

With a little advance planning,  
you can save your pet's life  
during a disaster.

## Before

**PLAN AHEAD.** Evacuation shelters do not welcome pets, so make pre-disaster plans for temporary placement of your pets. Determine the best place to leave your pet in case of a disaster. Identify an off-site location as well as a place in your home.

**PHOTOGRAPHS AND IDENTIFICATION.** Keep a current photo of each pet. Make sure any distinguishing markings are visible. Birds should be leg-banded.

**MEDICAL AND VACCINATION RECORDS.** Store these and other important documents in a zip-lock or waterproof plastic bag. Your animals need to have current vaccinations. Keep medical histories and record special dosing instructions and dietary requirements. Write down contact information for your veterinarian.

**TRANSPORTATION.** Each animal should have their own airline approved pet carrier. Normal cages may not be sturdy enough to hold your pet during a disaster. Familiarize your pet with the carrier or cage before an emergency.

**AQUARIUMS.** Fish tanks and aquariums are very top heavy and unstable. They should be secured or bolted to the wall studs or placed on the floor to prevent them from toppling.

**BUDDY SYSTEM.** In case you are not home when disaster strikes, ask a trusted neighbor to check on your animals. Exchange veterinary information and file a permission slip with your veterinarian authorizing them to get emergency treatment for our pet if you can't be located.

## During

Evacuate your animals early, if possible, to ensure their safety and ease your and their stress.

Listen to the Emergency Broadcast System on the TV or radio.

Take all vaccination and medical records, the Emergency disaster kit, and enough food and water for two weeks.

Call your destination to make sure space is still available.

In cold weather, wrap a blanket around the carrier and warm up the car before placing animals inside.

Snakes can be transported in a pillowcase, but they must be transferred to more secure housing when they reach the evacuation site.

Keep birds caged. They may sense danger and be difficult to capture.

If you must leave your animals, leave them in a safe area. Cover their cages with a light cloth or sheet. Take all identification/medical records and identification photos with you when you depart.

**Do not rely on electric filters, feeding systems or other electric equipment during a disaster. The power may go out, leaving your pet stranded.**

## After

Check animals for injury and exposure to chemicals. Contact your veterinarian if you have any concerns.

Monitor birds closely for several days after a disaster. Many commonly show signs of disease several days following a stressful episode. Consult a veterinarian immediately at any signs of lethargy, loss of appetite, loose stool, depression, injury, or sitting on a cage bottom.

If you have to move to new surroundings, do not remove your bird from its cage until it is calm, then do so only in a closed room. Frightened birds may become aggressive or fly away.

If your bird has been without food and water for a prolonged time, give it small amounts every few hours for several days. Allowing the bird to gorge can be harmful. Work up to a normal volume of food gradually.

Let your bird have plenty of uninterrupted sleep to recover from the stress and trauma. Birds will usually remain calm in isolated, darkened areas with cages covered.

Practice Your Plan!

Animal Health and Food Safety Services  
Animal Health Branch  
1220 N Street, Room A-107  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 654-1447  
[www.cdfa.ca.gov](http://www.cdfa.ca.gov)  
birdexot.wpd 10/98

## Disaster Preparedness Kit

- ' Transportable Cage (airline carrier quality)
- ' Cage cover/blanket
- ' Non-spill food and water bowls/dispensers
- ' Two weeks supply of food and water
- ' Any special dietary instructions
- ' Hot water bottle
- ' Newspaper
- ' First Aid items

- ' Paper towels and plastic bags for cleanups
- ' Disinfectants
- ' Toys and treats
- ' Water bowl for soaking and heating pad for snakes
- ' Battery powered heat lamp
- ' Veterinarian-s information
- ' A current photograph of each pet



## Emergency Contact Information

You will need to have your emergency contact information in one easily accessible place. This information is different in every county. By filling in the information below, you will be prepared to reach the key animal disaster resources in your county.

Office of Emergency Services County Animal Coordinator

County Animal Control

California Veterinary Medical Association County Disaster Coordinator (Call (916) 344-4985 for your county-s contact information)

Department of Fish and Game

Your Veterinarian

Potential Evacuation Sites



Developed by the State of California, Department of Food and Agriculture, Animal Health and Food Safety Services, Animal Health Branch, Animal Care Program, 1220 N Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, (916) 654-1447.



# Disaster Preparedness for Bird and Reptile Owners



**Animal Health and  
Food Safety Services  
Animal Health Branch**

