



Rescue of Animals (Dogs) by Disaster Relief Personnel

Only trained disaster personnel experienced in animal behavior should attempt to rescue animals. Before a disaster, develop a list of qualified animal rescuers to act as first responders and keep the list current. Untrained disaster responders/volunteers should contact the designated animal control officer for guidance.

General Guidelines

- Pets should be evacuated with their owners, if possible.
- Any attempt to capture animals can be potentially dangerous.
- Always use extreme caution when approaching animals.
- Some dogs may bite or show aggression even if not provoked.

Animal Capture

- Size up the situation and respond appropriately.
- Recognize possible warning signs that an animal is about to attack – tail high and stiff, ears up, hair on back standing up, barking and showing teeth. Even the friendliest dog can bite or attack when in fear and/or in pain.
- For non-aggressive animals, use an approved muzzle, slip collar, leash and/or food lures.
- For aggressive, unpredictable animals, use snare poles, restraints and humane traps.
- Sedation should be used when appropriate.

Avoiding Animal Bites

- Remain as still as possible. Avoid direct eye contact.
- Put something between you and the aggressive animal, such as a trash can lid.
- If you fall, protect your head; curl into a ball with your hands over your ears and remain motionless.

If Attacked or Bitten

- Use dog repellent if the dog attacks. Do not use repellent to keep the dog at a distance or if there is a danger of spraying others, especially children.
- Wash wounds immediately with soap; seek immediate medical help. Secure and observe offending dog.

Use Appropriate Equipment & Personal Protection

- Capture animals using humane live traps, catch poles, leashes, cages, appropriate strength ropes, floodlights or flashlights.
- Use appropriate bite-resistant gloves.
- Maintain a properly equipped first-aid kit.