



**American
Red Cross**

National Capital Region

Press Release

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Serving these communities:

Virginia

Alexandria

123 North Alfred Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 549-8300

Arlington County

4333 Arlington Boulevard
Arlington, VA 22203
(703) 527-3010

Fairfax County

8550 Arlington Boulevard
Fairfax, Virginia 22031
(703) 584-8400

Ft. Belvoir

9716 Middleton Road
Ft. Belvoir, VA 22060
(703) 805-2057

Loudoun County

604 South King Street, #006
Leesburg, VA 20175
(703) 777-7171

Prince William

9934 Liberia Avenue
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 368-4511

Quantico Marine Base

2034 Barrett Avenue
Quantico, VA 22134
(703) 784-3113

Maryland

Andrews Air Force Base

1050 West Perimeter Road
Andrews Air Force Base, MD 20762
(240) 857-7315

Montgomery County

2020 East West Highway
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910
(301) 588-2515

Prince George's County

6206 Belcrest Road
Hyattsville, Maryland 20782
(240) 487-2100

District of Columbia

2025 E Street NW, #SE-1068
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 243-7200

To learn more, please visit us:

www.redcrossnca.org

For immediate release

NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION WELCOMES 8 TRAILERS TO SHELTER PETS IN TIMES OF DISASTER

August 20, 2010:

The American Red Cross in the National Capital Region, in partnership with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Animal Services Committee welcomes eight (8) regional animal shelter trailers for pets in times of disaster. The arrival of these eight trailers, each with the capacity to set up a shelter for up to 200 pets, brings significant new capabilities to our region and will help with the important reunion of families and their pets after disaster. The trailers are being transferred to our animal services partners in Montgomery County, Prince George's County and DC. These trailers were funded under a grant from the US Department of Homeland Security issued through the DC Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency.

Five years after Hurricane Katrina one of the most vivid memories Linda Mathes, CEO of the National Capital Region has centers around one older gentleman in a wheelchair who came to the shelter the Chapter set up in the DC Armory.

When she asked what he required, he explained he needed an electric wheelchair and his dog, who had been left behind. Members of the Red Cross team worked persistently and collaboratively with other organizations to get him an electric wheelchair since his hands were in no condition for a manual one. And, against all odds, his dog was found and brought to him. His happiness was boundless.

Studies show that it is important psychologically to making sure their pets are taken care of during and following an emergency:

- * 63% of US households have pets and most consider them a family member.
- * 44% of those who chose not to evacuate in the path of Katrina (37% of all who did not evacuate in the path of Katrina) did so because pets were not accounted for in the evacuation and would not evacuate without their pets.
- * 36% of those who did not evacuate were physically unable to evacuate when people with disabilities are not accounted for in the evacuation.

As a result of these lessons learned Congress passed the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act (PETS Act) of 2006, which requires that pets included in disaster planning and preparedness activities. The PETS Act requires local and state emergency management to include pets in preparedness and response capabilities.



The American Red Cross looks forward to continuing its outreach to ensure appropriate preparedness and response before, during and after emergencies. In the event of a disaster, if you must evacuate, the most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to evacuate them, too. Leaving pets behind, even if you try to create a safe place for them, is likely to result in their being injured, lost, or worse. So prepare now for the day when you and your pets may have to leave your home.

The Red Cross recommends the following:

TIPS FOR PET OWNERS

The best way to protect your family from the effects of a disaster is to have a disaster plan. If you are a pet owner, that plan must include your pets. Being prepared can save their lives.

Different disasters require different responses. But whether the disaster is a hurricane or a hazardous spill, you may have to evacuate your home.

Have a Safe Place To Take Your Pets

- Local and state health and safety regulations do not permit the Red Cross to allow pets in disaster shelters. Service animals which assist people with disabilities are the only animals allowed in Red Cross shelters. It may be difficult, if not impossible, to find shelter for your animals in the midst of an evacuation, so plan ahead. Do not wait until disaster strikes!
- Contact hotels and motels outside your local area to check their policies on accepting pets and restrictions on number, size and species. Ask if "no pet" policies could be waived in an emergency. Keep a list of "pet friendly" places, including phone numbers, with your other disaster information and supplies. If you are alerted to an impending disaster, call ahead for reservations.
- Ask friends, relatives or others outside the affected area whether they could shelter your animals. If you have more than one pet, they may be more comfortable if kept together, but be prepared to house them separately.
- Make a list of boarding facilities and veterinarians who could shelter animals in an emergency; include 24-hour phone numbers.
- Ask local animal shelters if they provide emergency shelter or foster care for pets during a disaster. Animal shelters may be overwhelmed caring for the animals they already have as well as those displaced by a disaster, so this should be your last resort.

Assemble a Portable Pet Disaster Supplies Kit

Whether you are away from home for a day or a week, you'll need essential supplies. Keep items in an accessible place and store them in sturdy containers that can be carried easily (a duffle bag or covered trash containers, for example). Pet disaster supplies kit should include:

- Medications and medical records stored in a waterproof container and a first aid kit.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and/or carriers to transport pets safely and ensure that your animals can't escape.
- Current photos of your pets in case they get lost.
- Food, potable water, bowls, cat litter/pan, and can opener.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems,

and the name and number of your veterinarian.