

## Disaster Planning for Dogs

**Advance planning helps keep dogs safe in the event of an emergency or natural disaster.**

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As the height of hurricane season approaches and wildfires become more prevalent, thorough disaster planning should include appropriate emergency preparations for pets, says Jack Hanna, animal expert and director emeritus of the Columbus Zoo.

Hanna offers several tips on how to include dogs in your family disaster plan:

If possible, do not leave your dog behind. Most disaster shelters do not accept pets. Contact local animal shelters and veterinarians to obtain information on sheltering pets in case of an emergency and identify pet-friendly hotels along evacuation routes. Speak with neighbors and discuss plans to ensure all dogs and cats are taken care of in case some neighbors are not at home.

Keep emergency supplies readily available. Each dog needs a sturdy crate, and pet owners should keep a two-week supply of food for each dog. If dogs require medication, keep enough on-hand to last for several weeks. Other useful emergency-preparedness items include a pet first-aid kit, disinfectant, plastic bags, and pooper scoopers.

Be prepared in case of separation. Get up-to-date identification and take a current photo of each dog, showing any distinguishing marks. Keep dogs' vaccinations current and records organized.

Monitor your dog's behavior. Dogs may become easily frightened in stressful circumstances resulting in aggressive or defensive behavior. Keep dogs in their crates, watch for changes and give dogs extra reassurance and attention.

Hanna provides these tips on behalf of Motel 6 as the motel chain's pet travel spokesman.