

Natural Disaster Emergency Guide for Pets

Just as airlines advise putting on your own oxygen mask before assisting your child, so too should you have made preparations for yourself and family to better care for your animals.



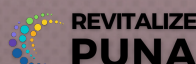
In a state prone not only to hurricanes, tsunamis and lava but also heavy rains with flooding and wild fires it's vital for all of us as animal owners to care for those who cannot care for themselves during a natural disaster.



Prepared by: Social Resilience Capacity Area of Revitalize Puna

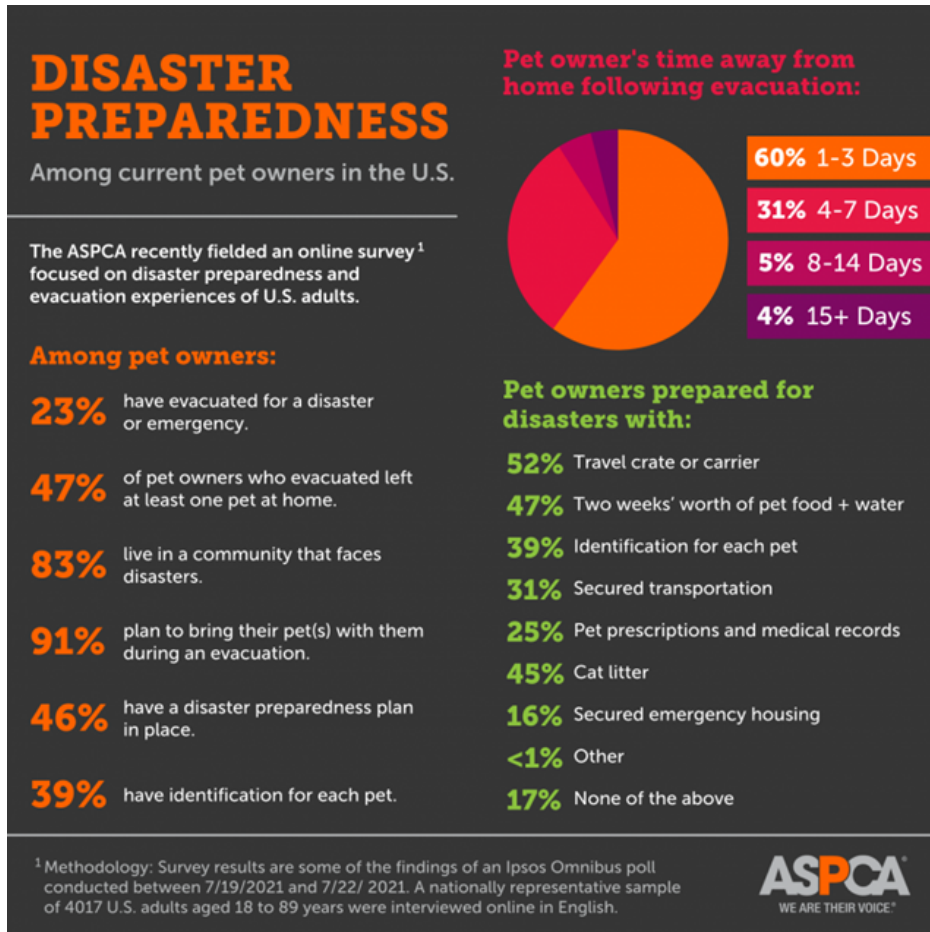


SOCIAL
Resilience Capacity Area



JUST A FEW FACTS

According to a 2006 Fritz Institute survey, 44% of people did not evacuate for Katrina because they did not want to leave their pets. Yet, as many as 104,000 pets were left behind after Katrina, 15,00 were officially rescued; 3,00 have been reunited with families and at least 88,700 remained unaccounted for. -LA/SPCA statistics cited on www.agriculture.vermont.gov.



Graphic courtesy of ASPCA

According to 2021 estimates from pethospitalsofhawaii.com, show about 60% of Hawai'i households have at least a dog or cat compared to 36.5% nationwide. Yet also, a report from Safeway (a Utah company studying home security and safety) concludes Hawai'i ranks as the 44th friendliest state to own a pet based on anti-abuse laws, veterinarians and no-kill shelters. (article by Ellie Nakamoto-White. *Hawaiinewsnow*, June 19,2019)

GENERAL PREPARATION LONG BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

- A healthy pet: vaccinations, flea/tick/heart worm medication and any other necessary medication;
- Identification on a good-fitting collar for each pet: microchip, license for dog. Make sure your pet's microchip is updated with current contact information before the weather reports spells trouble.
- Put together and keep updated a pet "passport": name, age, copies of vaccinations, medical or behavior issues, feeding schedule/allergies, veterinarian contact information, microchip (and for dogs, HI dog license number), picture, identifying marks, name and contact information of owner and other contact (keep digitally and keep a paper copy with other important information in a zip lock bag'
- Equipment/Supplies: dog leash, food and container(s) to keep food dry/insect free, bowls for food and water, crate(s), GPS tracker (opt.);
- Dog Training (check out dog training classes, "good citizen" training (formal or following a AKC good citizen test items list)
 - Behavior Training: Sit, Down (lie down), Stay, Come, Potty-training, Crate training, Loose-leash walking;
 - Socialization: Allows another person to come up to and touch, able to maintain sit or walk in the presence of other people with dogs.

GENERAL PREPARATION LONG BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

- Buddy System: Develop a buddy system with pet-owning neighbors to take in pet if you are not home;
- Know Names, Locations, and Contact information for boarding facilities, hotels/motels that accept pets;
- Have a "please rescue" notice with pets' names to post if pets are alone at home without care; hang dog leashes near door;
- Train for emergency behaviors: scattering treats to distract, using a treat as a magnet held in front of pet's nose to lead away from a problem;
- Periodically replenish emergency food and water supplies
- At least yearly prepare or update Emergency Supplies:
 - crate with an available cover for each pet in which they can stand up and turn around;
 - water and food bowls,
 - insect and waterproof container for food
 - leash/harness,
 - poop bags,
 - kitty litter, cleaning supplies & litter pan for cats;
 - grooming supplies,
 - paper towels, towels, baby wipes,
 - manual can opener (if feeding canned food),



- medications, pet first aid kit,
- pet passport (see appendix),
- pet bed, bedding,
- toys and treats,
- calming devices such as familiar blankets, “thundershirt”,
- calming treats



SUGGESTIONS FOR DURING A DISASTER EITHER SHELTERING-IN-PLACE OR DURING AN EVACUATION

Secure pets inside at the **FIRST** sign of a pending emergency (Choose an interior room with or close to where you are sheltering)

ACTION TO TAKE IMMEDIATELY BEFORE A DISASTER

- Use a pet crate with a cover to calm pet
- Use calming tools, soothing recordings,
- voice and touch to reassure a stressed pet;



IN THE EVENT OF AN EVACUATION

- Remember that guide, service and emotional support pet also can become disoriented and confused during a disaster. Don't rely on a service pet as a reason not to evacuate;
- Don't wait to evacuate: rentals and most desirable shelter locations fill quickly;
- Take pets with you when you evacuate;
- *Understand only service animals are allowed inside public evacuation shelters;
- Be prepared to load crates, emergency supplies and pets into vehicles during adverse conditions;
- Expect to have the responsibility of caring for your pets in a separate location at the shelter.

ACTIONS FOR DURING RECOVERY

- If returning home, check for any hazardous conditions or debris before allowing dog access;
- Reestablish familiar routines



We need your help

REAL EXPERIENCES

What do you do when you have to evacuate with pets?

DS found herself and her husband having to evacuate with an elderly dog and a cat. Managing the dog was “easy” but the cat was no where to be found. Finally, they were forced to leave the cat behind. Several times, DS’s husband was able to get permission and an escort to try to find the cat, but ended up just leaving food. Then DK herself went “the cat hunt” and the cat emerged from the lava.

As with many evacuees, the family found itself relocating more than once. The cat formed an attachment to the first residence. When the family again moved, the cat repeatedly found its way across miles of lava to return to the first residence.

Now relocated in a residence next to their original home that was lost, the cat spends its time on the original property.

Lessons learned: Secure your pets indoors as soon as you can, and beware of the homing instinct during recovery.



YKR was following a family tradition of caring for abused and abandoned special needs dogs. When the lava came, KR found himself alone with 13 special needs dogs. Seeking shelter in Pahoa, KR struggled trying to keep the dogs in 2 ½ kennels in a 10x25’ area.

With so many people crowded together tensions were high and there was the constant struggle to keep food dry, secure water and care for the dogs. KR is thankful for the people who offered to walk the dogs, but there was no support or volunteer veterinarian services. KR left Pahoa as soon as possible, but ended up moving a total of 5 times for 3 ½ months, much of the time living under a canopy. Sadly KR lost 5 of the dogs to failing health during the many moves and impossible rain.[People forget that Hurricane Lane dumped 60” of rain while people were struggling with shelter.]

Lessons learned: KR has many, the biggest is don’t wait to evacuate wanting to tough it out as long as possible. Have everything you need and go right away. Otherwise, the best options are already taken and many suitable rentals up their rentals 50% as availability decrease. Think through everything you will need to do and have such as jugs to carry water and containers to keep pet food dry. KR gives a special thanks for the hub where everyone was treated fairly, where there was dry clothes, hot meals and kindness.

WHAT ABOUT A PLAN?

YES WE CAN

Before Katrina no federal law provided for pets during a disaster. In 2006, President Bush signed the Pets Act.

What the PETS ACT provides:

- Requires local and state emergency preparedness authorities to include plans for pets and service animals in their disaster plans to qualify for certain FEMA grants;
- Grants FEMA the authority to assist states and local communities in developing plans to accommodate people with pets and service animals;
- Authorizes federal funds to help create pet-friendly emergency shelter facilities; and
- Allows FEMA to provide assistance for individuals with pets and service animals and the animals themselves following a major disaster.

According to the Michigan State College of Law's Animal Legal & Historical Center (www.animallaw.info), 30 states have laws or emergencies plans relating to animals during a disaster. By 2011, 11 of these states had included provisions for non-companion animals (such as, horses, livestock, zoo animals.)

WHERE'S HAWAII'?

Despite our history and continuing vulnerability to natural disasters, Hawai'i has no state provisions except for Hawai'i §127A-19 whereby shelters for animals need not be subject to guidelines for public shelter.

RECENT DISASTERS - WHAT WE'VE LEARNED WE NEED

- A Comprehensive state disaster plan for both pets and “non-companion” animals;
- Non-profit or adjunct to existing programs such as Neighborhood Watch or Resilience Hubs with funding to organize a list of current emergency housing options, and a visitation or foster care network that functions both during a natural disaster and year-round during personal emergencies;
- A training and volunteer rescue unit (who are the only ones authorized to enter an area and rescue animals)
- Emergency vet network during disasters or emergency clinic) currently local vets do not accept emergencies or only for established patients)
- Temporary shelter that can be set up during an emergency with volunteers to set up and man
- Distribution of “pets in an emergency” information - through vets, licensing, humane society, trainers, pet supply stores

WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM OTHERS

- HAKA:Hawai'i Island Rescue for Livestock and Pets
<https://mydreamforanimals.com/heroes/hawaii-animal-kuleana-alliance/>
Facebook:<https://www.facebook.com/groups/hakaohana/>
- Vermont (more livestock than people) has an umbrella non-profit program (VDAT)
<https://agriculture.vermont.gov/sites/agriculture/files/Pets%20in%20Diaster%20s.pdf>
- ASPCA has a detailed plan for creating a pet-friendly shelter
https://www.aspcapro.org/sites/default/files/pet_friendly_shelter_plan_0.doc
- www.Animallaw.org has an interactive map that allows the user to click on a state to view relevant provisions. One interesting provision from Louisiana calls for a public information campaign on pet disaster preparation (LSA.R.S 726(E)(20) (a)(vi) "Implement a public information program to provide guidance to household pet owners in formulating their own evacuation plans for their household pets and service animals, and inform such pet owners of the resources available to assist them in such evacuations."
- Sample state website that community can request help with animals:
<https://animalevacuation.org/>
- ASPCA: <https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/sample-plans-evacuation-and-sheltering>
- See also, the websites of aspcapro.org, cdc.gov, onehealthinitiative.com, akc.org, animalevacuation.org, cdfa.ca.gov for sites that continually update information.



**Email comments, suggestions and additions to:
socialresilience@revitalizepuna.org**

Download copy at: <https://recovery.hawaiicounty.gov/revitalize-puna/resilience-capacity-areas/social>

Or scan the QR Code



PET EMERGENCY “PASSPORT”

PICTURE OF YOU
WITH YOUR PET

SIDE PICTURE
OF YOUR PET

PET NAME:

Breed:

Age:

Any identifying markings:

Microchip Number:

License (if applicable):

Owner's Name

Owner Address

Phone Number(s)

Alternative Contact Name

Address

Phone Number(s)

ADDITIONAL PICTURE

Veterinarian:

Medications:

Feeding Information:

Behavioral Concerns:

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: