Video Training

Animals in Emergencies

Animals are often an important part of people's lives. Because animals can influence a person's decision to take protective actions, it is important to understand how to manage animals in emergencies. If passed, the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2005 will require state and local emergency plans to address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals. When a disaster occurs, animals may remain untended for weeks if they are not evacuated or placed in a secure facility. Often the disaster results in substantial debris, contaminated food or water supplies, downed fences and damaged structures, with abandoned animals facing significant hazards after the event.

This video training has two parts. The first module is intended to help emergency planners and public officials incorporate protection for animals into community emergency plans. The training discusses how to estimate the number of animals in the community for planning purposes, issues related to evacuating and sheltering-in-place, the importance of tracking animals, basic precautions to take when pets and livestock are returned, and how Animal Response Teams provide aid in disasters.

The second module is for animal owners and caregivers. It discusses how to plan for evacuating or sheltering animals in emergencies, transporting animals safely, what to include in an emergency kit for pets, the importance of identification and medical records for all animals, and what to do for animals when they are returned home.

Why are animal issues important in emergency planning?

- Animal issues can impact public health and safety
- Protecting animals in emergencies involves a public and private coordinated effort
- The average household is estimated to have 1.2 pets, excluding wild or exotic pets
- Treating domesticated or rescued animals may spread zoonotic diseases if personnel are not properly protected
- Decontaminating animals is difficult to manage if community plans and necessary resources are lacking

Robert W. Norville.
Training Manager: CSEPP
U.S. Department of Homeland Security Preparedness
Phone: 703-605-1209
Email: robert.norville@dhs.gov

Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program