

Animal welfare during an emergency

Pets are an important part of family life and therefore your emergency planning preparations should also consider their welfare.

In many instances for short term overnight evacuations it may be appropriate to leave certain pets safely indoors, but there will be instances when this is not an option.

If you have to evacuate your home:

- Plan ahead to ensure that your pets will have a safe place to stay.
- Check with friends and/or relatives living outside your immediate area to see if they are willing and able to shelter you and your animals, or just your animals, if necessary.
- Make a list of pet boarding shelters that might be able to accommodate your animals in emergencies.
- If you have to evacuate and intend to stay in a hotel or other lodging accommodation, take the time to check their policies on accepting pets and whether a 'no pet' policy would be waived in an emergency.

If you have to remain in your home:

- Make sure your pets remain indoors with you where they are safe – remember pets can be frightened as well!
- Keep a supply of pet food and water inside watertight containers, along with other emergency supplies.

What happens if you are not home and your neighbourhood / road are told to evacuate?

- Talk to your immediate neighbour and plan for this eventuality.
- Make sure your neighbour is familiar with your pet and where to locate a lead or carrier basket.
- It's best to be on the safe side and make sure that your pet has up to date identification and contact information just in case your pet is lost during the emergency.

If you have to attend a rest centre:

For health, safety and hygiene reasons any pets will have to be left in a designated pet area. Alternatively, care for pets can be arranged through the RSPCA.