

Helping Your Pets Adjust After a Disaster

- In the first few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside. Always maintain close contact. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost. Downed power lines are a hazard.
- The behavior of your pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become aggressive or defensive. Watch animals closely.
- Ensure that pets who are outside have access to shelter and clean water.
- Beware of wild or stray animals. Structures damaged in a storm are particularly attractive and provide easy access for wildlife.
- Be aware of your surroundings and avoid wild or stray animals. Call local authorities to handle both live animals and or dispose of deceased animals according to local guidelines.
- Survey the area inside and outside your home to identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, dangerous wildlife, contaminated water, downed power lines, or other hazards.
- Examine your animals closely, and contact your veterinarian immediately if you observe injuries or signs of illness.
- Release equine/livestock in safe and enclosed areas only. Initial release should take place during daylight hours, when the animals can be closely observed.
- Release cats, dogs, and other small animals indoors only. They could encounter dangerous wildlife and debris if they are allowed outside unsupervised and unrestrained.
- Ensure that pets cannot escape from your home by repairing broken fences.
- Be aware of hazards at nose and paw or hoof level, particularly debris, spilled chemicals, fertilizers, and other substances that might not seem to be dangerous to humans.
- Clean paws of animals to get rid of any debris and ash.
- Release birds and reptiles only if necessary and only when they are calm and in an enclosed room.
- Reintroduce food in small servings, gradually working up to full portions if animals have been without food or eaten different food for a prolonged period.
- Allow uninterrupted rest/sleep for all animals to recover from the trauma and stress.
- If your animals are lost, physically check local animal shelters daily for lost animals.

