



TOWN OF FALMOUTH

Marine & Environmental Services

(508) 457-2550

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR PETS

Disasters can occur at any time; it is important to prepare for when a disaster does strike. Your pets are important members of your family, so they need to be included in your emergency plan. Here are some tips to prepare for the unexpected with your pets in mind:

- Make a plan.
- Build an emergency kit.
- Stay informed.



Make a plan –

Making a plan and preparing ahead of time can take away some stress from an already stressful situation, especially when having to make decisions during an emergency. **Check with your local disaster shelters to make sure they facilitate pets too.**

- **Evacuation:** If you are evacuating, take your pets with you! If it is not safe for you to stay, it is not safe for your pets. Animals left behind in a disaster can easily become injured, lost, or killed.
- **Buddy System:** Make a plan with your family, friends, or neighbors to ensure someone is available to take care of your pets or evacuate them if you are unable to do so.
- **Copies of vaccines and have your pet microchipped:** Always keep copies of your pet's current vaccine records. Have your pet microchipped and keep your address, phone number, and emergency contact up to date. This will insure your pet will be reunited with you in case you are separated during a disaster.
- **Know contact information:** Have the contact information for local shelters and animal control offices on hand in case you and your pet become separated.
- **Discuss with local veterinarian:** Discuss with your veterinary what is essential to have together in a pet first aid kit. Gather contact information of local and neighboring emergency vet hospitals that would be open during a disaster.

Build an emergency kit for your pets –

Just as you will build an emergency kit for your family members, you will need to build them for your pets too. Review your kit regularly to ensure that it is up-to-date and contents are fresh. Make sure to think first about the basics for survival.

- **Food and water:** Keep a several day supplies of both food and water – food can either be unexpired canned goods, or dry kibble in an air tight, waterproof container. Keep on hand a collapsible bowl for food and water.
- **Medications:** Keep an extra supply of your pet’s daily medication in a waterproof container. Contact your veterinarian about refills before your run out.
- **First aid kit:** Talk with your veterinarian about what items are most appropriate and necessary in case of an emergency. Most kits will include gauze, bandage tape and scissors, antibiotic ointment, disposable gloves, isopropyl alcohol or hydrogen peroxide. Also include a pet first aid reference book.
- **Collars, harnesses, leashes, muzzles:** Have updated ID tags and rabies tag attached to your pet’s collar or harness. Include a backup leash, collar, harness, and ID tags in a waterproof container. Include your pet’s muzzle, if needed, to keep your pet and others safe.
- **Important documents:** Have extra copies of your pet’s documentations – registration papers, adoption papers, vaccination documents and medical records.
- **Crate or carrier:** Have a crate or sturdy carrier for each of your pets if you are planning on evacuating.
- **Sanitation:** Include in your kit pet litter and litter box, paper towels, trash bags, household cleaner, and other items to keep your pets clean.
- **Pictures:** If you become separated during an emergency, make sure to include laminated photos of you and your pet together. This will help document ownership and aid other in assisting you with finding your pet. On the back of the photos, include information about species, breed, age, sex, markings and distinguishing characteristics.
- **Familiar items:** Put your pet’s favorite toys, treats, and bedding in your kit. These items can help to reduce stress for your pets.

Stay informed –

While disasters cannot be avoided when they strike, it is important to be as prepared as you can be for them. Stay informed of disasters that can strike your area and know how you will receive emergency alerts and warnings. Keep up-to-date on local shelters, as well, that will take in animals too.