

PLANNING FOR EMERGENCIES: Guidance for Pet owners

Your pet or pets are important members of your household and it is sensible to incorporate their needs into your planning. As is the case for humans, the likelihood that your pet will survive an emergency situation is greatly increased through a measure of pre-planning.



Some of the things you can and should do, like developing a buddy system or assembling a pet-specific emergency kit, are the same for any emergency. Whether you decide to stay put in an emergency or evacuate to a safer location, you should make plans in advance for your pet.

If you must evacuate, take your pets with you if possible. However be aware that pets are probably not allowed in a public rest centre so you should plan in advance for alternatives. Uttlesford District Council's animal warden will be involved in any large-scale evacuation but is likely to be extremely busy so once again try to pre-plan your own arrangements. If your pet remains at home, let the emergency services know by (leave a note on your door or your window) and tell staff at the public rest centre.

Prepare – include pet-specific items in your own emergency kit

Think about the basics first: food, water and clothing. Consider two kits, one containing all you and your pet would need if you stay in the house for some time and another smaller kit that you can take with you if required. Review your kits regularly to ensure that contents are fresh and still useable.

Food: keep at least three days' worth of food in an airtight, waterproof container.

Water: Store at least three days' worth of water specifically for your pets in addition to your own needs.

Medicines and medical records: keep an extra supply of medicines in your kit along with any details that may be needed to re-supply. Also keep your vet's contact details, vaccination records and microchip details handy.

First aid: Talk to your vet about what is most appropriate for your particular pet. A basic kit could include bandages, tape and scissors, flea treatments and latex gloves.



ID and restraints: Get your pet microchipped if at all possible. Your pet cat or dog should wear a collar with an ID tag at all times. If you have to take your dog to a public area, it should have a strong lead and/or harness and be muzzled as even the most placid of pets can become traumatised, anxious and aggressive if faced with new situations. Being controlled and contained will help make your pet feel more at ease.

Pet Carrier: A properly designed pet carrier is the best way to transport your pet, especially in an emergency. Take advice from your vet as to the most suitable for your pet if necessary.

Sanitation: Include pet litter, paper towels, plastic bags and some household bleach in your kit.

Photographs: Include a photo of you and your pet together. If you become separated, a photo will be useful in finding and identifying your pet and proving ownership. Include detailed information about the breed, age, sex, colour and identifying marks.

Toys: put a few favourite toys in with your kit. Familiar items may help to reduce the stress of being in an unfamiliar environment.

Plan – what will you do in an emergency?

Assess the situation: depending on the circumstances and the nature of the emergency, the first important decision is whether to stay put or get away. Follow the advice of the emergency services – they are best placed to understand the nature of the emergency. However, you should plan for both possibilities

Create a plan to get away: consider how you will assemble your pets and family and anticipate where you will go. Discuss the issue with family and friends who may be able to take you in with your pets. Identify kennels or catteries and keep a record of their contact details.

Develop a buddy system: Plan with friends or relatives to make sure in your absence at the time of evacuation, that there is someone who can take care of your pets and evacuate them if necessary. Share information with your pet buddy and show them where your emergency kit and supplies are kept. Designate specific locations, one nearby and one more distant where you can meet in an emergency

Stay informed: Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will encounter less stress, worry and difficulty during an emergency. It is important to understand the types of emergency that may affect your area and the roles of the emergency services should something happen. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal needs and seek out information that is specific to your pets. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

Contacts: If you would like your pet microchipped, please contact the animal warden or if you would like to discuss any aspect of this guidance, please contact either the animal warden or district emergency planning officer

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