

PREPARING YOUR WHOLE FAMILY FOR A DISASTER!



There are steps that you can take to be better prepared to care for your pets in a disaster. Here are some emergency tips and planning information from the NHSPCA and the HSUS.

If You Evacuate

The single most important thing you can do to protect your pets if you evacuate is to take them with you. Chances are that if it is not safe for you to stay home, it is not safe for them either. Even if you think you will be gone for a few hours. TAKE THEM with you. Once you leave your home there is no way of knowing when you will be able to return.

Leave early; don't wait for a mandatory evacuation order. If you wait to be evacuated by emergency officials you may be told to leave your pets behind. If they provide transportation, emergency officials may not let you bring your pets along.

Identification

Identifying your pet with a tag is always important. In the event of a disaster it may be your pets only key to being reunited with you if lost. Include a phone number of a friend or relative outside your immediate area, this will help in the event that you are not home.

Find a Safe Place NOW

Remember Disaster shelters generally do not accept pets, you must plan ahead to ensure that your pets will be able to come with you and have a safe place to stay. Don't wait until disaster is at your front door.

The NHSPCA has provided a list of hotels and motels in New England that accept pets. It is still important to check with them to see if there is a size or number limit. Also if you have a place in mind and it is not on our list; Call them and ask if, in the event of a disaster, they might waive their 'no pet policy.' Friends and relatives that are outside your area are very important as well. Your family should discuss this option now if in the event of a disaster you want to stay with them.

As The Disaster Approaches

Don't wait, leave early. Remember that if your only way out becomes transportation by officials at the last minute, they may not let you take your pet. Better to waste a trip to your planned destination than have them tell you "Sorry No Pets allowed."

What If You Are Not Home?

Consider also that you may be at work or away from home when an order to evacuate is given. Planning ahead to have a trusted neighbor retrieve your pets for you and meet you may be your only alternative. Be sure they have a key, know where your supplies are and where your pets may be.

After The Disaster

Upon returning home you could find damage to your home or you may not be able to return at all. Your pets will be confused and unfamiliar with the changes as well.

Do not allow pets to roam freely where you are staying or if you return to a damaged neighborhood and home. Pets can get lost through holes in your home or simply because the neighborhood looks different. Sharp objects, falling branches and other debris create an additional threat of injury. Try to get back into a routine as soon as possible. Pets find comfort in repetition and may be confused and stressed after a disaster or when staying elsewhere. Be patient and if behavioral problems develop seek help through a behaviorist or trainer.