

## Companion Sheltering in N.C.

The Department of Crime Control and Public Safety is working with local officials to make necessary plans and gather resources to shelter people and their pets in the same location during an emergency. A co-location pet shelter may be a school, auditorium or other large facility that will allow both the family and their companion animals - such as a dog, cat, rabbit, hamster, gerbil, guinea pig, bird, fish or reptile - to check into shelters at the same location. (No poisonous animals are allowed.)

This ongoing initiative is designed to ensure that no one in North Carolina has to choose between their pets and safety during an evacuation.



*The CAMET trailer helps local officials house pets with their families at emergency shelters.*

Using the Companion Animal Mobile Equipment Trailer (CAMET) local emergency management officials can borrow pet supplies and equipment from the state to quickly set up and run a pet shelter during an emergency. These pre-stocked trailers allow specially designated shelters to house between 50-100 small pets.

These shelters will have personnel that are trained in animal care and welfare and will help you check your pet into a secure area. They will then set up a schedule so that you can provide care for the animal to include daily walks and feeding.

## Disaster Approaches

Warnings are often issued hours - even days - in advance. At the first hint of disaster, act to protect your pet. A little advance planning and preparation will enable you to evacuate with your pets quickly and safely.

- Have pet disaster supplies ready to take at a moment's notice.
- Bring all pets inside so that you won't have to search for them if you must leave in a hurry.
- Securely fasten collars with up-to-date identification on all dogs and cats.
- Attach phone number and address of your temporary shelter or of a friend or relative outside the disaster area. Hint: You can buy temporary tags or put adhesive tape on the back of your pet's ID tag, adding information with a permanent pen.
- Keep dogs securely leashed when outside your home and car.
- Transport cats in carriers.

Don't leave animals unattended anywhere they can run off. Remember, even the most trustworthy pets may panic, and attempt to escape, when under stress.



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# PROTECTING YOUR PETS IN A DISASTER



## DO YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN DISASTER STRIKES?

## Be Prepared

Pets are important members of the family for many people. So, it is essential that you include Fido and Fluffy in your family's emergency plan by:

- Preparing a pet emergency supply kit, and
- Developing a list of 'pet friendly' places in case of evacuation.

Taking a little time to plan ahead and gather supplies now, will make life much easier and calmer for you and your pets during an emergency.

## Emergency Supply Kit

Preparing an emergency kit for your pets will ensure that they have the supplies they need during an evacuation. Be sure to include:

- Food – either dry or canned (pop top or have a can opener).
- Water – enough to last three to seven days.
- Pet feeding dishes.
- Proper identification for all pets. ID tags should contain pet name, telephone number and any urgent medical needs.
- A two-week supply of any medicine your pet requires.
- Pet beds and toys, if easily transportable.
- A sturdy pet carrier or traveling bag, ideally for each pet.
- Muzzle, collar and leash for dogs.
- Disposable litter trays (aluminum pans are perfect) and litter, or paper toweling, for cats.
- Flashlight and extra batteries.
- Blanket (for scooping up a fearful pet).

Include the following in your **family emergency kit**:

- Pet immunization and medical records (stored in a waterproof container).
- Current photos in case your pet becomes lost.
- A first aid kit.

## Birds

Birds should be transported in a secure travel cage or carrier. In cold weather, wrap a blanket over the carrier and warm up the car before placing birds inside. Do not put water inside the carrier during transport.

Be sure to bring:

- A plant mister to mist the bird's feathers periodically (during warm weather).
- A few slices of fresh fruits and vegetables with high water content.
- Photo for identification and leg bands.
- Paper towels to line the carrier and change frequently if it does not have a perch. Try to keep the carrier in a quiet area. Do not let the birds out of the cage or carrier.

## Pocket Pets

Small mammals (hamsters, gerbils, etc.) should be transported in secure carriers suitable for maintaining the animals while sheltered.

Be sure to bring:

- Bedding materials.
- Food bowls and water bottles.

## Reptiles

Snakes can be transported in a pillowcase but must be transferred to more secure housing when they reach the evacuation site.

Be sure to bring:

- Food, if your snakes require frequent feedings.
- A water bowl large enough for soaking.
- A heating pad.

For house lizards, follow the same directions as for birds.

Owner should confirm with local Emergency Management regarding acceptance of exotic pets in shelters.

## A Safe Place for your pets

It may be difficult to find shelter for your animals in the midst of a disaster. Plan ahead by developing a list of pet friendly places outside your immediate area, then keep the list with your family emergency kit.

If you have more than one pet, they may be more comfortable if kept together, but be prepared to house them separately.

A list of pet friendly hotels and motels can be found online at [www.petswelcome.com](http://www.petswelcome.com). Be sure to check policies regarding types, number, size and species of pets that are accepted. Ask friends, relatives, or others outside the affected area, whether they could shelter your animals. It's also a good idea to prepare a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency (include 24-hour phone numbers). However, these boarding facilities and shelters may be overburdened caring for the animals they already have, as well as those displaced by a disaster, so this should be your last resort.

Many communities are developing pet friendly shelter plans. During an emergency, listen to local officials and media to find out if your local emergency shelter includes pets.

