

Emergency Preparedness for your Pets

Overview

Being prepared before, during and after an emergency can help to keep your pet safe and comfortable when it matters most.

Before an emergency

Know the risks

This can help you prepare your pets for the unexpected. To learn about the risks in your community, contact your local emergency management office.

Make a plan

Having an emergency pet plan can reduce stress for you and your pet. Here are some things to think about when making your plan.

- How will you assemble and transport your pets?
- Where will you go and what will you bring?
- What are your pet's stressors and how can you calm them?
- Is your pet friendly with people and animals?
- Does your pet have food and medications that require refrigeration?

When planning, be sure to add an emergency pet friendly contact list that includes hotels, kennels, shelters, friends and family in and outside of your community.

Practice your emergency plan with your household, including your pet.

Financial preparedness

Emergencies can be costly. If possible, consider an emergency savings account to cover pet costs such as hotels, shelters and vet visits.

Community

What if an emergency occurs while you are away and your pet is home alone? Prepare by setting up a community buddy system. You'll want your pet to be comfortable with your buddy so visit with them often. Don't forget to give your

buddy access to your home and the location of your pet's supplies.

Take a photo of you with your pet to help you reunite if you are separated.

Supplies and kits

To register yourself and your pet into a reception centre, temporary housing, or place your pet in care some or all of these items may be needed.

- Sturdy pet carrier or crate (labelled)
- Collar, harness, leash, and muzzle
- Active pet license with your municipality. If you become separated, this will assist in their return.
- Up-to-date I.D. (e.g. tattoo, microchip, collar with tags, etc.)
- Current list of pet's medications, allergies, and food restrictions
- Current vaccination records, and insurance information
- Proof of ownership such as a recent photo of you with your pet

Additional items to store that will keep your pet safe and comfortable:

- 7-14 day supply of food and water
- 14 day supply of medications (stored in a waterproof container)
- Pet first-aid kit
- Liquid dish soap, disinfectant, and paper towels
- Garbage bags and waste bags for cleanup
- Comfort items like blankets, towels and toys

For a quick grab and go, store your pet's emergency supplies with yours in an easy to access location.

Preparedness is different for everyone. Adapt this information to fit your pet's needs.

During an emergency

During an emergency or disaster you may be directed to shelter in place, or ordered to evacuate.

Shelter in place

If authorities direct you to shelter in place, follow all instructions and watch your news source for updates. These situations can last a few hours, or a few days. It is a good idea to have enough supplies on hand to last a minimum of 14 days.

Evacuation

If authorities order you to evacuate, plan to take your pet with you! If authorities direct you to a reception centre, it is possible your pet will not be allowed.

Use your pet friendly emergency contact list to help you during this time.

If you must leave your pet behind, you can increase their chance of survival by:

- Not confining them
- Not tethering them
- Leaving out lots of food
- Leaving out lots of water (such as a full bathtub, or large storage bin)

Stay informed

Find out where your community will post information and updates during an emergency, and make sure to download the Alberta Emergency Alert app for critical life-saving alerts.

Weather alerts and warnings can help you decide on the best actions to take to protect your pets.

- Tornado: keep pets indoors
- Flood: contain them on an upper level floor
- Fire: take them to a safe place outside the zone

Use the buddy system, ask friends, family, and neighbours to be on alert and ready to assist.

After an emergency

Research shows that having a pet by your side can provide comfort, increase resilience and reduce recovery time.

Returning Home

Depending on the emergency or disaster, your home may look and smell different which can be confusing for your pet. It will be important to keep pets on leash or in a carrier, so they don't get lost or hurt.

Follow this checklist to make sure your return home is as safe as possible:

- Check your home for sharp objects, spilled chemicals, and exposed wiring
- Monitor animals closely, as these types of situations can change their behaviour
- Only release them in a safe and secure place

Where to go for help

If your pet gets lost, contact emergency animal shelters, local animal rescues, veterinarians, or animal control. Proof of ownership may be required.

For more information

Read our other fact sheets on:

- Pet Emergency Kit Checklist

You can find more information about preparedness through [Alberta.ca](https://www.alberta.ca), [Animal Emergency Task Force](#) or by contacting your community's Director of Emergency Management.