

Have A Safe Place To Take Your Pets

In the event of a disaster, if you must evacuate, the most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to evacuate them, too.

Leaving them behind, even in a seemingly safe spot, can lead to injury, loss, or worse. It's essential to prepare in advance for the possibility that you and your pets may need to evacuate.

Red Cross Shelters

Red Cross disaster shelters cannot accept pets because of states' health and safety regulations and other considerations. Service animals who assist people with disabilities are the only animals allowed in Red Cross shelters. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to find shelter for your animals in the midst of a disaster, so plan ahead. Do not wait until disaster strikes to do your research.

Friends or Relatives

Ask friends or relatives outside the affected area if they can shelter your pets. If you have multiple pets, they may prefer to stay together, but be ready to house them separately.

Hotels & Motels

Contact hotels and motels outside your area to check their pet policies, including restrictions on number, size, and species. Ask if "no pet" policies can be waived in emergencies. Keep a list of pet-friendly places and their phone numbers with your disaster supplies. If a disaster is imminent, call ahead for reservations.

Boarding Facilities or Shelters

Prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency; include 24-hour phone numbers. Check if local animal shelters offer emergency shelter or foster care for pets during disasters, but use this as a last resort since shelters may already be overwhelmed.

Readiness Guide for Pets & Disasters

Assemble A Portable Pet Disaster Supplies Kit

Whether you're away for a day or a week, you'll need essential supplies. Store them in an easily accessible place and in sturdy, portable containers (like duffle bags or covered trash bins).

Your pet disaster supplies kit should include:



Medications and medical records (stored in a waterproof container)



Food, potable water, bowls, can opener



Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and collars



Cat litter/pan



Pet carriers to transport pets safely and ensure that your animals can't escape



Pet beds and toys, if easily transportable



Current photos of your pets in case they get lost



Feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior issues, veterinarian's contact details

Know What To Do As A Disaster Approaches

Be proactive: act early! Often, warnings are issued hours, even days, in advance.

At the first hint of disaster, act to protect your pet.

- Ensure all dogs and cats wear collars with up-to-date identification. Include the phone number and address of your temporary shelter or a friend/relative outside the disaster area. Use temporary tags or adhesive tape on the ID tag for added info with a permanent marker.
- Check your pet disaster supplies to be ready at a moment's notice.
- Arrange for a trusted neighbor or pet-sitting service to take care of your pets during an evacuation if you aren't home. Ensure they know your pets, have a key, and know where the supplies are.
- Call ahead to confirm emergency shelter arrangements for you and your pets.