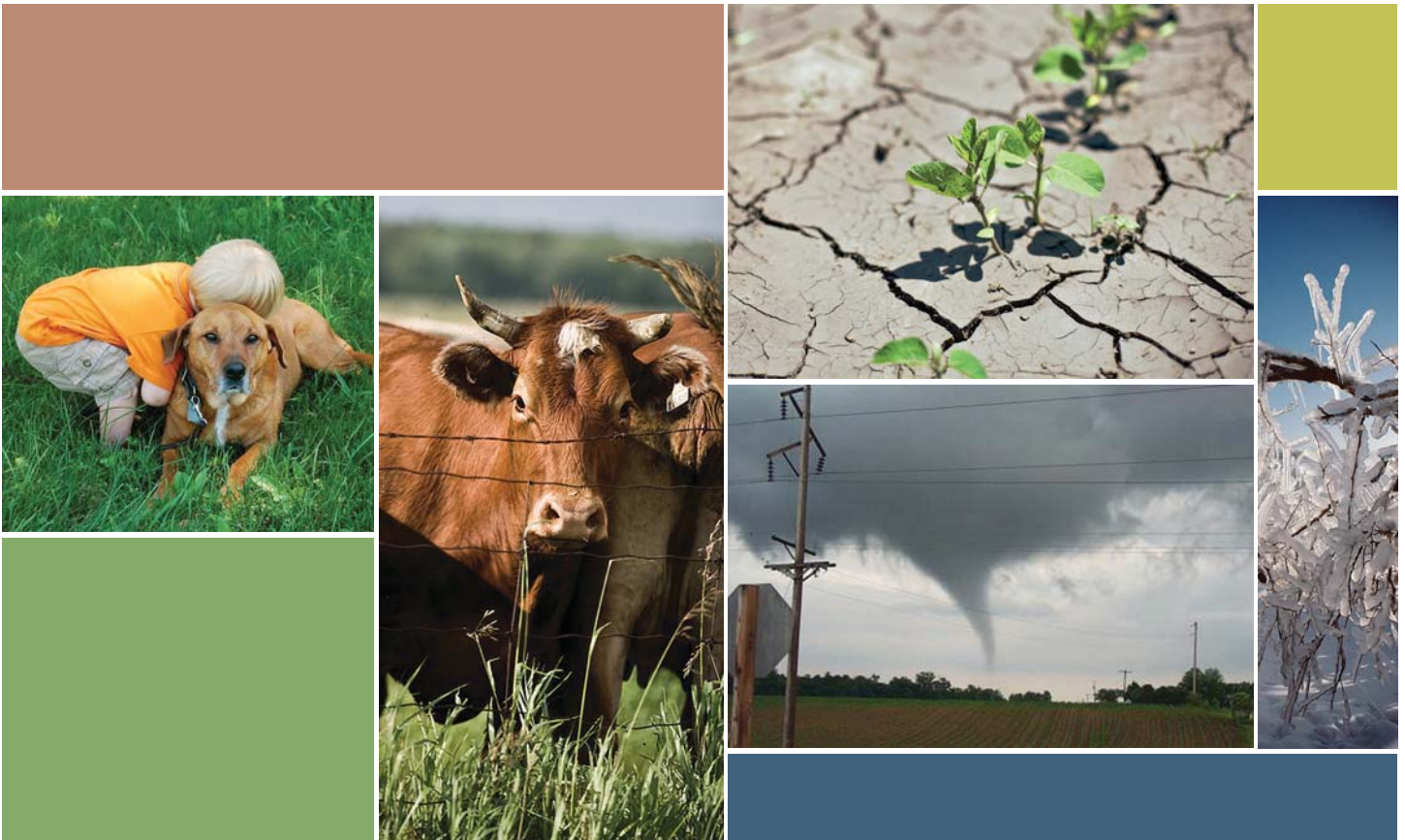


# ALL-HAZARDS PREPAREDNESS FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

[www.prep4agthreats.org](http://www.prep4agthreats.org)

A guide to help rural agriculture communities prepare for threats to their families, farms, animals and businesses





In an emergency situation, such as a natural disaster, preparing items beforehand can help keep you and your family safe until you can get assistance.

## Basic Kit

### • Essential items needed for all situations – FOOD – WATER – CLOTHING.

- Canned food: 3-5 days worth – don't forget a non-electric can opener
- Water to last 3-5 days -- about 1 gallon of water per person per day
- Any medications needed by family members (e.g., heart or high blood pressure medication, insulin, contact lens supplies)
- A first aid kit and first aid manual.
- Extra clothing

### • Other items to bring:

- A battery-powered radio
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Cell phone with charger
- Mess kits or paper dining products (e.g., cups, plates, napkins)
- Personal hygiene supplies (e.g., soap, toothpaste, toilet paper, garbage bags, etc.)
- Hand sanitizer
- Sleeping bags or extra blankets
- Dust masks
- Duct tape
- Cash or traveler's checks

### • Additional items for infants:

- Bottles, formula, drinking water
- Diapers, ointments
- Medications

### • Special items for children:

- A favorite toy or blanket
- Colors and paper to help keep them busy while in the shelter

### • Don't forget items for pets.

- See 'Pet Emergency Plan and Supply Kit' handout (next page).

### • Place your kit in a central location.

- Let all of your family know where it is.
- Check the contents regularly to ensure fresh and complete supplies.

### • Gather important family documents:

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks, bonds
- Passports, social security cards
- Immunization records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates, social security numbers)
- Keep these documents in a waterproof, fireproof, portable container.

## Seasonal Items

### • Spring/Summer

- Mosquito protection: Insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin, or long sleeved and long-legged clothing
- Sunscreen, wide brim hat

### • Winter

- Extra blankets
- Hats, gloves, scarves
- Shovel, sand or cat litter

## Emergency Kit for Your Car

### • You may be away from home and in your car during an emergency situation.

### • Keep these preparedness items in your car:

- High energy foods (e.g., peanut butter, crackers, granola bars, trail mix) and water
- Flares, booster cables, tools, maps
- First aid kit, blankets
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Seasonal items: sunscreen, shovels

### • Keep your gas tank full, in case of emergency.

## For More Information

### Ready.gov: Build A Kit

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

<http://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>

*Information adapted from publications by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Weather Service, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the American Red Cross.*



# PET EMERGENCY PLAN AND SUPPLY KIT

General Preparedness

Pets can also be affected by a number of hazard situations. While preparing your family emergency plan, don't forget to include plans for your pets.

## Before a Disaster or Emergency

- **Make a preparedness kit for your pet.**
  - Leash and collar: clearly labeled with your pet's name, your name and a contact number
  - Transport carrier: clearly labeled with your name and a contact number
  - Food and water (5-7 day supply) – don't forget bowls and a non-electric can opener
  - Any medications for the pet
  - Copies of your pet's medical and vaccination records (e.g., rabies certificate)
  - Your veterinarian's name and phone number
  - Paper towels, newspapers, plastic trash bags, disinfectant (e.g., bleach) for waste clean-up
  - Toys or blankets the pet will find familiar
- **Provide for the special needs of unique pets.**
  - Birds/lizards: blanket to keep cage warm, spray bottle to hydrate feathers
  - Snakes: pillowcase to transport, heating pad for warmth, water bowl to soak
  - Pocket pets (hamsters/gerbils): cage/bedding material, water bottles
- **Store items in a sturdy container that can be easily carried.**
  - Covered trash container, duffle bag, plastic tote, bucket
- **Make sure pets are current on all vaccinations.**
- **Identification**
  - All pets should have some sort of identification (collar with tag, microchip).
  - Take a photo of the pet and keep it with the medical records.
  - Include any proof of ownership materials (e.g., registration information, proof of purchase, adoption records, microchip information).
- **Practice loading your pet into their cage, carrier, or trailer.**
- **Identify pet friendly locations in case of the need to evacuate.**
  - Board with friends/relatives in a safe area.
  - Check with your local animal shelter, boarding facility, or veterinary clinic.
  - Pet friendly hotels - [www.petswelcome.com](http://www.petswelcome.com)

## During a Disaster or Emergency

- **If you are sheltering in place:**
  - Bring your pet indoors.
  - Place them inside a carrier or cage to help reduce their stress.
- **If you need to evacuate:**
  - Take your pets with you whenever possible.
  - Allow plenty of time to catch and "load" your pet.
  - Make sure your pet has identification securely fastened to them.
  - Call your prearranged animal evacuation site.
- **If you must leave your pets behind:**
  - NEVER leave pets tied up outside.
  - Leave them untied in an interior room with adequate air and no windows (e.g., bathroom).
  - Purchase a self-feeder in advance and leave enough food and water for 3-5 days.
  - Leave a faucet dripping as a water source; keep the sink drain open.
  - Leave a notice on your front door with the location and type of pets inside, their names and your contact phone number.

## After the Disaster or Emergency

- **A pet's behavior may change before, during and even after a disaster.**
  - In the first few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside.
  - Maintain close contact to help them readjust to the changed environment.

## For More Information

### Saving the Whole Family

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

<https://ebusiness.avma.org/>

*Information adapted from publications by the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA).*



Floods are one of the most common, and most costly, natural disasters. Preparing now for flood situations can minimize injury to yourself and your family and speed the recovery process.

## Before a Flood

- **Be prepared for the possible disruption of services for extended periods of time, including electric, phone and local food and water sources.**
- **Prepare an emergency kit:**
  - Food, water and necessities for all members of the family to last 3 to 5 days
  - Any medications needed for family members
  - First aid kit, battery powered radio, flashlight with extra batteries
  - Sleeping bags or blankets, and extra clothing
  - Important family documents (e.g., insurance policies, emergency contact numbers)
  - Water-purifying supplies (e.g., chlorine tablets, or unscented, household chlorine bleach)
- **Family communication and evacuation plan.**
  - Know how you will contact each other if you are in separate locations or establish a location to meet.
  - Have an out-of-state relative or friend serve as the family contact person.
  - Learn the evacuation routes and locations of emergency shelters in your area.

## During a Flood

- **Gather your emergency supplies.**
- **Stay informed.**
  - Listen to the radio or television for situation developments, evacuation instructions and routes, and road closures.
- **Never ignore an evacuation order for the safety of you and your family.**
- **If you have time,**
  - Disconnect electrical appliances to prevent electrical shock when power is restored.
  - Turn off the gas, electricity and water as the main switches or valves.
  - Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.
- **Follow evacuation routes; expect heavy traffic.**
- **Avoid floodwaters.**
  - Water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage, harmful bacteria or electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.

- **Do not walk through moving water.**
  - If water is above your ankles, turn around and go another way; as little as 6 inches of water can sweep you off your feet.
- **Do not drive in flooded areas.**
  - Most flood-associated deaths are related to vehicle incidents.
  - As little as six inches of water will cause loss of control and possible stalling. A foot of water will float most vehicles. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles.
  - If flood waters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground.

## After a Flood

- **Only return home after officials have declared the area safe.**
- **Cleanup safely.**
  - Wear protective clothing, (rubber gloves, boots).
  - Do not use water that could be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, or make ice.
  - Use caution with gas powered equipment – dangerous carbon monoxide can be generated.
  - Be aware of hazards that may cause injury to you or others cleaning up, (e.g., chain saws, pressure washers, electrical or chemical hazards, heat exposure).
- **Prevent and treat injuries.**
  - Exposure to floodwaters in cold weather can lead to hypothermia.
  - Extreme heat can lead to heat stress or exhaustion.
  - Take precautions to minimize insect exposures.
- **Prevent illness.**
  - Wash hand frequently – especially after contacting flood water or contaminated items.
  - Use clean, boiled or disinfected water; if no water is available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers may be used.
- **Food and water safety.**
  - Throw away any food that may have come in contact with flood water.
  - Throw away perishable foods that have been unrefrigerated for 2 or more hours.
  - When in doubt, throw it out!
- **Use safe water (e.g., bottled, boiled or treated) for drinking, cooking and personal hygiene.**
  - Wells may be contaminated following floods.
  - Boil or treat water for drinking and cooking until authorities tell you that your water supply is safe.

*Information adapted from publications by the National Weather Service, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.*



# FLOODS AND YOUR HOME

Natural Disasters

Protecting your home during flood situations can involve a variety of actions, from inspecting and maintaining the property to installing protective devices or materials.

## Before A Flood

- **Determine the risk of flooding for your area**
  - The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS)  
<http://water.usgs.gov/pubs/>
  - The National Weather Service  
<http://www.weather.gov/>
- **Identify potential hazards on your property.**
  - Know how to turn off electrical power, gas and water supplies.
  - Secure unstable materials that are outside your home (e.g. patio furniture, fuel tanks).
  - Protect your well by using heavy plastic and duct tape to seal the well cap and top of the well casing.
- **Protect your home.**
  - Build with or install flood-resistant materials.
  - Buy and install sump pumps with backup power (e.g., battery-operated).
  - Install backflow valves or plugs to prevent flood water from entering.
  - Place furnace, water heater, washer, dryer on cement blocks above projected flood elevation.
- **Stockpile emergency building materials.**
  - Plywood, plastic sheeting, lumber, nails, hammer, saw, pry bar, sandbags, shovel.
- **Safeguard your possessions.**
  - Create a room-by-room inventory of your possessions, include receipts and photos.
  - Gather copies of critical documents, such as finance records, insurance policies.
  - Keep these lists in a secure place (e.g. safe deposit box, waterproof container).
- **Flood insurance.**
  - Obtain flood insurance
  - Most standard home owner insurance policies do not cover floods.
  - The National Flood Insurance program is available in most areas. For more information [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov)

## During a Flood

- **Stay informed.**
  - Listen to the radio or television for situation developments and evacuation instructions.
  - Do not ignore evacuation orders.
  - Follow designated evacuation routes.
- **If you must evacuate,**
  - Ensure your family's safety first.
  - Gather your emergency supply kit; take only essential items with you.
  - Shut off electrical power and natural gas or propane tanks to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions.

## After a Flood

- **Return home only when officials have declared the area safe.**
- **Before entering - Assess the situation.**
  - Assess the impact and areas of damage to your home.
  - Identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, downed power lines, damaged gas lines, or other hazards (e.g., chemical spills).
  - If you smell natural or propane gas, or hear a hissing noise, leave immediately and call the fire department.
  - If power lines are down outside your home or buildings, do not step in any standing water.
- **Approach entrances carefully.**
  - Parts of your home or building structures may be collapsed or damaged.
  - Check if porch roofs and overhangs have all their supports.
- **Keep power off until an electrician has inspected your system for safety.**
- **Account for your inventory.**
  - Compare the list with the one prepared prior to the incident.
  - Take photographs of all damage for insurance or emergency assistance purposes.
- **Contact your insurance company or the National Flood Insurance program to file your claim.**
  - Your adjuster will need evidence of the damage to your home and possessions to prepare your claim.
  - Keep accurate records listing all clean-up and repair bills, flood-related living expenses and actual losses (furniture, appliances, clothing, etc).



- **Clean and disinfect items.**

- Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of 1 cup of bleach to five gallons of water.
- Thoroughly disinfect surfaces that may come in contact with food, such as counter tops, pantry shelves, refrigerators, etc.
- Areas where small children play should also be carefully cleaned.
- Wash all linens and clothing in hot water, or dry clean; For items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, (mattresses, upholstered furniture), air dry in the sun, then spray thoroughly with disinfectant.
- Steam clean all carpeting. If there has been a backflow of sewage into the house, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during cleanup.
- Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected, such as wallcoverings, cloth, rugs, and drywall.

- **Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.**

- Alternative sources of fuel or electricity for heating, cooling, or cooking can cause carbon monoxide to build up in a home, garage, or camper.
- Never run a gas-powered equipment (generator, pressure washer, engines) inside, even if the doors or windows are open.
- Avoid running gas-powered equipment near open windows, doors, or vents where exhaust can enter indoor enclosed areas.

- **Clean up safely.**

- Be aware of hazards that may cause injury to you or others cleaning up - these can include chain saw or pressure washer injuries, electrical or chemical hazards, heat exposure.
- Have an electrician check the house's electrical system before turning the power on again.
- If the house has been closed up for several days. Enter briefly to open doors and windows to let the house air out for awhile (at least 30 minutes) before you stay for any length of time.
- Presume your home has been contaminated with mold.
- Use fans and dehumidifiers to remove excess moisture. Fans should be placed so air blows outwards rather than inwards.
- Have your home heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning (HVAC) system checked and cleaned by a maintenance or service professional who is experienced in mold clean-up before you turn it on.

- **Prevent mold growth.**

- Remove any items that have been wet for more than 48 hours, that cannot be thoroughly cleaned and dried.
- Porous items include carpeting, carpet padding, upholstery, wallpaper, drywall, floor and ceiling tiles, insulation material, some clothing, leather, paper, wood, and food --can remain a source of mold growth and should be removed from the home.
- When in doubt, take it out!

- **Well and pump inspection.**

- There is a danger of electrical shock from any electrical device that has been flooded.
- Do not turn on the pump and electrical system until equipment has dried and been checked by a qualified electrician, or well professional.
- Swiftly moving flood water can carry large debris that can damage the hardware, construction or casing of wells and pumps.
- Flood water could have also entered the well and contaminated it.
- Well water should be sampled and tested for contamination prior to use for drinking, cooking or cleaning.
- Call you state laboratory certification officer or contact the Safe Drinking Water hotline (1-800-426-4791) <http://www.epa.gov/safewater/hotline/index.html>

- **Septic systems.**

- Septic systems should not be used immediately after floods; drain fields will not work until water in the soil absorption field is lower than the water level around the house.
- Floodwater may have also broken septic lines. Have your septic tank professionally inspected and serviced; septic tanks may contain dangerous gases.

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*Information adapted from publications by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the American Red Cross, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Environmental Protection Agency, and University of Wisconsin Extension.*



# FLOODS AND YOUR PETS

Natural Disasters

Floods can impact animal health as well as human health. Make plans for your pets in the event you will need to evacuate your home or farm.

## Before a Flood

- **Create an emergency supply kit for your pet:**
  - Leash, collar
  - Transport carrier
  - Food and water (5-7 day supply)
  - Any medications
  - Vaccination history, rabies certificate
  - Waste disposal supplies
  - A blanket
  - Favorite toy
  - Your veterinarian's contact information
  - Special supplies for pets such as birds, pocket pets or reptiles (e.g., heat lamps)
- **Make sure pets are current on all vaccinations.**
- **Develop an evacuation plan for your pets.**
  - For public health reasons, evacuation shelters will not be able to accept pets.
  - Identify pet friendly locations in case of the need to evacuate. [www.petswelcome.com](http://www.petswelcome.com)
  - Check with boarding facilities, pet-friendly hotels, veterinary clinics, or relatives or family friends outside the impacted area.
- **Identification.**
  - All pets should have some sort of identification (collar with tag, microchip).
  - Take a photo of the pet and keep it with the medical records.
  - Include any proof of ownership materials (e.g., registration, proof of purchase, adoption records, microchip information).

## During a Flood

- **Bring your pets inside immediately.**
- **AVOID leaving pets behind.**
  - If there is no other alternative, leave them loose inside your home with food and plenty of water.
  - NEVER leave your pet chained outside or enclosed in a way they cannot escape danger.
  - Place a notice on the outside of your home with the location and type of pets inside, their names, your contact phone number and the name and number of your veterinarian.

## After a Flood

- **Be aware that a pet's behavior may change before, during and even after a disaster.**
- **Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost.**
  - In the first few days after the disaster, leash your pets when they go outside.
  - Always maintain close contact.
  - Reintroduce food in small servings, gradually working up to full portions, especially if animals have been without food for a prolonged period of time.
- **Pets can be poisoned by exposure to harmful chemicals, products, or foods.**
  - If you suspect that your pet has been poisoned, call the Animal Poison Control Center toll-free 1-888-426-4435 (calls answered 24 hours a day, every day).

*Information adapted from publications by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Veterinary Medical Association.*



# SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS AND YOUR FAMILY

Natural Disasters

Severe thunderstorms can produce lightning, hail, high winds, even tornadoes or flash flooding, all of which can cause injury to you or your family. Know how to protect your family before, during and after severe storms.

## Before a Severe Storm

- **Know the warning system for your community.**
  - Learn the thunderstorm warning system for your county or locality.
  - Monitor for severe thunderstorms in your area at NOAA's National Weather Service National Storm Prediction Center - <http://www.spc.noaa.gov>
- **Know the terminology.**
  - A **severe thunderstorm WATCH** means storms are likely in your area—Be ready to take necessary action.
  - A **severe thunderstorm WARNING** means storms have been reported by spotters or indicated by radar – Take immediate action to stay safe.
- **Know the safest location for shelter in your home, workplace and school.**
- **Prepare an emergency kit. You may experience power outages or need to shelter-in-place due to the storm.**
  - Food, water and necessities for all members of the family to last at least 24 hours
  - Any medications needed for family members
  - First aid kit
  - Battery powered radio
  - Flashlight with extra batteries
  - Sleeping bags or blankets, and extra clothing

## During a Severe Storm

- **Stay informed.**
  - Listen to the radio or television about the situation.
- **If a WARNING is issued – Seek shelter immediately.**
- **If you are home,**
  - Remain indoors; stay off porches.
  - Stay away from windows and doors.
- **If you are outdoors,**
  - Seek shelter immediately – such as a nearby home or building.
  - If no shelter is available – take shelter in a hard top (not convertible) automobile, but avoid touching any metal.
  - If you are in the woods, go to a low area such as a ravine or valley under a thick growth of small trees; be alert for flash flooding.

- **Avoid** natural lightning rods: tall, isolated tree in an open area • hilltops in open fields • the beach or a boat on the water • isolated sheds/small structures in open areas • anything metal—tractors, motorcycles, golf carts or clubs, bicycles.

- **Lightning safety tips, if you are inside your home.**
  - Avoid contact with corded phones; cordless and cellular telephones are safe to use.
  - Avoid contact with electrical equipment or cords; if you plan to unplug any electronic equipment, do so well before the storm arrives.
  - Avoid contact with plumbing, it can conduct electricity – do not wash your hands, shower, wash dishes, or do laundry.
- **Lightning safety tips, if you are caught outdoors.**
  - Squat low to the ground on the balls of your feet.
  - Place your hands over your ears and your head between your knees.
  - Make yourself the smallest target possible and minimize your contact to the ground.
  - DO NOT lie flat on the ground.
  - Rubber-soled shoes and rubber tires provide NO protection from lightning.

## After a Severe Storm

- **Stay away from storm-damaged areas.**
- **Clean up safely.**
  - Wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves.
  - Stay away from downed power lines and report them immediately.
  - Be aware of hazards that may cause injury to you or others cleaning up (e.g., chain saws, electrical or chemical hazards).
  - Use caution with gas powered equipment – dangerous carbon monoxide can be generated; use in well ventilated areas.
- **If someone has been injured by lightning,**
  - Call 911 or your local Emergency Medical Services.
  - Check the person for burns or other injuries; being struck by lightning can also cause nervous system damage, broken bones, loss of hearing or eyesight.
  - If breathing has stopped, begin rescue breathing.
  - If the heart has stopped beating, a trained person should give CPR.

*Information adapted from publications by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Weather Service and the American Red Cross.*





Damage to your home from severe thunderstorms can occur from lightning, hail, high winds, even tornadoes or flash flooding. Prepare your home before the storm, to minimize the impact.

## Before a Severe Storm

- **Pick a safe place in your home to gather during a thunderstorm.**
  - This should be a place where there are no windows, skylights, or glass doors, which could be broken by strong winds or hail and cause damage or injury.
- **Identify potential hazards on your property.**
  - Know how to turn off electrical power, gas and water supplies.
  - Secure unstable materials that are outside your home (e.g., patio furniture, fuel tanks).
  - Remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage.
- **Prepare your home.**
  - Shutter windows and secure outside doors.
  - Keep your roof clean and free of debris regularly and check for loose shingles or leaks on a regular basis.
  - Make sure there is proper drainage around your home to help reduce the possibility of flooding.
  - Consider having a lightning protection system installed.
  - Install surge protectors to protect electronic equipment.
- **Safeguard your possessions.**
  - Create a room-by-room inventory of your possessions, include receipts and photos.
  - Keep these lists in a secure place (e.g., safe deposit box).
  - Review your insurance coverage.

## During a Severe Storm

- **Stay informed.**
  - Listen to the radio or television about the situation.
- **If a WARNING is issued – Seek shelter immediately.**
- **Avoid hazards in your home.**
  - Avoid corded telephones and metal; telephone lines and metal pipes can conduct electricity.
  - Unplug appliances and other electrical items such as computers and turn off air conditioners. Power surges from lightning can cause serious damage to equipment.
  - Draw blinds and shades over windows to prevent glass (if high winds break the windows) from shattering into your home.

## After a Severe Storm

- **Assess the situation.**
  - Check the area for downed power lines; if found, notify your electric company immediately.
  - Check for power outages.
- **Cleanup safely.**
  - During cleanup, wear sturdy shoes or boots, long sleeves, and gloves to protect your body from injury.
  - Stay away from downed power lines and report them immediately.
  - Be aware of hazards that may cause injury to you or others cleaning up (e.g., chain saws, electrical or chemical hazards).
  - Clear broken tree branches away, but use caution, downed or damaged power lines can send electrical currents through tree branches and metal fences.

*Information adapted from publications by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the National Weather Service and the American Red Cross.*



# SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS AND YOUR PETS

Natural Disasters

High winds, thunder and lightning during severe storms often produce anxiety, fear and a need to escape for some pets. Take preparedness measures to protect and care for your pet during severe storms.

## Before a Severe Storm

- **Identification.**
  - Major storms can destroy fences allowing frightened pets to run away.
  - Make sure your pet has some form of identification (collar, microchip) that will let people contact you if your pet becomes separated from you.
  - Take a photo of the pet and keep it with its medical records.
- **Create a safe haven.**
  - Try to create a safe place for your pets.
  - Practice loading your pet into their cage or carrier.
  - Know their favorite hiding locations.
  - Some pets will feel more comfortable in a small crate or under a bed.
- **Try to desensitize your pet.**
  - Over a period of time, expose your pet to an intensity level of noise that doesn't frighten the animal.
  - Pair the noise with something pleasant, like a treat or a fun game.

## During a Severe Storm

- **Pet behavior.**
  - A pet's behavior may change before, during and after the storm.
  - Consult your veterinarian. Medication may be available which can help reduce your pet's anxiety levels for short time periods.
  - Distract your pet. Encourage them to engage in any activity that captures their attention and distracts them from being fearful.
- **Pet safety.**
  - Bring pets indoor well in advance of a storm.
  - NEVER leave pets tied up outside.
  - If they are frightened, reassure them and remain calm.
  - Pets should be provided the same cover as humans during severe weather.
  - Keep pets away from windows.
  - Do not give your pet a bath during a storm.

## After a Severe Storm

- **Pet behavior.**
  - Be aware that a pet's behavior may change before, during and after a disaster.
  - In the first few hours after the storm, leash your pets when they go outside until they readjust to the situation.
- **Pet safety.**
  - Keep your pet away from storm damaged areas.
- **Lost pets.**
  - If pets cannot be found after a disaster, contact the local animal control office.
  - Bring along a picture of your pet, if possible.

*Information adapted from publications by the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Humane Society of the United States.*



Power outages can occur from a variety of situations (e.g., natural disasters) and can last for prolonged periods of time. This can present unique challenges in the home for ensuring your families safety. Taking preparedness actions now can help keep your family safe and healthy.

## Before a Power Outage

- **Prepare an emergency supply kit.**
  - Food, water and necessities for all members of the family to last 3 to 5 days
    - Non-perishable food or food that doesn't require refrigeration
    - Water: One gallon per person per day
    - Any medications needed for family members
  - First aid kit, battery powered radio, flashlight with extra batteries
    - Avoid using candles as they can be a fire hazard.
  - Sleeping bags or blankets, and extra clothing
  - Emergency contact numbers
  - Food thermometer
- **Family communication and evacuation plan.**
  - Know how you will contact each other if you are in separate locations or establish a location to meet.
  - Have an out-of-state relative or friend serve as the family contact person.
- **Protect electrical equipment.**
  - Install surge protectors and/or battery back-up systems for sensitive electronic equipment (e.g., computers).

## During a Power Outage

- **Stay informed.**
  - Listen to your battery powered radio for situation developments.
- **Decide whether to stay or go.**
  - Depending on the amount of time you will be without power, it may be best to remain at home (e.g., temporary outage) or evacuate (e.g., power outage in winter with loss of home heat).
  - If driving to another location, proceed with caution and be alert to traffic lights that are not working.
- **Backup power.**
  - Use standby or backup power sources for emergency power. Only use generators in well-ventilated areas. Generators are a major cause of fatal carbon monoxide poisoning.
  - Use battery-operated light sources (flashlights or glow sticks). Do not use candles due to the risk of fire.
  - Never use gas ovens, gas ranges, barbecues or propane heaters for indoor heating.

- **Protect electrical equipment.**
  - Surges or spikes can occur when the power returns; this can damage electrical equipment. Turn off and unplug any electrical equipment (e.g., electronics and appliances).
- **Turn off as many lights and other electrical items as possible.**
  - This helps to eliminate potential fire hazards and lessens the power draw when service is restored.
  - Keep one light turned on so you will know when the power is back on.
- **Keep your food supply safe.**
  - Keep your refrigerator and freezer closed as much as possible throughout the power outage.
  - If your freezer is completely full, the food inside it should be safe for up to 48 hours. If it is half-full, the food inside should be safe for up to 24 hours.
  - If you have been without power for over 48 hours, do not eat any of the food in your freezer.
  - NEVER taste a food to determine its safety!
  - Check the temperature of any and all food before you cook or eat it.
  - Throw away any food that has a temperature higher than 40°F or has been out for more than two hours.
  - If the food in your freezer still contains ice crystals or is 40°F or below, then the food is safe to cook and eat, or refreeze.
  - When in doubt, throw it out!

## Water Safety

- **Water purification systems may not be fully functioning during power outages.**
  - Check with local authorities to be sure your water is safe to drink.
  - If your water is not considered safe, boil or treat any water used for drinking, cooking, washing dishes, brushing teeth, washing and preparing food, washing your hands, making ice, or preparing baby formula.
  - "Safe" water includes bottled, boiled, or treated water.
  - Contact your local public health department for water treatment directions.

*Information adapted from publications from the American Red Cross, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*