

NAPA COUNTY ANIMAL SHELTER'S STORM AWARENESS TIPS FOR YOUR PETS DURING DISASTERS!

Disasters can come in many different forms, fires, earthquakes and floods. No matter what form of a disaster you are affected by we all need to include our family pets, in our plans. In Napa County we face the potential of flooding during the rainy seasons. The following will cover storm awareness.

IDENTIFICATION:

Always keep a proper fitting collar with ID, on all your pets. Even indoor only pets. Tattooing or microchipping are permanent ID's.

PHOTOS:

You should have at least ten pictures of each pet. If your pet is a puppy or kitten, be sure to update the photos as your pet matures. Include yourself or family members in the photos, it may assist in proving ownership. The reason for multiple photos, in case you must leave some at shelters.

TRANSPORTATION:

Now is the time to purchase a pet crate or carrier for each of the pets in your household. During a disaster your pet may need its crate for temporary housing. Get your pet acquainted with its crate now. You can separate the two halves and let your pet use half of it for a bed. The crate should be large enough to allow your pet to stretch out comfortably. Cardboard is not recommended.

BUDDY SYSTEM:

Now is the time to coordinate with your neighbors, a buddy system. Inform them of the locations of your pets carriers and leashes, in the

MEDICATION:

If your pet is on long term medication, keep at least two weeks worth in your disaster kit. Be sure to replace it before it expires

VACCINATIONS:

If you need to board your pet during a disaster, it is important to ensure their vaccinations are up to date. This includes both distemper and rabies. With dogs it would be wise to include the Bordetella vaccine, also. Keep copies of these records in your disaster kit.

FOOD and WATER:

Have at least one weeks worth of your pets brand of food available. Feed your pet as close to its regular feeding time, as possible. If there is a "BOIL WATER" order in effect, this applies to your pets, also. You will have to boil water before your pets drink it. You can also purify water by mixing two drops of household bleach to each quart of water. Store water in a sealed container for ½ an hour before drinking.

TEMPORARY HOUSING:

Now is the time to arrange for temporary housing, in the event of a disaster. Friends or family that live out of the danger zone is one

event there is an evacuation and you're not home. Also, arrange a location you can meet, should you have to evacuate each other's pets. Be sure to let each other know where your disaster kits for your pets are located, also.

suggestion. Check with local veterinarians and boarding facilities, they may be able to assist. Contact your local animal shelter to see if they have room or have facilitated temporary shelters, due to disasters.

EVACUATION:

A general rule of thumb, when trying to decide whether to leave your pets behind during a disaster is to ask yourself, "Is it safe enough to leave a child behind?" More than likely the answer will be no. Never leave your pets behind, no matter who tells you to do so. Plan ahead, as soon as the disaster warning goes into effect, start confining your pets. Animals generally sense danger sooner than we do.

COMFORTING:

Generally, animals will display symptoms of stress during a disaster. These symptoms can include loss of appetite, changes in sleeping patterns, erratic behavior, diarrhea, aggressiveness, desire to hide, and nervousness. So be sure to comfort your pet as often as you can. A few pats on the head, and a hug will do wonders in calming them down.

LEAVING YOUR PETS BEHIND:

If you can't evacuate your pets, here are some tips: Do not confine your dogs and cats in the same area, together. Even if they get along great, pets behave differently during disasters. If a flood watch is posted, clear off an area with a flat surface for the pets to climb up on. Table tops and counters are good for dogs, be sure they are above projected flood levels. Place food and water in an area you think will stay dry. Leave enough food and water to last at least one week. Cats will also need a litter box. Cats would be fine on top of the refrigerator, be sure to give them climbing access to it. Cats outdoors will end up on rooftops or in trees. Do not leave dog outdoors chained up or in kennels, place them in the garage with a high area to get up on. Any pets left outdoors will need a high flat dry surface to escape to, above the waterline. With at least five days worth of food and water, available.

