

Pets

Preparing ahead for pet evacuation is the key to reducing the stress of the situation and to being able to react quickly in the event of a storm. The most important aspect of a successful evacuation is being prepared. Make sure your pets are ready to go in the event of an evacuation.

Caged pets require the same kind of planning as our four-legged pets. Take a little time now to think about what you would need for your hamsters, snakes, and guinea pigs. What about any aquatic animals? What about corralled pets, or livestock?

Most people will evacuate themselves and their pets to the home of friends or family, but what if your pets can't be accommodated?

Many pets are tuned in to their owners' emotions. They sense our stress and this can worsen theirs. Advanced planning and preparation will reduce your stress as well as your pets.

1. Identification

Your first line of defense for being reunited with your pet if separated in an emergency or other situation is to make sure your pets are properly attired with their City license tag, their rabies tag, and a pet ID tag firmly attached to their collar or harness. When selecting the engraving for your pet ID tag, consider what phone numbers are best for your situation. If evacuated from your home, it won't do any good for the finder to call you at home.

Ideally your pets will have permanent microchip IDs (an injected microchip that contains information that most shelters can access with a special scanner.)

Tattoos are another form of permanent identification. During the chaos of an evacuation and storm, animals easily can be lost. Identification will improve the chances of pets and owners being reunited.

Have current pictures of all pets. These could be used when asking others if they have seen your lost pets and as proof the animals belong to the owners.

2. Important documents:

Proof of vaccinations and health records should be carried during an evacuation. The rabies certificate is required to prove vaccination status. The health records might be necessary to aid in health care if the animal needs help while away from its family veterinarian. Also, records left at home could be destroyed in a storm.

3. Medications:

Try to have at least one week's worth of the pet's medication available. Owners may want to have their pet's doctor write a prescription for one week's worth so

that if they run out while they're away they could go to a pharmacy out of town to get enough medication until they return.

4. **Food:**
Carry enough food for at least seven days in a watertight container. Evacuees do not know how long they will be away or if food will be available where they are going.
5. **Water:**
Carry enough fresh water for several days.
6. **Bowls:**
Have enough bowls for food and water for each pet.
7. **Restraint**
Have leashes for each of your pets. Carriers and or kennels will provide your pet with a sense of security especially if you include a favorite blanket and toys.
Cats travel much better in the car if they are confined
8. **Toys:**
Bring your pets' favorite toys. This will provide them with a sense of home and a distraction from all of the changes and stress.
9. **Blankets/beds:**
A familiar bed or blanket to lie on will relive some of the stress of being away from home.