

22. PREPPED PETS PREFERRED

Having emergency plans and supplies for animals

WHY ACT?

New York City apartments house a veritable menagerie of common and uncommon pets. If you are a pet owner, you are familiar with their needs, but what would they do without you for a few hours, or a few days? What if you needed to evacuate? If an emergency happens, they are helpless, so they need you to plan ahead for their well-being. There are many things that can be done in advance that will make a world of difference to your pet's welfare.

PREPAREDNESS ACTION

- Create a Go Bag for all of your pets.

Step 1: Get a notebook and a pen or pencil.

Step 2: Make an evacuation plan for your pets: Write down the names, addresses and phone numbers of friends, relatives, or locate pet-friendly motels or hotels (disaster shelters do not allow pets). If you have a service animal, he or she will be permitted to stay in a disaster shelter with you, but you must bring along your Pet Go Bag.

Step 3: Write down your pet's daily care information, including feeding and medication schedules and list of emergency contacts.

Step 4: Scan your home for the items on the list below. Make a list of items that will need to be purchased. Make another list of items you will need to photocopy (e.g., vaccination records).

A Pet Go Bag consists of:

- ▶ The Bag. Choose a sturdy, easy-to-carry container (e.g., a backpack, duffel bag or suitcase on wheels) that is large enough to hold all of the items listed below.
- ▶ A three-day supply of water, food, medications and kitty litter (if applicable); manual can opener (for canned food) and food bowls for each pet.
- ▶ A photocopy of all current vaccination and health records, license numbers, microchip numbers, and the phone number of your veterinarian.
- ▶ The evacuation plan in Step 2.
- ▶ The pet care information in Step 3.
- ▶ A sturdy pet carrier or cage (and a wheeled luggage trolley if your pet's carrier is difficult to carry) for each pet.
- ▶ A leash and muzzle or harness, if applicable.
- ▶ Newspaper or plastic bags and disinfectant for waste clean-up.
- ▶ Current color photo of each pet (in the event he or she becomes lost).

Step 5: When all of these items have been gathered, prepare a Go Bag for all of your pets.

Step 6: If feasible, store your pet's Go Bag alongside your own. When you evacuate, remember to grab your pet's Go Bag when you grab your own. See Action 17, pg. 39 for complete evacuation instructions and include your pet in your evacuation plan practice session. Keep in mind a stressed pet may behave differently or more aggressively than normal.

NOTE: It is not advised, but if you must leave your pet, prepare a safe place in your home away from windows. Be sure your pet has food and access to a high place, such as a countertop, in case flooding occurs.

MATERIALS

Pet care supplies: food bowls, manual can opener, food, water, carriers, documents, etc.

TIME

A few hours for making a plan, shopping and assembling your pet's emergency supplies.

RESILIENCY GAIN

The satisfaction of caring for a best friend.