Are You Prepared for a Disaster?

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Introduction

Disasters, both natural and man-made, are inevitable. How well we prepare for them determines how well we recover when they occur. Preparation is a shared responsibility. While local, state and national governments are charged with developing plans, local citizens, non-governmental organizations and private sector entities are recognized as being vital resources throughout the process of planning for and responding to a disaster.

In response to the 2003 Homeland Security Presidential Directive 8 (HSPD-8), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) published the National Preparedness Guidelines in 2005. These guidelines recognized the need for community involvement in all aspects of planning, and the need for citizen preparedness. “As uniformed emergency responders constitute less than one percent of the total U.S. population, it is clear that citizens must be better prepared, trained, and practiced on how best to take care of themselves and assist others in those first crucial hours during and after a catastrophic incident” . . . (National Preparedness Guidelines, 2007, p. 27).

What Can We Do To Be Prepared?

Regardless of the size of the community, there are people assigned to plan and coordinate response actions should a disaster occur. This group, or groups, is charged with making sure that appropriate actions are taken to help keep citizens safe. However, as was evident during recent catastrophic events such as Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, 9-11, and the 2005 Tsunami, proper citizen involvement was critical in helping save human and animal lives. Community members cannot rely solely on uniformed first responders and the local emergency preparedness group to keep them out of harm’s way. Knowing what to do in an emergency is necessary, not only for personal and family safety, but because it
allows responders to attend to those who are in critical need of medical assistance or in immediate danger. Citizens need to know what steps to take to keep themselves and their families safe.

As a first step, citizens need to determine what types of disasters can affect their community and then learn what appropriate actions would be should that disaster occur. Would you know what to do to keep yourself and your family safe should that disaster occur? While planning for a wildfire is different from planning for a hurricane, the process of informing yourself about disasters is the same. Disaster information can be obtained from local and/or state emergency managers. Often fire and police departments have written guides to help you learn more about what emergencies face your community and what you should do to prepare. Knowing what can occur will help you develop an appropriate response plan.

Secondly, learn what you need to do in advance of an emergency. Advance preparation is key to safety. For example, do you know what to do in a tornado? A hurricane? A wildfire? A flood? Learning what to do in each of the emergency situations that can affect your community is imperative to personal safety. It is also recommended that every person have a disaster backpack (survival kit) that can be grabbed at a moment's notice. Recommendations are that supplies in the kit provide you with needed survival items for either 72 or 96 hours, long enough to sustain you until services are relocated and/or restored. While the Internet is filled with various examples of what is needed, remember that this kit is also designed to meet your specific needs and should be tailored to you. Each person should have their own individualized kit. While the hope is that this kit is never needed, the supplies contained (food, snacks, medicines, personal items, etc.) have expiration dates and should be cycled out of the backpack and replaced with fresh items. Even if your plan is to move to a shelter, your kit needs to include basic items tailored to your needs, which can help make your stay more comfortable. A list of examples of what to put in a kit begins on page 7.

In addition, you need to develop, and practice a safety plan. After taking the first step of finding out what disasters can happen, and what you should do to survive the disaster, the next step is to develop a personalized family plan. Since many disasters occur without warning, the plan is necessary so that all your family members will know what to do, no matter where they are. The plan needs to be individualized for your particular situation. For example, if your family is separated, who would you call to coordinate where you would meet? Do all your family members have a list with the appropriate contact information? If your contact person is unavailable or also affected by the disaster, do you have a backup plan? The safety plan should include steps for sheltering in place, evacuation and a list of sites to go to for assistance and shelter. In addition, you need to practice the plan and keep it up to date. Practicing the plan will help reinforce what needs to be done during the chaotic time of a disaster. A list of resources to help you develop a plan begins on page 5.

**Our Animal Family**

The importance of pet safety has become more evident following the disasters of recent years. Owners have been willing to risk their own lives to stay behind and care for their pets or to re-enter cordoned areas to rescue them. Numerous stories tell of the bond that exists between a pet and its owner. In 2006, President Bush signed House of Representatives Bill (H.R. 3858) known as
the “Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006.” This law was written to ensure that state and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals following a major disaster. While community emergency management has a plan to address animal needs during a disaster, owners need to develop individualized plans to keep their pets safe. Animal safety is ultimately the owner’s responsibility. Just as you would plan to care for yourself and your family, your animal’s needs must also be addressed.

The first step in animal disaster planning is pet identification. While micro-chipping is highly recommended, having a recent photograph of you with your animal is also important. While the photograph can be useful, remember that your pet may not look like the animal in the picture, especially if it has braved the elements during a disaster. For pets that have been micro-chipped, the owner must maintain up-to-date information at the manufacturer’s website.

A second planning strategy is to have a disaster kit for each animal. This kit should include similar items that a human kit contains, i.e. food, water, medications, shot records and sanitation items. It should also contain a leash, collar and any personal items to make your pet more comfortable. All pets should have their own carrier or kennel as warranted by species and breed. (An example of a pet disaster kit begins on page 12.) Because the disaster can, and probably will, affect the emotional state of your pet, owners should practice their emergency plan with their pets. For example, does your pet easily enter their carrier? If not, practice this process with them so that they will be more comfortable loading during the emergency.

An important component of your pet plan is knowing what facilities accept pets and/or companion animals should you have to evacuate. Prior planning is necessary to know where you can take your pet during a disaster. Community residents that are faced with regular evacuation (hurricane-impacted communities) should identify pet-friendly hotels outside the normal perimeter of the disaster. Another alternative is locating friends and/or relatives who can house your animals on a temporary basis. Local shelters are also an option but should be identified in advance so that when evacuation is necessary their locations are known. Remember that the nature of the emergency determines which shelters will be available. Therefore, being flexible with a backup plan is always a good strategy. For those who do not frequently evacuate, identifying animal shelters or having a shelter-in-place plan is just as important.

Check with your local emergency management personnel to determine what resources are available to help you plan for an emergency. Your safety and your pet’s safety can depend upon how well you plan for a disaster.

Conclusion

Man-made, natural and technological disasters can and do occur. Many happen without advance warning. Therefore, knowing what can occur and how you will respond can improve how well you will survive. Having a plan is critical to the safety of both you and your animals. Practicing the plan is essential. Since disasters create chaos, practicing the plan will improve your response and reduce inappropriate actions. Advance knowledge about your community plan also helps you coordinate efforts with those in charge of your safety and well-being.
References


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Family Emergency Plan
Current as of (date): __________________

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

Police/Sheriff Department: ________________  Fire Department: ________________
Phone #: ________________________________  Phone #: ________________________________

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

Family Doctor: ________________  Family Doctor: ________________
Address: ____________________________  Address: ____________________________
City/ST/Zip: ____________________________  City/ST/Zip: ____________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________

Family Dentist: ________________  Family Dentist: ________________
Address: ____________________________  Address: ____________________________
City/ST/Zip: ____________________________  City/ST/Zip: ____________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________

Pharmacist: ________________  Hospital/Clinic: ________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________

Medical Insurance: ________________  Homeowners/Rental Insurance: ________________
Policy #: ____________________________  Policy #: ____________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________
E-mail: ____________________________  E-mail: ____________________________
Contact: ____________________________  Contact: ____________________________

Veterinarian/Kennel: _________________________________________________________
Address/City/ST/Zip (if applicable): _______________________________________________
Phone #: ___________________________________________________________________

Neighborhood meeting place: ______________________________________________________
Address/City/ST/Zip (if applicable): _______________________________________________
Phone # (if applicable): __________________________________________________________
Cell Phone # ____________________

Area meeting place: _____________________________________________________________
Address/City/ST/Zip (if applicable): _______________________________________________
Phone # (if applicable): __________________________________________________________
Cell Phone # ____________________

Evacuation location: _____________________________________________________________
Address/City/ST/Zip (if applicable): _______________________________________________
Phone #: ___________________________________________________________________

Out-of-Town Contact: ____________________________________________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Cell Phone #: ____________________________
E-mail: ____________________________
FAMILY MEMBERS:

Name: ____________________________  Social Security Number: ____________________________
Date of birth: _________________________  Important medical information: _________________________
Work: ______________________________  School: ______________________________
Address: ____________________________  Address: ____________________________
City/ST/Zip: __________________________  City/ST/Zip: __________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________
Cell phone #: __________________________  Alt. phone #: __________________________
Evacuation location: _________________________  Evacuation location: _________________________

Name: ____________________________  Social Security Number: ____________________________
Date of birth: _________________________  Important medical information: _________________________
Work: ______________________________  School: ______________________________
Address: ____________________________  Address: ____________________________
City/ST/Zip: __________________________  City/ST/Zip: __________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________
Cell phone #: __________________________  Alt. phone #: __________________________
Evacuation location: _________________________  Evacuation location: _________________________

Name: ____________________________  Social Security Number: ____________________________
Date of birth: _________________________  Important medical information: _________________________
Work: ______________________________  School: ______________________________
Address: ____________________________  Address: ____________________________
City/ST/Zip: __________________________  City/ST/Zip: __________________________
Phone #: ____________________________  Phone #: ____________________________
Cell phone #: __________________________  Alt. phone #: __________________________
Evacuation location: _________________________  Evacuation location: _________________________

FREQUENTED LOCATIONS
Address/City/ST/Zip: ____________________________
Phone #: ____________________________
Evacuation Location: ____________________________

Address/City/ST/Zip: ____________________________
Phone #: ____________________________
Evacuation Location: ____________________________

NOTES
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
Survival Kits

Everyone needs to be personally prepared to survive at least 72 hours without help

+ Don’t forget the special needs of each family member
+ Kits are “living kits.” Rotate food, water and other perishable items like medications.

Types of Survival Kits:
+ Evacuation only kit: Supplies should be stored in an easy to carry storage container like a backpack and located in a place where they can be quickly accessed.
+ Shelter-in-place kit: Supplies should be stored in an easy to move container and in an accessible location within the home.
+ Earthquake supply kit: Store in a durable container like a garbage can or plastic box and locate it along an outside wall near an entrance or window.
+ Automobile: Disasters can occur while driving. Keep a survival kit in your car at all times.
+ Workplace/School: Disasters can occur while at work or school. A small survival kit is appropriate.

Survival Kits Need To Include:
+ Water – At least one gallon per person per day. Store in clean plastic or other non-breakable containers.
  Purify, if needed by:
  ◆ Boiling at a rolling boil for 1 minute
  ◆ Using commercial purification tablets available from outdoor stores
  ◆ Using household liquid bleach (5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite, unscented).
    o Ratio: 1 quart of water – add 4 drops of bleach,
    o 1 gallon of water – add 16 drops of bleach
    o 5 gallons of water – add 1 teaspoon of bleach.
  ◆ After adding bleach, shake or stir the water container and let it stand 30 minutes before drinking.

+ Food should:
  ◆ be non-perishable and require no refrigeration
  ◆ require little or no preparation and little or no cooking
  ◆ use little or no water
  ◆ be as high in nutrition as possible.
  Rotate food in kit so emergency supply stays fresh.

+ Suggested foods:
  ◆ Canned soup, fish, meat, vegetables and fruit
  ◆ Protein or fruit bars
  ◆ Dry cereal and granola
  ◆ Peanut butter
  ◆ Dried fruit
  ◆ Nuts
  ◆ Crackers
  ◆ Canned or boxed juice
  ◆ Non-perishable canned milk
  ◆ Comfort food (the food you turn to when under stress, such as chocolate)
  ◆ Special food (such as baby food or formula)
Utensils:
- Mess kit (unbreakable plate, bowl, cup, and utensils) for each family member
- Manual can opener
- All purpose knife
- Aluminum foil and re-sealing plastic bags
- Personal water bottle for each family member
Some food preparation items may be needed for certain disasters – such as camp stove, fuel, and matches.

First-Aid Kit:
- Two pairs of latex or sterile gloves
- Virus masks
- Sterile dressings in various sizes to stop bleeding
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandage
- Sterile roller bandages assorted sizes
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleaning agents such as soap, alcohol wipes, antibiotic towelettes and waterless soap
- Antibiotic ointment
- Adhesive bandages of various sizes and shapes
- Q-tips
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Thermometer
- Petroleum jelly
- Eye wash solution
- Sunscreen
- Prescription medications and supplies
- Non-Prescription drugs: Aspirin and non-aspirin pain reliever, anti-diarrhea, cough syrup, antihistamine tablets, decongestant tablets, antacid

Personal and Sanitation:
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Toothbrush / Toothpaste
- Hair brush, comb
- Deodorant
- Chap Stick or lip balm
- Vitamins
- Feminine supplies
- Toilet paper, towelettes
- Plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses)
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Disinfectant
- Household chlorine bleach with medicine dropper
**Clothing and Bedding:**
- Sturdy shoes or boots
- Rain gear (if appropriate)
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Hat and gloves (for warmth and/or sun protection)
- Thermal underwear (if appropriate)
- Sunglasses
- Belt
- Bandana
- Complete change of clothes (socks, underwear, pants, shirt)
- Jacket as appropriate for climate

**Tools and Supplies:**
- Battery operated radio with extra batteries (or wind-up radio)
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Duct tape
- Paper, pencil, marking pens
- Leather work gloves
- Wrench for shutting off natural gas is needed
- Whistle
- Tarp or plastic sheeting
- Emergency blanket
- Dust masks
- Sewing kit
- Rope
- Trash bags

**Other:**
- Cash in coins and small bills
- Personal Identification
- Copies of important documents such as birth certificates, marriage license, Social Security cards, passport, wills, deeds, inventory of household goods, insurance papers, immunization records, bank and credit card account numbers, stocks and bonds. Store in watertight container.
- Entertainment – games and books
- Emergency contact list and phone numbers
- Extra set of house and car keys

**Pet Supplies: (Consider micro-chipping your pet)**
- Food, water and dishes
- Veterinarian records in waterproof container
- Pet first-aid kit and needed medications
- Blanket
- Treats and favorite toy
- Leash and collar
- Crate
- Current photo of pet and you
Kit for Vehicle:
- Water
- Food
- First-aid kit
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Flashlight & batteries
- Coat, gloves and hat (as appropriate for climate)
- Seasonal complete change of clothes including socks and underwear
- Sturdy shoes or boots
- Plastic tarp
- Jumper cables
- Flares
- Shovel
- Chains

Kit for Workplace/School:
- Water
- Food
- Whistle
- First-aid kit
- Complete change of clothes
- Jacket, hat, and gloves (as appropriate for climate)
- Comfortable walking shoes


Agriculture, Family and Community Development, 4-H Youth, Forestry, and Extension Sea Grant Programs. Oregon State University, United States Department of Agriculture, and Clackamas and Wasco County Cooperating.
Animal Survival Kit
Every animal in your household should have its own kit

+ Don’t forget the special needs of each pet: dogs, cats, birds, reptiles, pocket pets, horses, etc.
+ Kits are “living kits.” Rotate food, water and other perishable items such as medications.

**Types:**
+ Evacuation supplies: Supplies for evacuation should be stored where they can be accessed quickly and in an easy to carry storage container like a backpack or rolling suitcase
+ Shelter-in-place only supplies: Should be stored in an accessible location within the home, shed or barn

**Include:**
+ Water...At least 1 to 2 gallons per dog per day for drinking and cleaning bowls/cages
  At least 1 to 2 quarts per cat/birds per day for drinking, bathing, and cleaning
  A two week supply per reptile for drinking, soaking and misting
  It is recommended that you have 25 to 30 gallons per horse per day
  Store water in clean plastic or other non-breakable containers in cool, dark locations
  Purify, if needed
+ Food should:
  ♦ Be non-perishable
  ♦ Require little or no preparation
  ♦ Use little or no water
  ♦ Be as close to their regular diet as possible
  ♦ Rotate food in kit so emergency supply stays fresh.
+ Suggested foods:
  ♦ Canned or pouched dog/cat food are best in single serving portions
  ♦ Dry food needs to be in an airtight container
  ♦ Birds – pelleted diets, seeds, dried fruits/vegetables and nuts in airtight container
  ♦ Reptiles – dry or pelleted food in airtight containers, frozen fruits and vegetables, ice packs, small cooler or baby food
  ♦ Horses – grain in airtight container and baled hay
+ Utensils:
  ♦ Manual can opener
  ♦ Spoons
  ♦ Feed and water dishes/buckets
  ♦ Knife, hay hooks, gloves and tarp - to cut, move and store hay bales if needed
+ Sanitation:
  ♦ Newspaper to line crate
  ♦ Pooper Scooper
  ♦ Small plastic bags and gloves for disposing of waste
  ♦ Paper towels and garbage bags
  ♦ Dish soap and disinfectant
  ♦ Litter pan, litter and scoop for cats
  ♦ Shavings and manure fork for equine
First-Aid Kit:
♦ Animal first aid book for your species of pet
♦ Extra pairs of disposable gloves
♦ Gauze pads and rolls to stop bleeding
♦ Q-tips
♦ Vet wrap for support wrap and to hold dressings on
♦ Cleaning agents such as soap, alcohol wipes, antibiotic towelettes and waterless soap
♦ Antibiotic ointment
♦ Bandage scissors and tweezers
♦ Instant cold pack
♦ Mineral oil – laxative and lubricant
♦ Small bottle of 3 percent Hydrogen Peroxide
♦ Bird additional items – Pedialyte, blunt nose scissors, styptic powder, cornflower to stop bleeding on wings or soft tissue, feeding syringes to hand feed if necessary
♦ Reptiles additional items – cornstarch, mite killer, Biotene or other non-burning medicated mouthwash
♦ Equine additional items – Electrolyte powder, eye wash, saline solution, antiseptic dressing to stop bleeding, stethoscope, digital thermometer, hoof pick, shipping boots, spray bottle

Pet Supplies: mark everything with your name, address and phone number
♦ ID – tags and micro chipping and paperwork
♦ Horse ID – livestock crayon or tag mane/tail with your contact information
♦ Collar, leash and muzzle fitted to animal
♦ Veterinarian records in waterproof container
♦ Prescription medications and supplies
♦ Toy – for comfort
♦ Blanket
♦ Treats – anything they are use to receiving for comfort
♦ Crate – tag with pet’s name, your name, address, and phone number
♦ Current photo of your pet and you
♦ Thick leather gloves – for handling an animal that becomes upset
♦ Towel – to wrap the animal in for moving or comforting
♦ Portable cage with perches for avian
♦ Wire, pliers, duct tape, wire cutter – for repairing portable cage
♦ Escape-proof aquarium, kennel or crate for reptiles
♦ Halters, lead ropes, lunge line and tie-out line for equine

Developed by Susan Emmons, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Churchill County, Nevada
EMERGENCY PET CAREGIVERS
In an emergency call these caregivers for my pets.

Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Vet:_________________  Phone:____________________

Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Vet:_________________  Phone:____________________

Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
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Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Vet:_________________  Phone:____________________

Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Name:__________________________________________
Address:________________________________________
Phone:_________________  Cell:____________________
Vet:_________________  Phone:____________________
Miscellaneous Emergency Preparedness Websites:

http://www.crn4h.org/
http://fallonnv.mystateusa.com/
http://www.72hours.org
http://www.ready.gov/
http://www.preparednessplus.net/
http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/
http://ca4h.org/projresource/prep/
http://www.eden.lsu.edu/
http://www.redcross.org/
http://crn.mystateusa.com/
http://texashelp.tamu.edu/
http://www.ces.purdue.edu/eden/
http://www.dhs.gov/
http://www.livingwithfire.info/
http://www.sba.gov/npm2005/
http://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/hazard/hazards.shtml
http://www.neahin.org/
http://www.neonn.org/
http://homelandsecurity.state.nv.us/
http://www.three-peaks.net/prepared.htm
http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/
http://www.nationaltownwatch.org/nno/
http://www.wmdfirstresponders.com/

Animal Response Websites:

http://www.vepr.lsu.edu/guide.htm
http://www.eden.lsu.edu/
http://www.avma.org/disaster/responseguide/responseguide_toc.asp
http://www.animaldisasters.com/
http://www.aspca.org/
http://www.floridadisaster.org/petplan.htm
http://www.avma.org/disaster/saving_family.asp
http://www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/animals.shtm
http://www.clemson.edu/ep/animal.htm
http://redcross.tallytown.com/educate.html#top
http://agri.nv.gov/Index_Animal2.htm
http://www.petswelcome.com/
http://www.aarp.org/bulletin/yourlife/evacuating_pets.html
http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/beprepared/barnyard.html
http://www.dogfriendly.com/
http://www.hikewithyourdog.com/
http://www.in.gov/boah/disaster/areThey.html
http://www.lsart.org/
http://www.animalshelter.org/shelters/Nevada.asp
http://www.petnetwork.org/
http://www.petweek.org/petweek/aboutpetweek.html
http://www.friendsofanimals.org/programs/animal-disaster-plans/
http://www.getreadygear.com/