

Disaster preparedness plans should include protecting your pets

Simple precautions can protect family pets when disaster strikes. The Oregon Department of Emergency Management (OEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), working with the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) recommend the following steps before a disaster:

fore a disaster:

- Contact a local animal shelter, humane society, veterinarian or emergency management office for information on caring for pets in an emergency.

- If your regular veterinarian does not have a disaster plan, locate one who does.

- Make sure the pet has a properly fitted collar that includes current license and rabies tags. Consider having the pet identified through microchip technology (your veterinarian can help locate a provider).

- Contact motels and hotels in communities outside the area and find out if they will accept pets in an emergency.

cept pets in an emergency.

- Keep a week's emergency supply of pet food, water and other essential support items including a pet first-aid kit and pet first-aid book in the animals' disaster kit.

- Take several pictures of the animal and keep them with important papers you plan to carry with you in an emergency.

- If a "pet sitter" is used while you are on vacation, discuss disaster plans and evacuation sites.

During a disaster, bring pets inside. Never leave a pet outside or tied up during a storm. If you must evacuate with your pets, take pet toys, pet food, and the animal disaster kit with you.

The behavior of pets may change after an emergency. Normally quiet and friendly pets may become aggressive or defensive. Animals should be watched closely for stress and be spoken to in a calm, confident manner. Pets may sense danger or fear in your reaction to the disaster. Petting and reassuring the pet may help calm their fears; favorite toys and bedding may help comfort them.

FEMA regulations now allow for the rescue, care, shelter and essential needs of individuals with household pets and service animals, as well as the rescue, care, shelter and essential needs of the pets and animals themselves.

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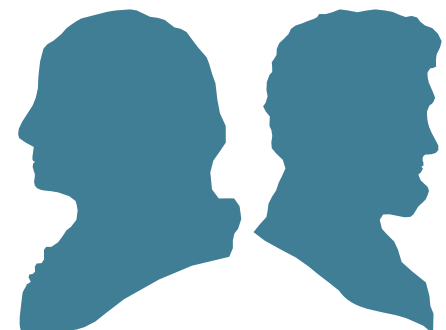
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study issues and make recommendations.

Commission members are volunteers appointed by the County Board of Commissioners. Members must be residents of Washington County.

Serving on an appointed board or commission is a great way for Washington County residents to participate in decisions that affect them and to learn more about how local government works.

Presidents' Day is February 18



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