



# Pets in Natural Disasters

In recent times, our community has endured disasters, particularly floods, which can cause severe disruption and damage to communities and properties.

Are you prepared in case of a natural disaster, and have an emergency plan in place for you and your pets?

Our pets are dependent on us for their health and happiness, and this is particularly the case during natural disasters – *our pets rely on us completely, and we need to plan for them.*



## BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

Decide what arrangements you will need to make for your pets in the case of a disaster, for example identifying somewhere you can evacuate your pet/s to, should this be required – such as with family/friends, a boarding facility, or an evacuation centre that accepts pets.

Make sure your cats and/or dogs are microchipped and your microchip information is up to date, and that they are fitted with identification tags. Also, ensure your dog/s is registered with Council.

## PREPARE AN EMERGENCY KIT

It is handy to have an emergency kit prepared that can be easily carried and transported.

Suggested items for a kit include:

- Pet carriers/transportation equipment.
- Bedding/towels/toys.
- Non-perishable food and water (and bowls).
- Medications and medical records.
- Collars, leads, harnesses and ID tags.
- Litter and tray (for cats).
- Poo bags (for dogs).
- Registration and vaccination documentation.
- Current photos and proof of ownership.

## DURING AN EMERGENCY

### Sheltering away from Home

Contact your local evacuation centre to ask if they offer accommodation for owners and their pet/s. If sheltering at a facility that accepts pet/s, remember:

- Practice safe handling of your pet/s because they may behave differently during a stressful situation.
- Keep your pet/s in a carrier or on a leash.
- Do not allow your pet/s to interact with other animals from a different household and be mindful of interactions with other people sheltering with you.
- Always follow instructions of evacuation centre staff.



### Sheltering in Place

If you don't need to evacuate and can safely shelter at home, look to bring pets indoors, remove hazards including toxic chemicals or plants, and ensure the enclosure/room is secure.

### Having to leave pets at Home

If you are forced to leave your pet/s at home during a disaster, some tips include:

- Confine them to a bathroom or secure part of the house.
- Ensure they have access to food and water for at least several days.
- Ensure, if left outside, they have access to an elevated table or bench in case of flooding.
- Leave an old towel or shirt with your scent to comfort your pet.
- Leave a stereo/tv running to cover noises.

### AFTER AN EMERGENCY

#### Returning Home

When returning home with or to pet/s, be sure to check and make sure everyone will be safe. For example:

- Eliminate danger/remove debris or sharp objects.
- Remove any contaminated food or water.
- Ensure they have clean and dry shelter again.
- Ensure fencing/enclosures are secure.
- If your pet has a microchip, call the microchip company to let them know your pet is missing, and make sure all the information about your pet is current (or updated immediately).



#### Finding a Lost Pet

Should the worst happen, and your pet/s become lost:

- Make sure firstly your family is in a safe location before beginning your search.
- Contact Council's Animal Facility, local shelters or refuges seeking out your pet/s.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<https://www.qld.gov.au/emergency/dealing-disasters/prepare-for-disasters/prepare-pets>

<https://www.getready.qld.gov.au/pets>

<https://www.rspca.org.au/blog/2022/emergency-planning-pets>

### OTHER PETS – NOT A CAT OR A DOG

This information sheet has been developed with information about cats and dogs during an emergency, being the most common household pets.

We understand that this is not always the case, and should your pet/s be different – such as fish, reptiles or birds (for example) you may have to make special arrangements in advance of any emergency situation.

