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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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San Diego Humane Society Encourages Animal Emergency Planning

September is National Preparedness month: People with animals should ensure they are ready if disaster strikes.

SAN DIEGO — In honor of September being National Preparedness Month, San Diego Humane Society is urging all people who have animals to ensure they have an emergency plan in place for their pets and livestock.

Whether an emergency occurs because of an illness, wildfire, earthquake or other disaster in San Diego County, planning ahead is the key to keeping you and your animals safe. “San Diego is no stranger to disasters and we have our Emergency Response Team at the ready to help if needed,” said Chief of Humane Law Enforcement Bill Ganley. “But it starts with you at home. You can reduce the burden on first responders and protect your loved ones. Animals cannot fend for themselves and we don’t want anyone to be faced with the difficult decision to leave them behind because they didn’t prepare for an emergency.”



San Diego Humane Society recommends the following tips for emergency planning:

1. **Prepare an Emergency Kit.** Put all of your daily pet supplies in a sturdy container. Gather a two-week supply of food, water and your pet’s medications. Don’t forget shot records, bowls, crates, bedding and toys. Keeping your pet comfortable will reduce stress during an evacuation.
2. **Practice Transporting Your Pet.** Make sure your pet is comfortable getting into a carrier and know where your pet hides when he is stressed and scared.
3. **Plan for Large Animals.** If you have large animals/livestock, have trailers or travel containers available for all of them. Practice with your animals in advance, so they are used to being loaded and unloaded from their trailers. Work with neighbors to identify locations where large animals can be brought to on foot (especially large open areas that can provide safe spaces during fires). You may not have time or space to evacuate all of your large animals, and you will not be allowed to reenter mandatory evacuation areas even for your own animals.
4. **Identification.** Make sure your pets are wearing identification at all times. This includes animals who don’t normally go outside. Collars with tags that have your phone number are important. Having your pet microchipped can also help identify them if they become lost. Make sure you keep your address and phone number up to date, in addition to listing an emergency contact outside of your immediate area.
5. **Plan Ahead.** Not all evacuation shelters accept pets, so it’s important to prepare. County information sources such as ReadySanDiego.org and ListoSanDiego.org (Spanish) can help. Research hotels outside your area for pet policies and ask friends or family if you and your pets can stay with them in case of disaster.
6. **In Case of Illness.** Create a care tree detailing how your pets will be cared for if you become sick or hospitalized. During a pandemic like COVID-19, have 2-4 options lined up in case additional people become sick.



7. **Leave Early and Take Your Pets.** If you are evacuating your home, take your pets with you. Pets cannot fend for themselves during disasters and leaving them behind can risk both their lives and those of rescuers. Leave early and don't wait for mandatory evacuation orders.
8. **In Case You're Away.** A disaster may strike or an order to evacuate may come when you're away from home. Make arrangements in advance with a trusted neighbor to take your pets and meet you at a specified location.
9. **Learn Pet First Aid.** The last thing you want is to be frazzled if your pet is injured. Spare yourself (and your pet) the panic by familiarizing yourself with what to do if your pet becomes injured.
10. **Know Your Vet.** Locate a veterinarian or animal hospital in the area where you may be seeking temporary shelter, in case your pet needs medical care. Be sure to add the contact information to your emergency kit.

More disaster preparedness information can be found on our website: sdhumane.org/disasterprep.

Photos and videos of emergency responses/preparedness for download here: <https://bit.ly/3AQVR7g>

Suggested Tweet: In honor of September being #NationalPreparednessMonth, @sdhumane is urging all people who have animals to ensure they have an emergency plan in place for their pets and livestock. Visit sdhumane.org/disasterprep for important information and tips.

About San Diego Humane Society

San Diego Humane Society's scope of social responsibility goes beyond adopting animals. We offer programs that strengthen the human-animal bond, prevent cruelty and neglect, provide medical care, educate the community and serve as a safety net for all pet families. Serving San Diego County since 1880, San Diego Humane Society has campuses in El Cajon, Escondido, Oceanside, Ramona and San Diego. For more information, please visit sdhumane.org.

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