



# Protect your Animals in an Emergency

## Planning for Pets

Same as you do with your family's Emergency Survival Kit, think first about the basics for your pets – food, water and warmth.

### Think about having two Emergency Survival Kits

**Home Kit** – contains everything you may need to stay at home for up to three days.

**Getaway Kit** – more portable and lightweight for when you need to leave quickly.

Make sure your kits are easy to grab in a hurry, and that everyone in the house knows where they are, including a neighbour.

Check your kits from time to time for expiry dates to ensure supplies stay fresh – particularly food, water and medicine items. Replace water every six months for freshness.

If where you are isn't safe for you, it isn't safe for your animals.

## Prepare for your Animals – checklist

### Emergency Survival Items

- Food:** Store at least five days of non-perishable pet food (canned or dried) in an airtight or waterproof container - remember the can opener! And try to keep their food the same as what you normally feed them to avoid possible stomach upsets.
- Water:** Store at least five days of water, additional to your family needs. Animals can drink more water than usual when stressed.
- Medicines:** Store any extra medical supplies and special dietary needs or supplements in a waterproof container.
- Veterinary/medical records:** Store copies of any medical and vaccination records in a waterproof container. Include your vet's name and phone number, in case you have to board or place your pets in foster care.
- First Aid Kit:** In addition to your family needs, store extra cotton bandage rolls and tape, scissors, tweezers and latex gloves. Talk to your vet about any specific first aid requirements, like antibiotic ointment and saline solution (separate to your family's kit).
- Blanket/bedding:** Familiar items, like favourite blanket or toy can help reduce stress for your pets.
- Sanitation:** Include pet litter and litter box and any other useful items, like newspapers, paper towels, poo bags, gloves and household bleach (to dilute).



See full First Aid Kit  
checklist [here](#).



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## Identification

- ID tag:** Add an ID tag to your pet's collar that clearly shows their name, your name, phone number and (if room) your address. Include a backup in your Emergency Survival Kit.
- Registered and microchipped:** Make sure your pets are microchipped and that dogs are registered and wearing their current registration tag. And that your personal details are up to date on relevant microchip databases, including next of kin or someone outside of your household. Store a copy of all documentation in your Emergency Survival Kit.

In the 2011 Canterbury earthquake 80 percent of microchipped animals were reunited with their owners versus 20 percent for non-chipped animals.

- Photograph:** Store a current photograph of your pets in a waterproof container, including notes on any distinguishing features, name, sex, age, colour and breed. Also include a photograph of you and your pets together to help prove ownership if you get separated.
- Save information online:** For easy access from wherever you are, save all your important information - microchip, photographs, medical, veterinary and contact details - online e.g. Dropbox, mobile phone or web/gmail.

## Equipment

- Cage/carrier:** For safe transportation and to prevent your pet from escaping. The cage/carrier should be sturdy e.g. made from metal or plastic, not cardboard which may disintegrate if it gets wet. It should be large enough for them to stand comfortably, turn around, lie down and have adequate ventilation. Your pet may have to stay in the cage/carrier for a period of time so include bedding, blankets and any favourite toy to reduce stress levels.
- Lead/harness/muzzle:** For dog control in the event that they become stressed and try to escape in an emergency situation. Make sure the device is sturdy and has an ID tag attached. Dogs may need to be muzzled. Even if your dog is friendly, emergency personnel may refuse to handle them unless they're restrained.

## Safe Shelter Places

If you need to evacuate you must take your pets. They're part of your family and it's not okay to leave them behind. If it's not safe for you to stay, it's not safe for them or those who may try and rescue them. Pets may not be allowed in public emergency shelters – check with your local civil defence centre. If not, you need to plan for a safe house or animal shelter that you and your pets (or just your pets) can go to.

- Safe House:** Plan for a family member or friend – who has cared for your pets in the past - to care for your pets if you can't.
- Safe Shelter:** Make a list of pet friendly shelters e.g. kennels, catteries, motels that allow pets, local vet centres. Your local council may be able to help you with this. Keep a list of their contact details and a copy in each of your Home and Getaway Kits.  
At most places you'll need to provide veterinary records before they'll accept pets. Some shelters may waive their 'no pet' policy if your pet is housed in a sturdy cage/carrier.  
Make a reservation as soon as you think you might have to evacuate your home.
- Pet carer details:** Put the full name, address and phone number of the person caring for your pets in a waterproof container inside your Emergency Survival Kit. Your household should also know this information and have it saved as well.
- Emergency Survival Kit locations:** Let the person caring for your pets – and a neighbour – know the location of your Home and Getaway Kits. In the event you're not home when a disaster strikes, they can feed and attend to your animals in the interim.
- House access:** Let the person caring for your pets – and a neighbour – know where the spare house key is located. Or give them their own key in the event your hiding place is destroyed in an emergency.
- Post emergency communications:** Have a plan to communicate with the person caring for your pets after the emergency event

## Have a practise run

Practise getting your family and pets to the designated safe place in your house - ideally where your Emergency Survival Kits are kept.

See how quickly you can evacuate and practise it from time to time to see if you can make improvements. Also try it in the dark. Particularly helpful if the emergency event happens at night and there's a power cut.