



4.5.8 Animals in Disaster

While the protection of human life is paramount, the need to care for domestic livestock and/or companion animals plays into decisions made by people affected by disasters. Preparing for the care of animals during a disaster **is the responsibility of owners**. However, the County may coordinate with local animal owners, veterinarians, and animal advocacy groups and charities sponsored by private organizations to address animal-related issues that arise during an emergency. If local resources are insufficient to meet the needs of animals during a disaster, the County may request assistance through OEM.

The **Wren Emergency Planning Committee** reminds animal owners to make a plan for pets/livestock for emergency scenarios:

- evacuation
- shelter-in-place
- unexpected personal situation resulting in you being unable to care for your animals for a period of time

There are several online resources that provide detailed information for pets/livestock owners to plan for each scenario: FEMA, American Red Cross, American Veterinary Medical Association, Oregon Response Plan for Animals in a Disaster, and Benton County are just a few. The information provided in this document is intended to guide households to creating a plan for their specific needs.

The American Red Cross has indicated it may take at least **14 days** after a major event for them to respond to the Wren community; therefore, food, water, medicine, and supplies should be stored for your pets/livestock for a minimum of 14 days. Review your plan regularly and update, as needed.

Evacuation

Create a buddy system in case you/your buddy are not home to evacuate animals. Make arrangements in advance with someone you trust.

Pets

- If it is not safe for you, it is not safe for your pet.
- Evacuate early or you may be told to leave your pet behind. Bring your pets indoors as soon as local authorities say trouble is on the way or you believe it is time to prepare.
- Identify appropriate shelter; many emergency shelters cannot accept pets for public health reasons. Locate pet-friendly hotels/motels, family/friend homes, kennels, etc.
- Ensure pets have some form of identification (collar w/tag, microchip) and keep your contact information current.
- If boarding your pet, take a copy of their medical records.



Livestock

- Ensure all animals have some form of identification.
- Map evacuation routes in advance.
- Make available vehicles/trailers needed for transporting and supporting each type of animal. Keep transportation items in good working condition.
- Make available experienced handlers and drivers.
- Ensure destination has food, water, veterinary care, handling equipment, dry bedding, and wind breaks.
- Benton County has established the Benton County Fairgrounds as an emergency livestock shelter.
- For animals that can not be evacuated, take steps to improve their chances for survival:
 - post a notice (prepared in advance) for emergency responders and post on your home and outbuilding. Include no. of each type of animal, any instructions, and your contact information.
 - set them loose (in the case of a wildfire).
 - leave water and food within their reach, if appropriate for them to stay while you evacuate.

Evacuation Kit

- Food and water - at least a 3 day supply
- Medicine
- Documents - medical records, registration, adoption, vaccinations
- First aid kit - include a reference book
- Collar or harness with ID tag, rabies tag, and a leash/rein
- Crate/pet carrier
- Sanitation items - litter with box, newspapers, paper towels, trash bags, chlorine bleach
- Picture of you with your pet - in case you become separated
- Familiar items - treats, toys, bedding, items to reduce stress

Shelter-in-Place

Create a buddy system in case you/your buddy are not home to care for animals. Make arrangements in advance with someone you trust.

Pets

- While you assess damage, keep pets in crates.
- Create a safe room for pets in the event your home has been damaged.
- Don't allow pets to roam loose, pets will likely be disoriented and may run.
- Ensure food, water, medicine, supplies for a minimum of 14 days.
- Be patient, try to keep them on their normal routines

Livestock

- Ensure food, water, medicine, supplies for a minimum of 14 days.
- Local surface water may not be potable due to landslides, spills, etc. - have a plan for watering livestock.
- Once you have established a safe place and made arrangements for your family, examine livestock related outbuildings and fencing. Make any adjustments that are needed and will be appropriate for several weeks.