

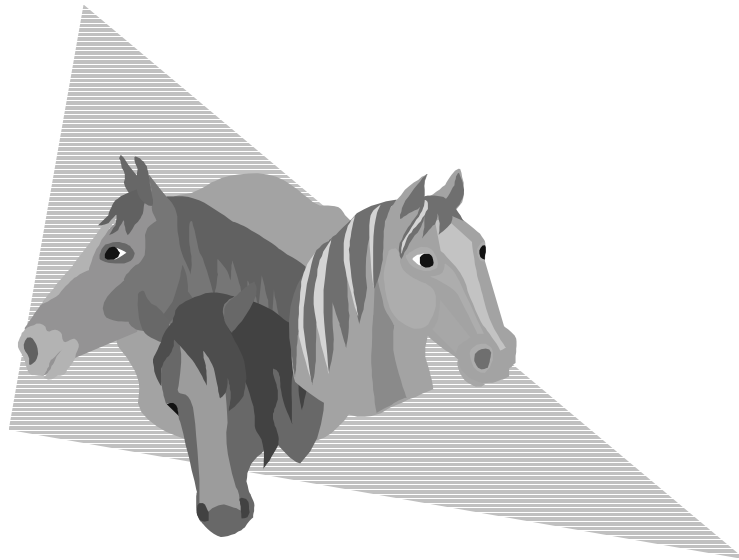


**Tompkins County**  
**Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

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# **Emergency Preparedness For Animals**

*~Large Animals~*



*How to protect your horses, cows, sheep,  
chickens, or other animals in an emergency*

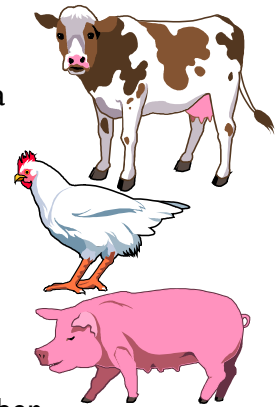
**A** little preparation goes a long way towards reducing the impact of a disaster or emergency on you and your loved ones. It is especially important for animal owners to prepare since there are fewer public resources available to help animals following a disaster. Remember, you are responsible for your pets' safety and well-being—they depend on you.

The term “emergency” or “disaster” can encompass anything from a fire in your barn or stable to a severe snowstorm to a region-wide chemical hazard. While it is important to be aware of the most likely disasters in your area, a general plan is best.

## An Ounce of Prevention

Look around your land and determine what you can do to reduce the impact of a disaster, and to prevent one from happening in the first place:

- Regularly check animal trailers to make sure they are in safe, working condition.
- Keep fire extinguishers and other basic firefighting supplies handy.
- Test smoke detectors on a regular basis.
- If you board your horse(s), review the boarding facility’s emergency plans, and find out whether they can and will evacuate your horse(s) and if so, where they will take them. Get at least one emergency contact phone number.
- Consider purchasing a generator. Regularly inspect it to be sure it is in good working order.
- Safely store sufficient fuel to run your generator(s) for a few days.
- Use shatterproof material in barn windows rather than glass. Sprinkler systems are also a good idea. While such preparations do involve financial cost, the cost of not doing so could be much greater.
- Any hazardous chemicals (such as herbicides, insecticides, fertilizer, paint) should be stored as safely as possible, away from people, animals, and food.
- Regularly inspect animal enclosures/barns/stables/hen houses to make sure the roofs are undamaged. Clear snow regularly during the winter to prevent damage or collapse.
- Build simple shelters, sheds, or windbreaks for animals who stay outdoors. Shelters must be spaced far enough apart to prevent snowdrifts. Contact the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for specifications on size, porosity, and spacing. FEMA contact information can be found on the back page, under Resources.

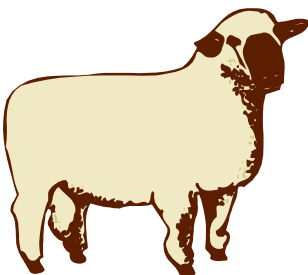


- In winter weather, be sure access to stables, barns, trailers, necessary equipment, and evacuation routes are not blocked by snowdrifts.
- Insulate buildings used to house animals to reduce the impact of severe cold weather. Insulation also reduces the need to rely on heating sources which could cause fire.
- Train all employees in emergency prevention, response, and evacuation procedures.

## Make a Plan

Once you have taken steps to reduce the impact of a disaster, develop an emergency plan. *It is vital to be prepared to take all of your animals with you if you must evacuate.* Leaving them behind is simply another disaster waiting to happen.

- Before winter weather hits, store enough food and fuel to last for several days.
- If you do not have a trailer (or one large enough to transport all your animals) make advance arrangements with someone who will be able to help you in an emergency.
- Determine where you will take your animals if it is necessary to evacuate. If you have one or two horses, you may be able to use a nearby boarding facility. For more animals, you may need more than one location. In large disasters, fairgrounds, racetracks, or parks may be set up to temporarily house large animals. Other farms outside your immediate area may be willing to help. Contact a variety of locations in advance and develop mutual aid agreements.
- Our shelter is often at capacity and focuses on ownerless small animals, so will be unable to temporarily house your animals following a disaster.

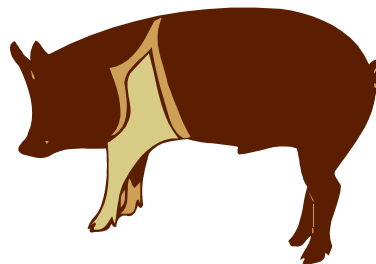


- Make a list of the following important phone numbers: your veterinarian, horse boarding facilities, your other housing arrangements, your transportation contact, the State Emergency Management Office, and animal poison control. Program them into your cell phone and keep a printed version in your emergency kit.
- Put together an emergency kit as described on page 4.

- Set up a “buddy system” with friends, family members, or neighbors to help with your animals if a disaster strikes. Make sure they have keys to your house and gates, instructions on what to do, a copy of your phone number list, and are familiar with your animals.
- Have transportation and cages and/or halters and lead ropes ready for all your animals.

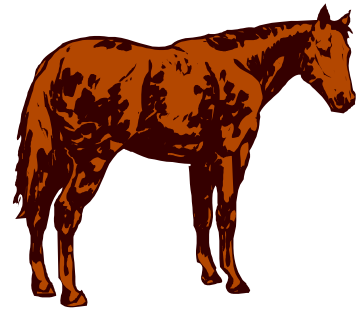
## Preparing Your Animals

- One of the best things you can do to ensure your animals’ safety is to be sure they are easily identified. For large animals, this includes tattoos, leg bands, painting or etching hooves, clipping phone numbers into hair, temporary neck bands, i.d. tags on halters, or stick-on numbers. Microchips can be helpful, but not everyone has a scanner and scanners do not always read the chip, so they are best used as a supplement to visible identification.
- To help them be more comfortable during transport and easier to handle in an emergency, practice loading your horse(s) or other farm animals into a trailer under different conditions (day, night, rain, with a blindfold, etc.). Easy loading can made a lifesaving difference in a disaster.
- Keep vaccinations current, and store a copy of vaccination records in your emergency kit.



## During the Disaster

- Stay calm. Animals react to your emotions and actions.
- If there is a possibility of an evacuation order, leave right away, especially if you have multiple animals. It is always better to be safe than sorry, and evacuation takes longer than you might imagine.

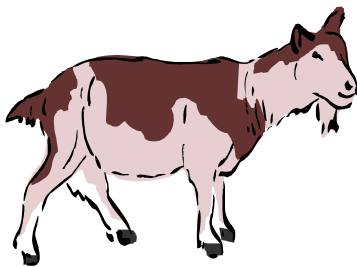


## After the Disaster

- Ensure that your land, barn, and/or stables are safe and fences are intact before bringing animals back.
- Be sure your animals' food is not contaminated (especially important following a flood or a chemical hazard).
- Empty flood water from any food and water containers and disinfect before using.
- Keep a close eye on your animals for signs of illness following a disaster. Contact your veterinarian for details on what to look for in various species.
- If animals have been separated due to evacuation, reintroduce them slowly to reduce stress and make it easier to determine if any are ill.

## Emergency Kit for Animals

An emergency kit for large/farmed animals (or large numbers of animals) is different than for pets. If you also have pets, or only a small number of animals, see the guidelines provided for pet emergency kits in "Emergency Preparedness for Small Animals."



Your kit should contain at least the following items:

- Emergency food supply\*
- Veterinary supplies you commonly use\*
- Current photos of animal(s) and any proof of ownership, as well as vaccination records
- Extra harnesses/halters and leads
- Temporary identification (leg bands, stick-on numbers/letters, hoof markers, temporary tags for halters, etc.)
- Cages/carriers for small birds
- Your emergency phone number list

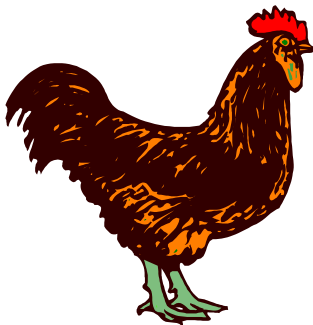
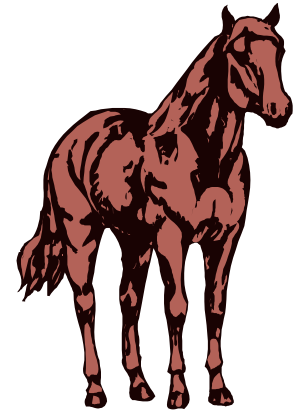
Organizations listed under Resources on the back page can provide descriptions of what your family's basic emergency kit should contain. In addition to food and water, don't forget:

- Flashlights
- Batteries\*
- Solar or battery powered radio

*\*Use up and replace on a regular basis so they stay fresh*

## Special Consideration for Specific Disasters

- **Wildfire.** Fire can spread quickly and unpredictably. If there is a wildfire in your area, immediately prepare to leave. If a voluntary evacuation notice is given, or if conditions appear to be unsafe, do not delay—leave. Also, even if you are not evacuated, soot, ash, and smoke can affect you and your animals. Air filters can make an enormous difference.
- **Flood.** If you graze or house animals in an area at risk for flooding, keep sandbags and plastic sheeting on hand. Be prepared to move your animals to higher ground early—before evacuation routes are flooded. Have several alternate routes planned.
- **Severe winter storms** (snowstorm, ice storm, blizzard). Farmed animals should be able to take shelter in severe weather. If barns or stables are not available for all animals, be sure you have built snow- and wind-breaks. Animals need extra food and unfrozen fresh water in cold conditions in order to remain healthy and survive. FEMA has specifications on both windbreaks and food requirements.
- **Severe summer storms** (thunderstorms, hail storm, lightning). If you are unable to evacuate your animals, and enclosures are at risk for collapse, turn animals out to pasture. Do not do so, however, if there is a greater risk of animal injury due to flying debris.



## Special Considerations for Specific Animals

- **Horses.** In a fire, a cloth placed over your horse's nose reduces smoke inhalation. If they must be evacuated in stressful conditions, some horses may benefit from the use of a blindfold. Be sure to familiarize your horse with this ahead of time. Ask your veterinarian about keeping tranquilizers on hand for high-strung animals. Be sure you know when and when not to use them.
- **Birds.** Remember that birds are particularly susceptible to smoke and chemicals. If a fire or chemical hazard strikes, birds must have fresh air. Consider having sprinkler systems installed in bird enclosures.

## Resources

Tompkins County SPCA  
(607) 257-1822 • [www.spcaonline.com](http://www.spcaonline.com)

A Guide to Citizen Preparedness (including animals)  
(800) 480-2520 • <http://www.fema.gov/areyouready/>

New York State Emergency Management Office  
(518) 457-2200 • <http://www.nysemo.state.ny.us/>

Animal Poison Hotline (\$35 charge)  
(888) 232-8870 • <http://www.animalpoisonhotline.com/>

AVMA Disaster Preparedness Series  
(847) 925-8070 ext.6632 •  
<http://www.avma.org/disaster/default.asp>

American Red Cross  
(607) 273-1900 • <http://www.tompkins-redcross.org>

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Tompkins County SPCA  
1640 Hanshaw Road  
Ithaca, New York 14850  
(607) 257-1822  
[www.SPCAonline.com](http://www.SPCAonline.com)