

# PLAN AHEAD FOR PET SHELTERING

When disaster strikes and you must evacuate, the most important thing you can do for your pets is to have a plan for their safety too. Pets are not allowed in public shelters in Suffolk County for health and space reasons. The Town's animal shelter is not equipped or large enough to handle the sheltering of animals during a disaster. Therefore, it is incumbent on the owner to find a shelter for their pet during a disaster. It is as easy as 1, 2, 3.

## 1. Identify a Shelter

Don't wait for the disaster to be here. Find out now where you will take your pet. Check with local kennels, veterinarians and motels/hotels that are pet friendly.

## 2. Plan a Pet Disaster Supply Kit

- Proper identification including immunization records
- Ample supply of food and water with bowls
- A carrier or cage that locks securely
- Newspaper or trash bags for clean-up
- Medications with specific care instructions
- Muzzle, collar and leash
- First Aid Kit

## 3. Stay Informed and be Prepared to Leave

If you are sheltering your pet, do so well before the storm arrives and don't forget your supply kit.

# TIME TO SHELTER

## Before

Make sure that your pets are current on their vaccinations. Pet shelters may require proof of vaccines.

Have a current photograph of you and your pet.

Keep a collar, with a securely attached identification tag, on your pet and have a leash on hand to control your pet.

Have a properly-sized pet carrier for each animal. Carriers should be large enough for the animal to stand and turn around in.

Plan your evacuation strategy and don't forget your pet! Specialized pet shelters, kennels, veterinary clinics and friends and relatives who are out of harm's way are ALL potential refuges for your pet during a disaster.

If you plan to shelter your pet, work it into your evacuation route planning.

## During

Animals brought to a pet shelter are required to have: Proper identification collar and rabies tag, proper identification on all belongings, a carrier or cage, a leash, an ample supply of food and water, food bowls, any necessary medications, specific care instructions and newspapers or trash bags for clean-up.

Bring pets indoors well in advance of a storm. Reassure them and remain calm.

Pet shelters will be filled on first-come, first-served basis. Make sure to call ahead and determine availability.

## After

Walk pets on a leash until they become re-oriented to their home. Often familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and pets could easily be confused and become lost. Also, downed power lines and debris can all pose a threat for animals after a disaster.

If pets cannot be found after a disaster, contact the Town's animal control office at 369-6189 to find out where lost animals can be recovered. Bring along a picture of your pet if possible.

After a disaster, animals can become aggressive or defensive. Monitor their behavior.

# WHAT TO DO IF YOU MUST LEAVE YOUR PET AT HOME DURING A DISASTER

- Confine your pet to inside your house, but not the basement.

- Leave them loose with plenty of food and water.
- For a water supply, brace an accessible bathroom door open, remove the tank lid and raise the seat.
- Place a visible notice by the front door stating what animals are inside and where they can be located. Include where you can be located, your cell number and the veterinarian's name and telephone number.

## IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND LINKS

Riverhead Animal Shelter	369-6189
Riverhead Storm Hotline	727-3200 ext. SOS (767)
Riverhead Police	727-4500
Riverhead Emergency Management	727-4500 ext. 315
Suffolk County Emergency Management	852-4900
Suffolk County Emergency Management	<a href="#">Suffolk County Government</a>
Homeland Security	<a href="http://www.ready.gov">www.ready.gov</a>

Don't forget your pet when preparing a family disaster plan and

**STAY INFORMED.**