



# TROPICAL STORMS & HURRICANES COMMUNITY ANIMAL RESPONSE PLAN (CARP)

Tropical Storms and hurricanes affect both coastal and inland regions of Texas and can cause catastrophic damage. Coastal evacuations disrupt lives, businesses, and animals. Inland communities that shelter people and animals will strain local infrastructure and resources. Community animal preparedness is critical to effectively respond to and recover from these events.

While animal owners are ultimately responsible for the proper care and safety of their animals, emergency management officials must include livestock, poultry, and household pets in their community hurricane response and recovery preparations. Including animals in emergency planning efforts is a vital part of overall community emergency preparedness.

Here are some hurricane-related issues to consider in your local emergency planning:

1. Floods will fill structures with rapidly rising water, mud, and debris, and may sweep structures off their foundations.
2. People and animals will be displaced and need temporary sheltering, housing, feeding and care.
3. Structures, fences, barns, and pens will be destroyed, allowing animals to escape confinement.
4. Local infrastructure and resources will be stressed, damaged, or destroyed.
5. Animals and people will be injured or killed by rising waters, high winds, debris, and/or by trying to escape confinement.
6. Animal carcasses will require proper disposal.
7. Local veterinary practitioners and clinics in your communities will be affected.
8. Downed or damaged power lines will injure people and animals and will disrupt power and communications.
9. Do you include animals and agriculture in your local tropical storm and hurricane emergency public information messages and disaster declarations?



## ANIMAL SEARCH AND RESCUE

- Will first responders knock down or cut fences to access structures and animals?
- Are pet rescue stickers promoted or distributed in your community?
- Do local first responders carry animal oxygen masks?
- Are animal search and rescue procedures in place?
- Are local first responders trained in animal search and rescue techniques?
- Who is the local TAHC Livestock Inspector?
- Is there a procedure in place to hold animals (livestock and pets) that have escaped confinement?
- How will stray animals be identified and reunited with their owners?
- Will animals be captured and held in a central location?
- Have local purchasing authorities identified suppliers of temporary fencing and pens?
- How long will stray livestock be held before becoming county property?
- How will veterinary care be provided for rescued or injured animals?
- What is the surge capacity of local veterinary facilities?

## SHELTERING ANIMALS

- Do you establish animal and evacuee comfort stations in your community?
- What is the surge capacity of local animal shelter(s)?
- Will small animals be co-located at local shelters or at a separate facility?
- How will animal owners be transported to off-site shelters?
- Are animal transport vehicles locally available?
- Are local facilities available to serve as expedient small animal shelters?
- How will additional animal care and shelter supplies be acquired?
- Can local animal shelters operate during extended hours?
- Are there adequate local resources for both large and small animal sheltering?
- Is there a local animal volunteer and donation management plan in place?
- Do local veterinary facilities and animal shelter(s) have disaster and COOP operating procedures in place?

## CARCASS DISPOSAL

- Is there a local animal carcass disposal plan in place?
- What disposal resources are available in the community?
- Who is the local TCEQ representative?
- Is there a local licensed landfill that will accept animal carcasses?
- Is burial a practical option for your community?
- What type of heavy equipment is available locally for burial operations?
- Are qualified operators available to operate heavy equipment?
- Are soil conditions acceptable for burial?
- Are environmental conditions acceptable for burial?
- Are conditions acceptable for outdoor burning of animal carcasses?
- Are animal carcass transport vehicles available?

## RESOURCES

- Texas Animal Health Commission: [www.tahc.texas.gov](http://www.tahc.texas.gov)
- Texas Commission on Environmental Quality: <https://www.tceq.texas.gov/downloads/publications/rg/disposal-of-livestock-carcasses-rg-419.pdf>
- Texas Division of Emergency Management: <https://www.tdem.texas.gov/>
- FEMA Ready Gov: <https://www.ready.gov/>
- Texas Veterinary Medical Association: <http://www.tvma.org/>
- ASPCA: <http://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/disaster-preparedness>

## TAHC CONTACT INFORMATION

Emergency Management Department:  
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<https://www.tahc.texas.gov/agency/contact.html>

