

Why You Should Be Prepared



The Cayman Islands is threatened by a wide range of hazards, including some of the obvious ones like hurricanes, earthquakes and floods.

If you believe your home is vulnerable then it is imperative that you make preparations in advance to evacuate.

The single most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to take them with you. If it's not safe for you to stay in the disaster area, then it's not safe for your animals.

Pets that are left behind in a disaster can be injured, lost, or killed. If they are left inside your home, they may escape through storm-damaged areas, such as broken windows. Also, animals turned loose to fend for themselves are likely to become victims of accidents, starvation, contaminated food or water. Leaving dogs tied or chained outside in a disaster is a death sentence.

There are steps you can take that will make you better prepared to care for your pets in a disaster. Here are some emergency tips and planning information for you to consider:

Don't Forget ID

Your pets should be wearing up-to-date identification at all times in case they get lost.

It's a good idea to include a cell phone number because landline service is more likely to be disrupted after a disaster.

Find a Safe Place Ahead of Time

Government shelters do not accept pets, so you must plan ahead to ensure that your family and pets will have a safe place to stay. Currently the Department of Agriculture and the Humane Society do not have space to shelter pets and these facilities are already stretched to their limits. Don't wait until you are facing the imminent threat of disaster to make your arrangements.



Check with friends and relatives and ask if they would be able to shelter you and your pets or just your pets, if necessary. Make a list of boarding facilities and veterinary offices that might be able to shelter animals in emergencies; include 24-hour telephone numbers.

If You Don't Evacuate

If your family and pets must wait out a storm or other disaster at home, identify

a safe area of your home where you can all stay together.

Keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers.

Have any medications and a supply of pet food and water inside watertight containers, along with your other emergency supplies.



As the Disaster Approaches

Don't wait until the last minute to get ready. Warnings of hurricanes or other disasters may be issued hours, or even days, in advance.

Call to confirm emergency shelter arrangements for you and your pets.

Bring pets into the house and confine them so you can leave with them quickly if necessary. Make sure your disaster supplies are ready to go, including your pet disaster kit.

In Case you are Not Home

Disaster may strike when you're at work or out of the house.

Make arrangements well in advance for a trusted neighbour to take your pets and meet you at a specified location.

Be sure that the person is comfortable with your pets, knows where your animals are likely to be, knows where your disaster supplies are kept, and has a key to your home.

After the Storm

Planning and preparation will help you weather the disaster, but your home may be a very different place afterward, whether you have taken shelter at home or elsewhere.

Don't allow your pets to roam loose. Familiar landmarks and smells might be gone, and your pet will probably be disoriented. Pets can easily get lost in such situations.

For a few days, keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers inside the house. If your house is damaged, they could escape and become lost.

Be patient with your pets after a disaster. Try to get them back into their normal routines as soon as possible, and be ready for behavioral problems that may result from the stress of the situation. If behavioral problems persist, or if your pet seems to be having any health problems, talk to your veterinarian.



Evacuation Planning Disaster Supply Checklist for Pets

Every member of your family should know what he or she needs to take when you evacuate. You also should prepare supplies for your pets. Stock up on nonperishables well ahead of time, add

perishable items at the last minute, and have everything ready to go at a moment's notice. Keep everything accessible, stored in sturdy containers (duffel bags, covered trash containers, etc.) that can be carried easily.

In your disaster kit, you should include:

- Medications and medical records stored in a waterproof container and a first aid kit.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure that your pets can't escape. Carriers should be large enough for the animal to stand comfortably, turn around, and lie down. Your pet may have to stay in the carrier for hours at a time while you have taken shelter away from home.
- You may also need blankets or towels for bedding and warmth, and other special items.
- Current photos and descriptions of your pets to help others identify them in case you and your pets become separated and to prove that they are yours.
- Food and water for at least three days for each pet, bowls, cat litter and litter box, and a manual can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to board your pets or place them in foster care.
- Pet beds and toys to reduce stress, other useful items include newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grooming items, and household bleach.

HAZARD MANAGEMENT CAYMAN ISLANDS

Pets and Disasters



Preparing for All Hazards



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