

# READINESS GUIDE

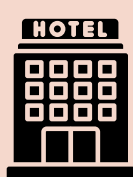
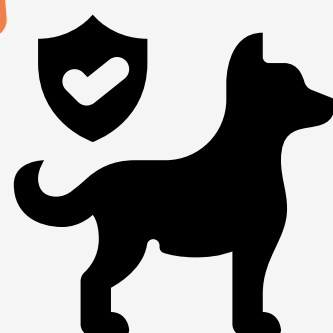
## PETS & DISASTER

Having a disaster plan is crucial to safeguard your family, including your pets. Preparedness can make a significant difference in their safety. Different types of disasters, whether a hurricane or a hazardous spill, necessitate specific responses. In many cases, you may need to evacuate your home.

**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.

### HAVE A SAFE PLACE TO TAKE YOUR PETS

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.



**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.



**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.



**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.

### 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), First Aid Kit



**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, and your **veterinarian's contact information** for fostering or boarding your pets

### KNOW WHAT TO DO AS A DISASTER APPROACHES

Often, warnings are issued hours, even days, in advance. At the first hint of disaster, act to protect your pet.



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. Keep dogs leashed and cats in carriers to prevent them from running off or panicking. Allow your pets time to readjust when you return, and consult a vet if behavior issues persist.



**Call ahead** to confirm emergency shelter arrangements for you and your pets.



Check to be sure your **pet disaster supplies** are ready to take at a moment's notice.



**Bring all pets into the house** so that you won't have to search for them if you have to leave in a hurry.



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**.