

Be Prepared!



A town is flooded by a river that flows over its banks. A community is hit by a powerful tornado. A hurricane wrecks an area on the coast. Because disasters do happen, it's important for families to have a disaster plan. That way everyone can stay safe together. But did you know your pet needs to be part of the plan too? When a disaster hits, your pet will need you more than ever.

So, how do you take care of your pet when disaster hits? Because you should never leave your pet behind, decide on a safe place where your pet can go if you need to leave your home and find shelter somewhere else. Can your pet go with you to the home of a family member or friend? Can your pet join you in a pet-friendly hotel? Perhaps you can house your pet for a while at a pet boarding facility. Wherever you decide to take your pet, make sure you plan several different routes for getting there in case a route is not available after the disaster.

Another thing you can do to prepare your pet for a disaster is to create a pet emergency kit. Use a clear container, like a large plastic bag or clear plastic shoebox. Include a list that has the name, address, and phone number of your veterinarian and of the nearest emergency animal hospital. Include enough food, water, and medications for at least three days. Toss in a collar or harness, a leash, extra ID tags, and health and immunization records. Also include photos that prove you are the pet's owner. In addition, store your pet carriers in a place you can get to quickly. Practice getting your pet in and out of the carrier.

Finally, remember that a disaster does not only stress people out. Pets feel the pressure too. Your pet's behavior may change during and after a disaster. Be sensitive to these changes. Give your pets extra space between each other and other people. Most importantly, be ready to comfort your furry friend with lots of pats and hugs!



Too many pets are abandoned or lost in natural disasters. Find out more about how to prepare your pet for a disaster at americanhumane.org/.

Read the article. Answer the questions on another sheet of paper.

1. What is the main idea of this passage? What text details support your answer?
2. Why is it important to include your pet in your family's disaster plan?
3. What do you think the word *immunization* means in the third paragraph?
4. Why do you think it's important to have extra ID tags in a pet emergency kit?
5. How would you explain why you should give pets extra space after a disaster?



Kindness 100: American Humane Association is celebrating the 100th anniversary of Be Kind to Animals Week® in 2015 by focusing on the humane treatment of farm animals and animal actors, the importance of adopting pets from a shelter and including them in family disaster plans, and caring about the world's endangered and disappearing creatures. Learn more at Kindness100.org.

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Note to the teacher: For another great lesson about helping animals, go to americanhumane.org/assets/pdfs/interaction/pa-lesson-plan-choosing-a-dog-1.pdf.

**“Be Prepared!”
Answer Key**

1. It is important to prepare your pet for a disaster.
2. to keep your pet safe if disaster hits
3. putting a vaccine into a pet’s body to protect it against getting sick
4. Answers will vary.
5. Answers will vary but should mention that pets stressed by a disaster may display different behavior.



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