

Emergency Management

Your animals are your responsibility. You need to include them in your planning and preparation in the event of an emergency.

Make sure emergency services can easily find you. Large reflective numbers should be displayed at the road front of your property.

Make sure emergency services have quick and easy access to buildings containing dogs and a water source, should they need it.

Plan alternative escape routes from your property in the event that your main access is blocked. Or make sure you have another plan, such as sprinklers and a safer area you can move to.

If you have to evacuate your dogs, check you have an appropriate vehicle to transport them to a safe shelter place.

Make a plan and document it, then ensure that all staff are familiar and know what they have to do in an emergency.

Make sure that you have sufficient firefighting equipment.

Protect your Animals in an Emergency

Same as you do with your family's Emergency Survival Kit, think first about the basics for your animals – food, water and warmth.

Think about having two Emergency Survival Kits :

- **Home Kit** – contains everything you may need to stay at home for up to three days.
- **Getaway Kit** – more portable and lightweight for when you need to leave quickly.

Make sure your kits are easy to grab in a hurry, and that staff and household members know where they are, including a neighbour.

Check your kits from time to time for expiry dates to ensure supplies stay fresh – particularly food, water and medicine items.

Replace water every six months for freshness.

If where you are isn't safe for you, it isn't safe for your animals.

Prepare for your animals – make a checklist.

Emergency Survival Items:

Food: Store at least three days of non-perishable pet food (canned or dried) in an airtight or waterproof container – remember the can opener! And try to keep their food the same as what you normally feed them to avoid possible stomach upsets.

Water: Store at least five days of water, additional to your family needs. Animals can drink more water than usual when stressed.

Medicines: Store any extra medical supplies and special dietary needs or supplements in a waterproof container.

Veterinary/medical records: Store copies of any medical and vaccination records in a waterproof container. Include your vet's name and phone number – in case you have to move your dogs to another property.

First Aid Kit: In addition to your family and staff needs, make up a first aid kit for your animals. Talk to your vet about any specific first aid requirements, like fly spray, antibiotic ointment and saline solution (separate to your families).

Blanket/bedding: Familiar items, like favourite blanket or toy can help reduce stress for your dogs.

Sanitation: Include any useful items, like newspapers, paper towels, pooh bags, gloves and household bleach (to dilute).

Identification

Include a backup or copy of all documentation in your Emergency Survival Kit.

Check your animal ID is current and that your personal details are up to date on relevant microchip databases, including next of kin or staff member outside of your household.

Equipment including leads and muzzles and any other equipment that would help you move your dogs in an emergency evacuation. Even if your dogs are friendly, emergency personnel may refuse to handle them unless they are restrained and muzzled.

Cages, carriers and trailers are important for safe transportation and to prevent your dogs from escaping. They should be large enough for them to stand comfortably, turn around, lie down and have adequate ventilation. Your dogs may have to stay in these for a period of time so include bedding, blankets and any favourite toy to reduce stress levels.

Safe Shelter Places

If you need to evacuate, you must take your dogs with you or arrange for a safe place. They are your business and part of your family and it's not okay to leave them behind. If it's not safe for you to stay, it's not safe for them or those who may try and rescue them. Animals aren't usually permitted in public emergency shelters so you need to plan for a safe house or animal shelter that you and your dogs can go to.

Not all animals may be able to be evacuated. You can improve their chance of survival by having a safer area to move them to in an emergency event. If you're not able to care for your dogs, plan for a staff or family member or friend – who has cared for your dogs in the past – to do so.

Animal carer details: Put the full name, address and phone number of your carer in a waterproof container inside your emergency survival kit. Your staff and household members should also know this information and have it saved as well. Let your carer – and a neighbour – know the location of your emergency survival home and getaway kits. In the event you're not home when a disaster strikes, they can feed and attend to your dogs in the interim.

House access: Let your carer – and a neighbour – know where the spare house key is located, or give them their own key in the event your hiding place is destroyed in an emergency.

Post emergency communications: Have a plan to communicate with your carer after the emergency event.

Financial support and advice: Check, where necessary, that your insurance records are up to date. Store a copy of the documentation in your emergency survival kit.

Have a practice run

Practice getting your family, staff and dogs to the designated safe place – including grabbing your emergency survival kits on the way.

See how quickly you can evacuate and practice it from time to time to see if you can make improvements. Also try it in the dark. Particularly helpful if the emergency event happens at night and there's a power cut.

If you need assistance sourcing water and supplemental food for your dogs, contact your local Civil Defence Centre.

Protecting your assets

Keep your kennels and the perimeter fences free of anything that will fuel a fire. Lay gravel so there's nothing to burn. Spray herbicide in late winter up to a metre either side of the fence, stifling grass growth and reducing fire-risk.

Safer areas should be away from dense vegetation, scrub, bush or forest.

Don't oil fences, posts and rails because it's fuel for a fire.

On a total fire ban day, turn off electric fences to reduce risk of igniting a fire.

Check kennel buildings have no gaps (walls/floors/ceilings) to prevent embers getting in.

Metal fly wire keeps embers out from under buildings while still allowing airflow.

Be aware of the dangers from intense radiant heat - it can kill dogs.

Safer areas should be fenced, have water supply, short pasture, and protection from radiant heat.

Clean buildings to keep cobwebs and dust to a minimum.

If you will need help with animal rescue, contact your local SPCA or local CDEM and have them involved in your planning.

Evacuation plan

Look after yourself, your family, any workers, and your neighbours. Ask for help if you need it.

If you have to evacuate, take your dogs with you – if you can do so safely – or take them to a safe shelter place.

Ask your neighbours if they're able to contain them on their property.

For alternative shelter options (animal shelters, saleyards or showgrounds), contact your local Civil Defence Centre.

If you have dogs in areas near liquefaction, or waterways that have the potential to flood (streams, rivers etc.), move them to higher ground.

Make sure your dogs have access to clean feed and water in their new contained space until they can be returned to their kennels.

If you have to leave your dogs behind, make sure they're in a safe, secure and sheltered place either inside or outside their kennels and well away from any risk.

On extreme fire-risk days and in high-risk areas, and you leave your property, go the night before or early in the morning. Late evacuation can be a deadly option.

If you can stay on your property, check that all the dogs are contained and that fences have not been taken out by power cuts, fire, land slips, liquefaction or flooding.

Vulnerable dogs (e.g. those close to giving birth, puppies) should be moved to areas which will be easily accessible in case they need assistance, feeding or veterinary treatment.

If you stay on your property, check all dogs are contained and that fences have not been damaged by land slips, flooding or power cuts.

Consider opening gates within your property to allow your dogs easy access to safe ground.

Do not open gates onto roadways or cut roadside fences.

Make sure your dogs have access to clean feed and water in their new contained space until they can be returned to their kennels.

Exercise your dog if it is safe to do so.

Injuries

In an emergency, dogs may panic and flee to escape the food water, smoke and heat; and be injured by any obstacles in their way.

Check your dogs for wounds and injuries - which may just look like a small hole or a tear.

While external burns to the skin may be easy to see, your dogs could also be suffering from internal burns, particularly to the lungs due to smoke inhalation.

On high risk fire days, remove any flammable gear. Most rugs are a polyester/cotton blend, if they catch fire they'll melt onto the animal's skin.

Unlike people, animals tend to hide their pain making it difficult to detect. Contact your veterinarian immediately if you think your animals have sustained internal or external injuries, internal burns or they look as though they are having difficulty breathing.

For extensive burn injuries, euthanasia may be the best option.

Contaminated water

Keep dogs away from liquefaction and flood water. It may be contaminated with biological waste and chemicals.

If you come into contact with a dog that has been in flood water, change your clothing and wash your hands thoroughly. If you can, wear protective gear such as overalls, gloves and a mask.

Move dogs out of flooded areas and away from liquefaction as soon as you safely can.

If dogs are left in contaminated water for long periods, they are at risk of bacterial infections, chemical burns and sloughing of their skin. If they are affected, you can cleanse their skin/coat by hosing them down with non-contaminated water.

Feed and water

Get water and feed to your dogs as soon as possible.

If the water is not safe for you to drink, it is not safe for your dogs.

Make sure all dogs have access to clean water that has not been contaminated.

Have a primary and secondary water supply in the event your main water supply is damaged.

Check that water pipes to the water troughs have not been damaged.

Check water tanks supplied by roof collection and clean the roof and gutters of any ash. Remove any ash and debris from drinking and washing water.

Do not let dogs drink flood water if possible since it may be contaminated. Make sure they have access to clean water.

Give your dogs bottled or boiled water.

Allow enough food and water for at least five days. Most dogs need 60ml/kg/ each 24 hours to sustain hydration levels.

Stored feed may be contaminated by fire or flood water. Make sure you have supplemental feed available for your dogs.

If you need assistance sourcing water and supplementary food for your dogs, contact your local Civil Defence Centre.

If you need help with animal rescue, contact your local SPCA, Council or Civil Defence Centre.

Behaviour of dogs in emergencies

Following an emergency event, animals can show signs of stress in different ways.

Animals react in different ways to emergency events such as flooding, earthquakes and fire. Your dog may be anxious, fearful, aggressive, clingy, or they may not show signs of stress at all. Unlike people, animals tend to hide their pain making it difficult to detect. Animal's reactions may be different to normal. Signs to look out for that can indicate an animal is anxious or stressed include:

- licking lips
- yawning
- obvious gaze
- constantly standing and looking around
- tail tucked, ears back, head down and shaking
- clingy

- reactive to noise, people and other animals
- fear aggression towards people and other animals – watch for signs, do not punish or confront, give them space, back away
- agitated.

Some dogs develop fears/phobias and anxiety to water, objects, unfamiliar people, familiar and unfamiliar animals, sounds, rain and may suffer from separation anxiety if left alone. If they must be left alone, put them in a safe place that they cannot escape from (garage, kennel, crate, cage), provide toys/distractions and put some music on. Where phobias are severe and the animal is likely to hurt itself or damage property, avoid leaving the animal alone and ask your veterinarian for advice and treatment options.

Ways to decrease anxiety: developing a routine is helpful. Try to keep meal times consistent. Try to be calm around your pets; they will pick up on your anxiety also. Comfort each other if this is not distressing to your pet.

Exercise your dog if it is safe to do so.

Providing your dog's usual bedding, and/or a piece of your clothing that smells like you, may assist their anxiety level. Pheromone products are available for dogs can also help reduce anxiety. They come in spray bottles or as plug-in dispensers (which need electricity) and are available from veterinary clinics.

Useful contacts

Fire and Emergency Service – Dial 111

Police – Dial 111

For general advice and assistance, contact your local Civil Defence Centre.

Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management (CDEM) – www.civildefence.govt.nz

Local CDEM – <http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/find-your-civil-defence-group>

For general information about road access and telecommunications, contact your local Council's civil defence team.

For animal welfare advice or assistance contact Ministry for Primary Industries (Animal Welfare) Phone 0800 00 83 33.

For rural support, contact the Rural Support Trust on 0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP).

If you need help with animal rescue, contact your local SPCA, Council or Civil Defence Centre.

Local Animal Control – contact your local Council

Federated Farmers – Phone 0800 FARMING (0800 327 646)

For more information about preparing and planning for your animals in an emergency, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/animals-in-emergencies

References

Animals affected by fire [PDF, 420 KB]

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/26533-animals-affected-by-fire-advice-for-livestock-lifestyle-block-horse-and-pet-owners>

Animals affected by earthquake [PDF, 384 KB]

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/26530-animals-affected-by-earthquake-advice-for-livestock-lifestyle-block-horse-and-pet-owners>

Animals affected by flood [PDF, 381 KB]

<https://www.mpi.govt.nz/dmsdocument/26527-animals-affected-by-flood-advice-for-livestock-lifestyle-block-horse-and-pet-owners>.

Caring for pets and livestock – Get Ready Get Thru website

<http://getthru.govt.nz/how-to-get-ready/pets-and-livestock/>