

TORNADOES AND YOUR PETS

Natural Disasters



Tornado situations will often produce anxiety, fear and a need to escape for some pets. Debris displaced by high winds, can cause injury to animals left outdoors. Take preparedness measures to protect and care for your pet during tornadoes.

Preparing Pets for Tornadoes

- **Create an emergency supply kit for your pet, should you need to evacuate your home due to heavy destruction.**
 - A 3-5 day supply of food and water for your pet, bowls and a non-electric can opener.
 - Sanitation items, such as a litter box or puppy pads, and disposal equipment.
 - Crates to provide the animal with a secure and safe hiding spot; make sure that the crate is clearly labeled.
 - Leash and collar should you need to transport your pet, carrier for cats.
 - Any medications for pets and all medical records for them as well.
- **Identification.**
 - All animals should have some sort of identification (collar with tag, microchip).
 - Take a photo of your pet and keep it with the medical records.
- **Prepare to seek shelter.**
 - Practice getting the entire family, including pets, to the tornado safe area during calm weather.
 - Train your dog to go to the area on command or to come to you on command regardless of distractions.
 - Learn how to quickly and safely secure your cat.
 - Know the hiding places of your pet and how to quickly and safely gather your pet.

During a Tornado

- **Pet safety.**
 - Bring pets indoor well in advance of a storm.
 - NEVER leave pets tied up outside.
 - If they are frightened, reassure them and remain calm.
 - Pets should be provided the same cover as humans during severe weather.
- **Put all pets in cages or carriers and in the safe room when a tornado warning is issued.**
 - Animals can sense bad weather and will look for a place to hide if they sense it is near.
- **NEVER leave your pet chained outside or enclosed in a manner in which they cannot escape danger.**

After a Tornado

- **Pet behavior.**
 - Be aware that a pet's behavior may change before, during and after a disaster.
 - In the first few hours after the storm, leash your pets when they go outside until they readjust to the situation.
 - Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet may become confused and lost.
- **Pet safety.**
 - Keep your pet away from storm damaged areas.
 - Power lines could be down and dangerous objects will be littered about everywhere.
- **Lost pets.**
 - If pets cannot be found after a disaster, contact the local animal control office.
 - Bring along a picture of your pet, if possible.

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