



Your Pets Need Protection Too!

The following guidelines for protecting your pets in the wake of a natural disaster are extracted from "You Can Protect Your Pet from Disaster," by Brian Kilcommons and Sarah Wilson, Parade, July 9, 2006.

After a major disaster, we will all need to respond to some degree or other in order to prevent further damage or injury, and to begin the long road to recovery. Experience shows that even the fortunate ones whose homes and family are not damaged or injured may find themselves without the conveniences of life like electricity, phone service, and potable running water.

Many, if not most, of us have formed some sort of emergency response plan in our heads even if not on paper...we people are more or less covered. But have you given thought to your pets in your emergency planning? Your pets need protection too!

The following is an outline of some things you can do to improve the survivability and comfort of your pets after a natural catastrophic disaster hits the Bay Area. The outline can be used as a checklist to ensure your pets have the best possible chance of surviving the next big one.

ID Your Pet:

- Up to date dog tags that include your cell phone number (however, chances are that there will be no phone service of any kind for several days)
- Have your vet implant an ID microchip in your pet (ID scanners run on batteries; so lack of electricity is not an issue)
- Tattoo a cell phone number inside your pet's ear (low tech; so devices are not required and, unlike tags, these cannot be lost)
- Keep photos of your pets in your own emergency supply kits

Pack a portable EPK (Emergency Pet Kit):

- Box Pet food and water for three or more days
- A small box of light-weight litter for the cats
- Pet records: vet and licensing

- Pet friendly emergency numbers: vet, shelter, SPCA, hotels that take pets
- Prepare to evacuate with or without your pet

Train your pet for a crate or similar carrying device if appropriate. Have leashes, harnesses, etc. readily available near the evacuation exits (e.g., garage or front door).

Leave your pets in the safest part of the house (in a corner away from doors and windows) with plenty of food and water if you must leave them behind (pick a food your pet is not wild about; so it won't binge).

Insist your city government comply with the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act that requires local authorities to plan emergency responses for both people and their pets.