

Protecting Pets in the Event of a Disaster



Cape Codders are no stranger to some of nature's strongest forces. Everyone should know what to do in the event of a natural or man-made disaster...and those with pets should take extra precautions. Here's how you...and your pets...can prepare for emergencies.

PREPARE — BEFORE IT HAPPENS

- **Make sure your animals are wearing collars with securely fastened up-to-date identification.** Ask your vet about microchipping your pets—it's an excellent way to assure that they make it safely back to you. Birds can be identified by photographs and leg bands.
- **Identify a safe location to bring your pet**—a pet-friendly hotel, a shelter that accepts animals, or a friend's home—so you know where to take them in the event of a disaster. Most Red Cross shelters do not accept animals. The Public Shelter on the Massachusetts Military Reservation does have one pet shelter adjacent to it. If this shelter is open, then the pet shelter may be one option for you. Please visit the Cape Animal CARE website for lists of shelters and hotels on Cape Cod that accept animals. If a disaster is pending, prepare to

evacuate, and do so early for your safety—and your pets'.

- **In the event you can't get back to your house, arrange for a trusted friend or neighbor to retrieve your animals.** This person should have a key, be comfortable with your pets, and know where your pet's disaster supply kit is kept.

ESSENTIALS— CREATE A DISASTER KIT (BEFORE THE STORM)

INCLUDE:

- Up-to-date medications**
- Medical records and an information sheet on special needs/feeding and exercise regimens for the boarding facility or shelter**
- Veterinarian's phone number**
- Properly-sized carriers for transporting and housing** (especially if evacuation to a pet-friendly shelter is necessary)
- Sturdy leash**
- Food and potable water and bowls**
- Cat litter/pan**
- Can opener**
 - Pet toys and beds**
 - Current photo of your pets in case they get lost**
 - Out-of-state phone number of a friend or relative to contact should your home phone be out of service**
 - Pet First Aid Kit**

TAKE YOUR ANIMALS WITH YOU!

Leaving pets behind can result in their injury, loss, or death. Always take your pets with you! If they cannot stay with you during an evacuation, take them to a prearranged shelter out of the evacuation area.

After an Event:

- **Walk pets on a leash until they become re-oriented to their home** – often familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and pets could easily be confused and get lost. Also, downed power lines and other debris can all pose a threat to animals after a disaster.
- **If pets cannot be found after a disaster, contact the local animal control office to find out where lost animals can be recovered.** Bring along a picture of your pet if possible.
- **After a disaster animals can become aggressive or defensive** – monitor their behavior. If you see an injured or stranded wild animal, do not attempt to help them. Call your animal control officer.

For more information on caring for your pet in a disaster or to locate a Cape Cod pet-friendly emergency shelter go to: www.CapeAnimalCare.org; www.fema.gov/library/anemer.shtm

