

Your guide to keeping pets safe in an emergency

1 CREATE A GO KIT

Just as we should have one, so should our pets. If you're faced with evacuating for a hurricane, wildfire, flooding, or even a power outage, being prepared can make a big difference in quickly getting your animals to safety, says Kitty Block, president and CEO of the Humane Society of the United States. In addition to enough food and water for at least five days and supplies your pet uses daily (medicines, a leash or harness, carrier, and blanket), include current photos

and descriptions of your pets in case they go missing. Write down your pets' feeding schedules, vet contact info, and any behavioral or medical issues. Record the info on a sheet of paper that you laminate, or write it in a notebook that has a copy of your pets' vaccination records stapled into it. Remember to update it once a year.

2 MAP OUT A SAFE HAVEN

The key is to know your options should you need to evacuate. Start by making a list of hotels that allow pets. (Try the free BringFido app or petswelcome.com to find pet-friendly hotels.) Contact your city or state office of emergency management to find out where pet-friendly shelters will be located. Also check with animal shelters

or kennels within driving distance to see if they can take in animals during crises, Block says. Another strategy: "Have a pet buddy," advises Nicole Forsyth, president and CEO of RedRover in Sacramento. Ask a friend or family member who lives within driving distance if they could help your pet in an emergency; give them what they need to access your pet in your absence.

3 THINK ABOUT A MICROCHIP

It's an added layer of insurance (in addition to a collar tag) in case you're separated. In fact, one study of pets in shelters showed that ones with microchips had a higher rate of return to their families. All it takes is a quick shot to insert the microchip under your pet's skin. You then register the chip online for about \$20; if your pet is ever lost and ends up at a shelter or vet, they can scan the chip to contact you. ■

«
THE AMERICAN RED CROSS PET FIRST AID APP (FREE) SUPPLIES MORE INFO ON HOW TO PREP FOR VARIOUS EMERGENCIES.



Treat Your Pup to the Natural, Bacon-Style Treat



A tasty snack you'll feel good about giving.



Find BLUE Sizzlers® at a Store Near You!