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## **Emergency Preparedness Pointers**

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### **Take Your Pet On The Ride For Its Life**

Many of us like to take short trips with our household pets. We gather a few items such as a leash, pet litter bags or a carrier. Just a few basics to make sure our pets will be safe and the trip will be enjoyable. Sometimes its a trip to the park or maybe a family vacation. But have we made all the necessary preparations to take our pets on the trip that could save their lives? During a disaster, home evacuation may be necessary. No one should be left behind. We all need to be sure that our pets are a part of our family disaster plan.

#### **The Seven P's**

##### **Prior Proper Planning Precludes the Possibility of Poor Performance**

During an emergency there is no time to make a plan. Planning ahead will ensure that your family and pets receive the best care possible during an evacuation.

##### **Where do you go?**

- Contact motels and hotels outside the area. Ask them if they have restrictions on size, type and species of pets. There are several websites that list pet friendly facilities. Some places with a no pet policy may waive the policy during an emergency.
- Call friends and relatives outside the area and see if they can shelter your pets.
- Make a list of boarding facilities and veterinary hospitals that may be able to shelter your animal(s). Include the 24 hr emergency numbers on the list.
- Call your local animal shelter and find out if they provide foster care. This option should be a last resort as shelters will have limited resources that will be stretched to the limit during an emergency.

##### **Your Pet's Disaster Kit**

- Food and water for five days with plastic bowls and a can opener if needed.
- Medications and veterinary records stored in a waterproof container. Include a basic pet first aid kit as part of this container.
- Toys, blanket and /or bed.
- Litter box, scoop, disposal bags and litter
- ID attached to your pet — Make sure it includes your out of state contact information.
- Pet carrier, leash, harness — These need to be sturdy items that will allow for the safe transport of your pets while keeping them from escaping. Your pet may have to be in a carrier for hours, so it should be large enough for them to stand up and turn around.
- Current photos of your pet and a written physical description.



#### **What if you're not home when disaster strikes?**

Find a trusted neighbor that knows your pet. Make sure they have access to your pet and the disaster kit when you are not home. Give them a copy of your evacuation plan and verify that they know the location of your family meeting place outside the neighborhood.

#### **Returning Home**

Do not allow pets to roam loose immediately upon returning home after a disaster. Sights, smells and landmarks may have changed. Animals can become disoriented. Be patient and slowly return them to their normal routine.

