



APHIS Animal Care

Ensuring the Safety and Well-Being of Household Pets During a Disaster



The Animal Care program of the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) provides technical assistance and subject-matter expertise on the safety and well-being of pets and their owners during disasters. In advance of an emergency, this means facilitating pet and animal emergency management discussions among Federal, State, territorial, tribal, and local governments, as well as animal industry, private sector and nongovernmental partners, as they develop and exercise disaster response plans. During a disaster, APHIS’ Animal Care program can also provide support to States to ensure the safe evacuation, transportation, shelter, and care of pets, as well as service and assistance animals.

In support of the response planning process, APHIS’ Animal Care program provides:

- **Animal emergency management best practices** with planners across the country.
- **Training materials** suitable for leaders in Federal, State, territorial, tribal, and local governments, as well as nongovernmental partners, on animal emergency management.
- **Connections to partners** (e.g., veterinary associations, humane organizations, and private sector entities) with shared goals and missions in responding to disasters.
- **Assistance in locating resources** such as training, grants, cooperative agreements, and equipment.

- **Technical support** and subject-matter expertise in identifying best-practice guidelines for use in animal emergency planning, including:
 - Forecasting response needs, including estimating pet demographics
 - Animal assessments
 - Animal evacuation and transportation
 - Animal emergency sheltering
 - Animal decontamination
 - Animal search and rescue
 - Veterinary medical response

In support of an ongoing disaster response, APHIS’ Animal Care program is ready to provide:

- **Support to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** and States by participating in pet/animal planning teams and coordinating Federal resources as well as offers of assistance from nongovernmental and private sector entities.
- **Supplemental staffing** for State and local Incident Command and Multi-Agency Coordination centers.
- **Assessment of States’ and communities’ pet/animal welfare needs.**
- **Resource identification** in support of FEMA to expedite filling State requests.
- **Technical assistance** to States and localities in protecting the safety and well-being of animals in zoos and aquariums, biomedical research facilities, and commercial pet breeding facilities.
- **Facilitation** to build relationships between States and key emergency management stakeholders, such as Federal agencies, humane organizations, professional associations, and other private entities.

To learn more about the disaster response role of APHIS’ Animal Care program, please call APHIS Animal Care Emergency Programs at (301) 851-3752. For information about APHIS Animal Care’s emergency work, please visit the program’s Web site at www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare.



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