milk and are contaminated with a residual chemical or radiological agent probably are going to have to be destroyed and those carcasses managed as hazardous waste. Pet animals that have a chemical contaminant or a radiological contaminant, but it isn't really a public health threat, I think those can be just managed medically.

Female:

Decontamination with soap and water is recommended for animals exposed to a hazardous chemical or contaminated flood waters. For animals such as reptiles and snakes that need to maintain certain bacteria, only water should be used. Everyone performing decontamination should wear appropriate protective clothing and be trained in its use. Animals used for search and rescue for structures demolished and explosions or fires will need to be decontaminated before taking breaks to ensure degree will not cross contaminate clean areas. The cleansing solution should be considered as hazardous material and disposed of properly.

Owners should not attempt to decontaminate animals unless they are very sure the substance will not cross contaminate the person. Owners should be vigilant about being exposed to persistent substances such as oily residue from poison ivy or waterborne contaminants if animals were found roaming.

Some, but not all first response teams are trained to decontaminate animals and should be involved in the development of the Annex on Animals. Owners and managers of animal care facilities should be careful to sequester the animal until the decontamination process is completed. Owners should be instructed to survey for wild animals, vermin or poisonous snakes that may have taken up

residence in animal quarters during the evacuation. Unfamiliar scents could also confuse animals. If possible, animals should be released initially into enclosed areas. Small animals should be kept indoors unless owners can supervise them outside to prevent them from encountering wildlife or debris.

Animals will be stressed during a disaster situation and then right after and you can imagine so it's important to not push the animal back into normalcy too fast so introduce foods slowly. Let the animal rest a lot. Hope this animals acclimate back to their situation and become comfortable in the area that's been affected by the disaster.

Any food or bedding materials that have been contaminated or which show evidence of being compromised such as during floods or from chemical releases should be discarded. Depending on the disaster, animals may die or need to be euthanized. A protocol for sample collection and submission should be developed before the emergency in the event laboratory analysis of carcasses is required for disease control. Accepted methods for individual and mass euthanasia should also be documented and written into the Annex.

Guidelines for animals with absentee owners need to be developed. If slaughtered for food purposes, inspection protocols for carcasses should be detailed and personnel and agencies necessary to do so should be listed in the Annex. Planners should work with animal control agencies and state and local health and environmental departments to ensure carcasses are disposed properly following an event.

All animals should be constrained during the duration of the event, even when they are exercised. Emergency personnel who will extirpate animals should have ample supplies of constraints including tranquilizing handguns, especially if animals need to be decontaminated by responders in personal protective equipment. Unfamiliar environments can be confusing to animals so all plans should detail how to keep them contained, harnessed and/or leashed or otherwise controlled until returned to their owners. In addition, protocols to report all bites should be distributed to each animal handler and owner.

If animals left behind are lost or unaccounted for, officials should encourage owners to physically check animal control and animal shelters daily, post lost animal notices and alert veterinarians and neighbors of lost animals. Evacuation housing and transport strike teams are being developed under the National Incident

Management System, NIMS, for every county in the country. Some states call them SART for State Animal Response Teams or CART for County Animal Response Team. The more general term is DART. That stands for Disaster Animal Response Team.

Disaster Animal Response Teams may be able to assist in extracting animals after major disasters or in tending to lost animals. The teams will not assist in extracting wildlife. Many states are now setting up programs for credentialing animal care workers to assist with animal care and disasters.

Nationally there is an effort ongoing right now to try to establish a more standardized system for credentialing animal response personnel, both volunteers and professionals. And 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 who want to come in and help, but we can somehow pre-identify those people that are truly qualified to do some of the specific tasks that are needed.

The public should be educated about what community officials and emergency response personnel plan to do about animals and emergencies. A coordinated public information program prior to an emergency can help owners plan for unusual events and educate them about the community's plans, that the information given during the emergency will tell people what protective actions are best given the circumstances and how to avoid harm to their animals.

Pre-scripted messages detailing such actions will save time and provide the best information because it can be checked before the event for accuracy. A pre-scripted message template should tell animal owners to collect their animals, make sure identification tags are securely attached, place their animals in individual carriers that are also clearly labeled, and load carriers and crates in emergency supplies. Tell them to have adequate food and water supplies, medications, copies of vaccination records and licenses and bedding. And leave as soon as possible.

Depending on the emergency, planners and emergency officials will also need to tell the public what plans are in place for people who cannot leave with their animals because of physical or other constraints and where people can call for more information. Emergency hotlines can provide information on pet friendly shelters and motels or hotels as well.

Exercises using the plan should be conducted at least annually if not biannually. They can be conducted as tabletop exercises to familiarize participants with names and faces of all involved or as a coordinated part of an overall state or jurisdictional emergency exercise. Exercises can be written specifically for the Local Animal Disaster Response Teams or be part of a county or state exercise.

When possible, evaluators should be there to record the events and to share their findings with community planners afterwards. During these exercises all phases or only certain parts may be played out. The most important part of any exercise is for the participants to learn their roles and responsibilities as well as others some modifications can be made to improve the efficacy of the community's plan for animal protection.

I would recommend that more practicing and exercising would be beneficial to all concerned because all of us know that having the plan on paper is a little different than thinking through the scenario and then dealing with what comes at you. It's very important to address animal issues and disasters because again people will die trying to stay behind with an animal or go into rescue an animal.

So what is vitally important is public education. We need to make sure the public knows what resources are out there to help them prepare to evacuate with their animal. And then for the situations where people haven't prepared to evacuate with their animals, it's very important for state emergency operations plans and local emergency operations plans to take into account the transportation of animals, the evacuation of those animals and in the sheltering of those animals.

Animals deserve our attention in good times and bad. Be prepared. Have a plan. Involve veterinary and other experts in developing the necessary protocols and know how to protect animals in an emergency. And finally train to and exercise the plans. Don't wait until it's too late to help animals and their owners.

[End of Audio]