



PALO ALTO
HUMANE
SOCIETY

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Helping animals through intervention, education, advocacy

DISASTER PLANNING: FOR YOUR LIVESTOCK AND FARM

Are you ready if a disaster strikes your farm?
What will you do with your animals?
Your best defense against any emergency
is to be prepared!

Your first priority is human safety. Animals
can't take care of themselves, so people must
be kept safe so they're able to help the animals.

PREPARING YOUR FARM

- Learn which types of disasters can occur in your area and develop a specific plan of action for each one. Each situation will require different methods of preparation, evacuation, and sheltering.
- Assemble an emergency disaster kit for your farm. Keep disaster supplies in covered, waterproof containers, in an easily accessible spot. Use these supplies only in an emergency. Include:
 - Food and water for each animal for at least three days
 - Food and water for each employee for three days
 - Animal first aid kit and first aid book
 - Leather or cotton halters and leads, collars, hog snares, hot shot, etc. (nylon can melt in a fire)
 - Flashlight and portable radio, plus extra batteries

- Buckets for food and water
- Blindfolds or bandanas
- Firefighting supplies: fire extinguishers, shovel, rake, long hoses, buckets, ladder, and wheelbarrow
- Identification photos and medical records of each animal (if possible)
- Rope (or wire and wire cutters), gloves, wrenches for turning off gas and water valves, and any other tools you may need
- Blankets or sheets
- A change of clothing for employees
- Make a diagram of your barn(s) and property, including the locations of:
 - All exits
 - Shut-off points for water, gas, and electricity
 - Stored emergency supplies
 - Firefighting equipment
 - Safety zones
 - Trailers

Post the diagram along with emergency phone numbers at each entrance and in all rooms within the barns.

- Find or create several alternative water sources on your property. Fires use a lot of water, earthquakes can break water lines, and water can become contaminated in a flood. Use storage tanks and water troughs, and prepare a way of obtaining water from running streams.



- Reduce fire hazards in and around your barn(s):
 - Enforce your “no smoking” rules.
 - Store gasoline, paints, solvents, and other flammables in a separate area.
 - Store hay, straw, shavings, manure, and wood away from barn.
 - Clear vegetation for at least 50 feet around all buildings. Prune overhanging trees.
 - Clean gutters and roofs regularly.
- Identify your animals with freeze marking, branding, tattoos, ear tags, or microchips. Store copies of their medical records, papers, and photographs with your emergency supplies.
- Maintain trucks and trailers in good condition and make sure they’re available at all times. Accustom your animals to loading and trailering quickly and calmly.

PREPARING YOUR PEOPLE

Familiarize everyone who works on the farm with your emergency procedures and location of emergency equipment. Focus on how to handle animals in an emergency, particularly those with special needs (stallions, bulls, pregnant females, etc.).

- Inform all employees and animal owners about your safety rules and evacuation plans. Hold disaster drills and practice emergency procedures.
- Form a neighborhood group to watch out for each other and help in an emergency. Teach your neighbors about your farm’s procedures and animals, and learn about theirs.
- Identify at least two escape routes from your farm. Some roads may be blocked.
- Consider buying a gas generator to run water pumps and emergency equipment.
- Have all employees trained in first aid and CPR.
- Work with your local fire department and sheriff’s office to develop an appropriate and effective emergency plan for your farm. Ask them to make yearly inspections of fire extinguishers and storage of combustibles.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

- Stay calm and follow your plan. Your animals will sense the danger and may panic if you do.
- Evacuate early. As the disaster worsens, roads may become blocked with traffic and emergency vehicles.
- Take other actions as described below for each type of disaster.

Barn fire

- Do not enter a building that is already burning. Smoke inhalation can kill you.
- Blindfold animals if necessary.
- Put halters on animals and lead to a safe area.
- Close the barn doors after you have removed all your animals. Otherwise, they may try to return to the barn and become trapped inside.

Wildfire

- If you are caught in the open, go to bare or rocky areas. Don’t try to outrun a fire!
- Let animals with you run loose. They will have a better chance to find safety.
- If a fire is approaching your farm, load your animals and evacuate early to a safe place away from the fire. Don’t hesitate; fires move quickly.

Earthquake

- Remember to stop, drop, and hold.
- Reassure your animals, as they will be frightened.
- Do not enter buildings that may be damaged.
- If an animal is trapped or injured, contact emergency personnel immediately.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.

Flood

- At the first sign of rising waters, move animals, feed, and water supplies to higher ground. Act quickly, as flood waters can rapidly inundate an area and eliminate escape routes.

IF YOU MUST LEAVE YOUR LIVESTOCK BEHIND

- Leave your animals in a safe, enclosed area, such as a corral or pasture with no barbed wire. Do not let them loose to fend for themselves unless your property is enclosed, or unless a wildfire threatens the area. Loose animals on the road can be injured, and can create a hazard for evacuating motorists.
- Put enough food (hay, not grain) and water out for at least 48 hours, in non-spill containers.
- Post a sign for rescue workers noting the number and types of animals left.
- Leave extra food in a safe place accessible to rescuers but not to animals.
- Return to check on your animals as soon as emergency relief workers deem it safe.

LOST AND FOUND

- If you lose an animal:
 - Check all local shelters, veterinarians, and emergency animal holding facilities. Provide them with a complete description of your animal, including photos.
 - Post flyers in your neighborhood, and place ads in local newspapers.
 - Keep searching! Animals will be frightened and disoriented, and may wander away from instead of towards their home.
- If you find an animal:
 - Contact local shelters, veterinarians, and animal holding facilities with a complete description of the animal (including a photo, if possible).
 - Post flyers and place advertisements in newspapers.

OTHER ACTIONS YOU CAN TAKE

- Organize or get involved with a neighborhood rescue group.
- Join a rescue group to learn disaster rescue techniques.
- Help organize safe holding facilities such as fairgrounds, farms, and racetracks for use in an emergency.



Materials produced by the Palo Alto Humane Society in conjunction with the American Red Cross Northern California Disaster Preparedness Network