

## ABOUT FOUR PAWS

FOUR PAWS is an international animal welfare organisation with headquarters in Vienna, Austria, and offices in 11 other countries. Founded by Heli Dungler in 1988, the organisation strives to help animals in need with sustainable campaigns and projects.

FOUR PAWS focuses on animals that are directly under human influence, for example stray dogs and stray cats, farm animals, companions animals and wild animals kept in inappropriate conditions. FOUR PAWS aims to help animals in need directly and quickly. [www.four-paws.org](http://www.four-paws.org)



Everyone can make a difference - please donate!

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## WHAT TO DO DURING A DISASTER: A GUIDE FOR YOU AND YOUR PET



HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF AND YOUR PET BEFORE A DISASTER OCCURS

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More Humanity towards Animals





Disasters can strike in any place, at any time, and often there is little or no warning. It is vital to plan ahead to safeguard your family, your community and yourself. People often become separated from their pets or put themselves and others at risk by refusing to leave their homes without their pets.

Here are things to do now, before there is a disaster, so both you and your pet are ready.

1. **Make a plan.** Know what to do whether you stay at home or evacuate, and create your own list of emergency contacts.
2. **Make a disaster kit.** Include supplies for staying at home and for evacuations. See the lists provided in this brochure for details of what to include.
3. In an actual disaster, **listen to warnings and instructions** from the authorities on evacuating or remaining in place. Follow these instructions, do not stay behind if you are told to evacuate.
4. For additional peace of mind we highly recommend that you **learn Pet CPR.**

## Planning for Your Pet during a Disaster

Begin by creating your **Pet Disaster Kit(s)** as described in this brochure. Then make sure that you have an **up-to-date contact list** including:

- Veterinarians (your local vet and two vets in opposite directions up to 80 km away)
- Friends or family you could stay with.
- Pet-friendly evacuation centres or hotels
- Animal shelters or boarding facilities for your pet
- Friends or neighbours who could get to your pet if you are not at home
- Local rescue and emergency authorities

Know your pets' hiding places so you can find them easily in an emergency. Practice evacuating quickly and calmly and sheltering at home away from doors and windows. Practicing will help your pet get used to the routine and will reduce their stress should a disaster occur.

Community pets should have access to safe areas, separated from your house pets. Please inform your local government veterinary agency or animal rescue group with the number of animals and clear identification information about your community animals in case they need to be temporarily relocated.



While remaining in your home during a disaster, make sure that your pet can not get out of your house, even into the garden.

## In Case You're Not Home

If you are out of the house when a disaster strikes, you may not be able to return to your home and your pet. **Make arrangements with neighbours or friend** ahead of time to care for your pets. Be Sure:

- Your pets have met the person.
- The person has a key to your home.
- The person knows where your pet emergency kits are kept.
- The person knows where to take your pet in the event of evacuation and is able to do this if needed.



## Staying at Home

It may be safer to remain in your home during a disaster – especially if evacuation would lead to a more dangerous situation. Heed the authorities' advice on whether to stay at home or evacuate. If you need to stay in your home, make sure that you have **food, water and medication** for your pet to last at least a week (see Pet Disaster Kit).

- Stay with your pet in a familiar part of the house, keeping comforting toys and blankets to hand.
- Keep yourself and your pet away from windows to minimise danger and stress.
- Make sure that your pet can not get out of your house, even into the garden – disasters sometimes involve toxic gas or chemicals in the air, in water, or on the ground.
- Animals kept outside should be moved inside or to appropriate safer ground.

Place animal information in a waterproof seal on the front door or window of your home to notify rescue authorities of:

- The number and types of animals in the house.
- Contact details to help reunite you and your pets should you be separated.



Stay as calm as possible to soothe your pet when evacuating.



Be patient with your pet after returning to your home.

## Evacuation

If authorities tell you to leave your home, **take your pets with you**. If the area is not safe for you to stay in, it is not safe for your pets.

- Pets may behave abnormally due to the stress – keep them, and their Pet Disaster Kit, with you at all times. Stay as calm as possible to soothe your pet. It may help to cover their carrier with a blanket or towel to minimise stress.
- Make sure you know where you are going – to friends, family or a pet-friendly centre.
- When you leave, place a note on the front door so that rescue services know you and your pet have left safely.
- Leave your home early if suggested by officials. Waiting for a mandatory evacuation order may force you to leave your pets behind.

When evacuating, constantly monitor the news in case evacuation orders change.



Familiar toys or objects can comfort animals in distress and should be part of your Pet Evacuation Kit.

## Returning Home

When returning to your home after an evacuation, be aware that it **might have been damaged by floodwaters, wind, debris, etc.**

- Prepare a clean, safe room in which to keep your pets before you gradually reintroduce them to the rest of the house.
- Clear an area in your garden for pets who go outside, but do not allow them to roam freely outside as the area may be changed and disorientated pets can easily get lost.

Be patient with your pets as they integrate back into their normal routines. They have likely been as stressed as you. If health or behavioural problems persist following a few days at home, have your pet checked by a vet.

## Pet Emergency Kit in Case of Staying at Home (Sheltering in Place)

Prepare a **Pet Disaster Kit** with the following items:

- ✓ Pet food (enough for at least 7 days)
- ✓ Water (enough for at least 7 days)
- ✓ Your pet's medications (enough for at least 7 days)
- ✓ Animal first aid kit (include bandages, gauze pads/roll, antiseptic wipes, tweezers and scissors, latex disposable gloves, cotton swabs, emollient cream, flea and tick treatments, flexible bandage, and other items suggested by your vet)
- ✓ For cats: Newspapers, trash bags, disposable gloves, cat litter and tray (if applicable), and cleaning/disinfectant supplies
- ✓ For dogs: collar, leash, muzzle, doggie bags and cleaning/disinfectant supplies

## Pet Emergency Kit in Case of Evacuation

If you evacuate with your pet, in addition to the items recommended for the Pet Disaster Kit, **have the following items in your Pet Evacuation Kit:**

- ✓ Collapsible carrier or cage with a waterproof label stating your name, last known address, temporary address, and phone number
- ✓ Cotton sheet/blanket/towel to cover the carrier
- ✓ Comforting blankets, beds, and/or toys
- ✓ ID documents (including medical, microchip and vaccination records, proof of ownership, and a colour photograph and physical description of your pet) in case you are separated.
- ✓ Food and water dishes
- ✓ Pet clean-up items such as litter and litter tray, scoop, trash bags, doggie bags, newspapers, etc.
- ✓ Can opener, spare containers
- ✓ For dogs: collar, muzzle and leash.
- ✓ Collar and leash for cats used to wearing them

## Unusual Pets

When preparing for disasters with your unusual pets you should include the same basic Pet Disaster and Evacuation Kits, but you will need **different types of containment**. We suggest the following carriers:

- Birds: small carry cage with a cover (such as a towel) draped over it
- Rats/mice/guinea pigs/rabbits: a small covered carrier
- Snakes: a pillowcase or sack (securely tied)
- Other reptiles (such as amphibians): a plastic container with holes for ventilation (but small enough that they cannot escape)

**Note:** Do not take your pets out of their carriers while evacuating or while in a different environment, for they may be fearful and run or fly.

## One Kit or Two?

It may be easier to create one **Pet Disaster Kit** with a separate bag/container to hold the evacuation supplies, which can remain untouched when staying at home. Or you may prefer to develop two separate kits, using the one designated for the situation you are facing.

**Whichever way you design your kits, be sure to schedule regular times (at least every 6 months) for checking the kit(s) and rotating perishable supplies.**

## Other Things You Can Do for Animals before a Disaster Strikes

- Speak with your local and national government agency responsible for Civil Protection/Disaster Relief about what is in place for animals during a disaster.
- Speak with your Fire and Rescue agencies about what is in place for animals during a disaster.
- Ask your veterinarian about any concerns you have about your pets and other animals during a disaster.
- Join or start a local Community Emergency Response Team, Disaster Animal Response Team or Community Animal Response Team.
- Help raise awareness to make your community better prepared for caring for animals in disasters.



Make sure you have an appropriate carrier for your unusual pet. In case of a parrot: a small carry cage with a cover.