

## Red Cross Offers Dog First-Aid Classes

**American Red Cross chapters across the country offer first-aid classes that teach emergency dog care.**

Posted: June 22, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

Veterinarians study for years to provide optimum care for animals, but when dogs are faced with a health crisis, it's typically the pet's owner — not a trained professional — that initially observes the incident. To improve emergency response during those first critical moments, the American Red Cross is offering dog first-aid classes at select chapters throughout the country.

The course teaches emergency care procedures such as pet cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), how to administer medications, recognizing dehydration, what to do for a choking animal, how to stop bleeding, approaching injured animals, and determining when advanced medical care is required.

"Classes are taught with animal mannequins," says Diane Caribardi, director of the American Red Cross, Heart of Oklahoma Chapter and pet first aid instructor, "which look like stuffed animals with plastic airways. They come in various sizes to be realistic."

The organization published a pet first-aid manual in 1997, "American Red Cross Pet First Aid," and has since starting offering hands-on classes. Caribardi added it's one of the organization's fastest growing training courses with classes often selling out in many areas of the country.

"This class is important for pet owners and professionals because dogs and cats are an integral part of many families," says Caribardi. "It's important to know how to react to an emergency situation with your pet."

First-aid instruction is offered for both cat and dog owners. Class prices range from \$25 to \$70, depending on location. For a list of American Red Cross Chapters that offer the course, or for more information on the pet first-aid manual, visit [www.redcross.org/services/hss/courses/pets.html](http://www.redcross.org/services/hss/courses/pets.html).