



Media Release

Director Theodore Berger
Public Information Officer Haley Williams
217-441-1480/haley.williams@Illinois.gov
Deputy Public Information Officer Melissa Hahn
217-502-3543/melissa.hahn@Illinois.gov

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Pet Preparedness Means Planning and Pre-Disaster Packing

SPRINGFIELD—Did you know that in a recent survey of pet owners who had to evacuate their homes in a disaster, nearly half left at least one pet behind? And 83 percent of those pet owners reported living in a community that faces a natural disaster?

These statistics from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ACPCA) show how important it is to include your pets in your evacuation plan and the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and Office of Homeland Security (IEMA-OHS) has tips on how to do that. This is a good time to do that because June is National Pet Preparedness Month.

“For many Illinoisans, pets are a part of their family,” said IEMA-OHS Director Theodore (Ted) Berger. “We encourage everyone to have a pet preparedness plan and be prepared for sheltering in place or evacuating with your pets.”

Actions to take to keep pets safe in a disaster:

- Have a photo of you and your pets handy for identification purposes
- Save a copy of pet medical records
- Keep leashes, harnesses, and carriers handy
- Create a pet preparedness kit with medications, non-perishable food and treats, water, bowls, cat litter and pan, waste bags, a familiar blanket, bedding for pocket/exotic pets (and perhaps a heat source), and toys
- Identify a safe area of your home where all can stay together with supplies during a shelter-in-place recommendation
- Coordinate with a neighbor, family, or friend about collecting pets and their preparedness kit if you are away from home, along with a meeting point where you can reunify
- Don't allow pets to roam loose in a damaged home or neighborhood.

Many shelters or other emergency centers do not allow pets because of health and safety concerns, so it is critical that you plan ahead for your pets' care.

More tips on pet preparedness information can be found here:

<https://ready.illinois.gov/plan/animals.html>.

Disaster preparedness information is readily available from IEMA-OHS on the [Ready Illinois website](#), a one-stop resource for detailed information about what to do before, during, and after disasters.

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