



Guide to the Developing the Evacuation Function of a Community Animal Response Plan (CARP)

Basic Considerations for Incorporating Household Pets into Existing Evacuation Plans and Public Preparedness Tasks for Self-Evacuees and Livestock
- August 10th, 2009 -

I. Planning Steps for Development of an Evacuation Plan for People with Animals:

A. Events Affecting the Community and Types of Animal Concentrations

1. List the natural and man-made disasters that could occur and require a community to conduct evacuations:
 - Wildfires
 - Floods
 - Hurricanes
 - Hazardous material incidents
 - Other
2. Determine the types and numbers of animals that are prevalent in the community and would require evacuation in the event of a disaster.
 - a. Examples of types of animals are:
 - Household pets (see FEMA DAP 9523.19)
 - Livestock in concentrated feeding operations (CAFO)
 - Horses and other livestock
 - Exotic or zoo animals
 - Research animals (ensure any research facilities in the community have developed emergency plans)
 - Animals, such as those in vet clinics, boarding kennels, etc.
 - b. While a great number of people will be able to self-evacuate, some portions of a community's population may require assistance from the local government to evacuate and are referred to as "special needs evacuees". Estimates from some community after-action reports from Hurricane Ike show that 10-20% of special needs evacuees had pets. Examples of methods to determine special needs populations and the concentration of animals in that population include:
 - Home health care surveys
 - 2-1-1 registry
 - Fliers in utility bills
 - Pet ownership calculator (see website)

B. Evaluation of Community Transport Resources for Special Needs Evacuees

1. Coordinate with local emergency management officials to locate the transportation resources available within the community and determine if those resources are already dedicated to the transport of humans during an evacuation.
 - a. Examples include:
 - School busses
 - Rural transport companies
 - City bus systems

- State-procured transport vehicles for hurricanes
2. Embarkation points may already be designated in a community's emergency plans. Consult local emergency management officials on the locations of embarkation points. Possibilities for local embarkation points include:
 - Local gymnasiums
 - Civic centers
 - Fairgrounds
 - Educational facilities, such as a high school or college
 - State-sponsored embarkation points (see DEM website)
 3. Consult with local emergency management officials to determine if the community is linked to another community in the point-to-point shelter system, and, if so, communicate with the hosting jurisdiction to facilitate the coordination of evacuation and sheltering plans.

C. Embarkation Point and In-Transit Staff

1. List volunteer groups that exist in the community that might be willing to assist with animal handling and processing at special needs embarkation points and during transit. Examples:
 - Local animal groups, such as non-profit rescue groups or breed clubs
 - Colligate organizations
 - Rodeo teams or riding clubs
 - Veterinarians and veterinary technicians
 - Faith-based organizations
 - Other civic groups
2. List "for hire" resources that exist in the community that could assist in the evacuation process. Examples include:
 - Livestock haulers
 - Veterinarians and veterinary technicians
 - Boarding kennels and stables
 - Fencing and feed supply stores
 - Pet stores
3. Determine the training needs of volunteers and begin developing and providing staff training.
 - a. Basic animal handling
 - Samples of training can be located at www.txsart.org
 - b. Train all volunteers in the basic Incident Command System (ICS)
 - ICS 100, 200, 700, and 800
 - ICS training allows the evacuation operation to integrate with other emergency response operations in the community
 - Links to ICS training can be located at www.fema.gov
 - c. Other essential training for volunteers include:
 - First aid to treat bites or injuries
 - Evacuee processing procedures
 - Proper use of processing equipment
 - Standard procedure for reporting bites

4. Develop a process for evaluating and training spontaneous volunteers during a disaster. Have the volunteer policy and procedures in place and provide every volunteer with a printed copy.
5. Develop and provide official identification to volunteers that comply with responder identification requirements within the community.

D. Evacuation Equipment and Supplies

1. Locate and inventory all evacuation materials involving animals that are currently available in the community.
2. Determine additional supplies and equipment that would be needed to evacuate people with animals. Consider low cost supplies because items may be lost, or consider methods of tracking equipment to reduce the expense of lost equipment.
 - a. Explore the materials required to integrate the processing of animals with human procedures for processing
 - Animal-related forms
 - Animal-related identification such as RFID tags
 - Collapsible water bowls
 - Other items owners may not remember to bring in a pet “go-kit”
 - b. Explore animal restraint alternatives to crates for transport, such as:
 - Breathable muzzles
 - Leashes and collars
 - Pillow cases (for cats)
 - “Evac-bags”
 - c. The safety and health of evacuees and animals must be considered during the stressful trip out of the affected area. Explore equipment and materials that may be necessary to clean up animal wastes:
 - “Spill-kits” listed on www.dshs.state.tx.us
 - Plastic to protect seats
 - Links additional evacuation materials may be located at www.txsart.org
3. Explore options for acquiring additional supplies, such as:
 - Fundraising by non-profit groups
 - Homeland Security grants obtained by the Councils of Government
 - Grants through private corporations or non-profit groups, etc
 - Donations from local feed and equipment suppliers or manufacturers
4. Develop written agreements, such as memorandum of agreement (MOA) or memorandum of understanding (MOU), with private facilities, businesses, veterinarians, and volunteer groups to outline the conditions for their use, to resolve liability issues, to outline volunteer or “for hire” resource roles in a response, to establish requirements for participation, and to outline expectations of community officials prior to the use of that resource in an evacuation.

II. Planning for the Activation of an Evacuation Plan

A. Communications

1. The Animal Issues Committee (AIC) needs to identify a responder to serve in the community's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or to be in communication with the local responding officials. The AIC also needs to:
 - a. Determine what process will initiate the activation of the evacuation plans, such as a call made from the local community officials.
 - b. Determine a process to assess the scope of the event. A review of prior events can assist in the development of the process. Some events like hurricanes require entire communities to evacuate, while other events such as a localized flood may only require a small portion of the community to evacuate. Knowing the scope of the event will help the AIC decide:
 - Which assets to activate
 - Amount of assets to activate
 - Duration of the activation
2. Develop and have prepared public service announcements (PSA) to disseminate evacuation information related to pets and other animals in coordination with the local emergency management officials.
 - a. Information that could be given to the public includes:
 - Location of embarkation points (with animals if specified)
 - Evacuation schedules
 - Permission to bring pets
 - Information on pet "go kits"
 - Evacuation supply donation "drop off" points
 - b. Determine how best to disseminate information to the community.
 - Television
 - Radio
 - Flyers
 - Public Information Officer for the community
 - Website
 - c. Locate and maintain the contact information of interpreters for hearing impaired and non-English speaking populations so that evacuation policies can be clearly communicated and forms can be correctly and clearly filled out. PSAs should also be translated into multiple languages.
 - d. Once the public is aware that pet owners are permitted to bring pets, it can save the community money, and lessen planning complications if the public is prepared with the equipment and items needed to support their pet during an evacuation. Topics for public education on pet preparedness include:
 - Food, water
 - Containers from which to feed and water the animal
 - Medicines
 - Restraints
 - Vaccination and immunization papers

- Links to lists of evacuation supplies
- Rabies vaccination information
- Make alternative plans for transport or animal, if possible

B. Evacuation Operations – Embarkation

1. Work with local emergency management authorities to evaluate the current system for processing evacuees at embarkation points and consider the best method for the community to incorporate animals. Consider necessary additions to procedures that would be required to process animals:
 - Add animal registration information to existing evacuee information forms
 - Develop a method of linking the animal with the owner
 - Develop forms to waive liability for animals
 - Develop forms to identify animal needs such as allergies or general medical condition
 - Detail the procedure for processing owners and animals and ensure all involved in the evacuation operations are clear on this process
 - Provide for interpreters at embarkation points for non-English speaking people and those with hearing impairments
2. Explore strategies for evacuating animals in relation to available transportation resources and existing evacuation plans. Issues to consider before selecting a method of transport include liability issues, cost, and logistical issues with each method and select the method that is best for the community. The basic methods of evacuating animals include:
 - Evacuating animals separately from their owners in “animal-only” transportation
 - Evacuating animals on buses with their owners
 - a. Ways to conduct animal-only transportation include:
 - Modified school bus with seats removed and replaced with crates
 - Stock trailers modified with crates
 - Refrigerated trucks equipped with crates
 - b. Evaluate the requirements and issues associated with animal-only transport:
 - Increased safety for animals and passengers
 - Increased sanitation of separate transport
 - Increased stress and concern of owners for their pets
 - Potential exhaust and overheating issues with open air methods of transport such as stock trailers
 - Potential risk of carbon monoxide poisoning if proper ventilation is not considered
 - Logistical difficulties of keeping humans and animals linked
 - Additional staff required to attend animals
 - c. Evaluate the requirements and issues associated evacuating animals with the owners:
 - Reduced staffing required to attend to the animal on a separate vehicle
 - Reduced stress on the owner from not being separated from the animal
 - Increased comfort for the animal if the bus has air conditioning
 - Increased discomfort and concern for people with allergies
 - Increased danger for passengers and other animals from aggressive animals
 - Additional sanitation issues from animal wastes

- Logistical difficulties of loading large animal crates onto a bus
- d. With either method of transport, contingencies may still arise that will require planning for alternative transport. These issues include:
- Extra large animals
 - Aggressive animals
 - Sick animals
 - Care for animals belonging to people who become ill on the trip
 - Addressing people who refuse to part with their pet
 - Care for animal bite incidents, to include tracking of both the person and the animal

C. Evacuation Operations – Transit and Arrival at Shelter

- I. Because of the distance between the evacuating and sheltering communities, rest stops will be needed to provide humans and animals with a chance to rest and take care of basic needs. The communities where evacuation buses stop while en-route to their destination are sometimes called “pass-through” communities. Pass-through communities will often select a location that is accessible to buses, and has the facilities to support a large number of people such as a Texas Department of Transportation (TXDOT) rest stop, fairgrounds, or roadside park to set up an evacuation rest stop. Evacuating communities’ need to communicate with pass-through communities and develop protocols to address issues that may arise during transit and at rest stops/fueling stations. Items to coordinate with pass-through communities include:
- a. Getting people and animals off and on buses in a timely manner
- Locations of resources for personnel and evacuees
 - Setting up an enclosed play area for pets to prevent escape and injury
 - Setting up areas for the animals to drink
 - If animals and humans are transported together, staff may be needed to assist evacuees with animals during the stop
 - If animals are transported separately from their owners, staff may be needed to assist in providing the animals with care during the stop
- b. Clean up during stops
- Additional cleaning supplies for the bus to clean up wastes while stopped
 - Designated area for animal relief and containers for disposal of wastes
- c. Develop protocols for providing veterinary medical care during transport or reporting the need for veterinary medical care to the rest stop so it is available upon arrival
- Plan to dispose of carcasses due to mortality during transport
 - Plan for the care of animals belonging to people who become ill during the trip
- d. In the confusion and chaos of an evacuation, normally docile animals may become territorial, or animals that normally are good travelers may become ill. Planning measures to mitigate and address these issues include:
- Alternative pet materials for restraint of animals such as breathable muzzles for dogs, or pillow cases or laundry bags for cats
 - Alternative plans for aggressive animals such as safely separating animals that fight, and protocols to treat injuries
 - Standard operating procedures for bite cases can be found at www.dshs.state.tx.us

- Development of sanitation protocols for cleaning up wastes
 - Suggested spill kit materials can be found at www.dshs.state.tx.us
2. Just as coordination needs to be conducted with pass-through communities, it also needs to be conducted with sheltering jurisdictions.
- a. Some communities will have a formal reception center where evacuees with pets can be directed toward a pet-friendly or co-located shelter.
- Allowing the sheltering community to prepare for the number of evacuees and animals expected by providing advance manifests if possible
 - Coordinating arrival times to ensure the shelters are prepared
 - Communicating the need to follow quarantine protocols for animals that have become aggressive and bitten a person or another animal
 - Communicating health status of animal upon arrival to coordinate medical care for those that have become ill or injured
- b. Some communities will not have a formal reception center. If owners and pets are transported separately, linking owners and their pets may pose problems for the sheltering community. Coordinated pre-planning protocols will allow:
- Owners to remain linked with their animals
 - Pet owners to potentially be directed to co-located or pet friendly shelters
 - Information for owners about their animals to be accessible

III. Other planning contingencies

A. Self-Evacuees, Livestock, and Animal-Related Businesses

1. Some portions of the population will not use public resources to evacuate because they have the means and ability to self-evacuate.
- a. Public education information needs to be disseminated to this portion of the population prior to the event. This information includes:
- Finding a place to shelter such as a relative's home or a hotel/motel that accepts animals
 - Having a plan for evacuation
 - Planning for the needs of pets just like any member of the family and packing all essential items to sustain pets for several days including food and medicines
 - Encouraging evacuation in a timely manner (i.e., don't wait until it is too late)
 - Other information can be located at www.txsart.org
- b. Some members of the community may wait until it is too late to evacuate and may need a refuge of last resort. In a hurricane situation, a refuge of last resort is anyplace where wind, rain and storm surge can be avoided. Important planning points for a refuge of last resort include:
- Coordinate with local officials to determine when evacuations will stop and a refuge of last resort will be activated
 - Prepare the facility to ride out the storm
 - Encourage pet owners to bring enough pet supplies to last through the storm and the days following the incident
2. Some self-evacuating members of the population may choose to evacuate livestock such as horses, show projects, and valuable breeding stock that may be easily accessed. Public

preparedness information that should be disseminated to this part of the population includes:

- Leave early enough to avoid heavy traffic while hauling a large trailer
 - Carry additional fuel to account for the extra fuel needed to haul a trailer
 - Have a plan to access animals in a timely manner and have a specific location to which to evacuate
 - Carry credentialing or proof of residency to be allowed re-entry for caring for livestock left behind after the event
 - Include adequate feed, water, restraint equipment, and medicines to last for an extended period of time
 - Take health papers showing the health status of livestock, to ensure access to shelters and stabling facilities
 - Ensure trailers are stocked adequately to address any emergency repair that may arise during the evacuation
 - Locate a resource to help them evacuate, if an owner does not have a trailer
3. Animal-related businesses or organizations should have a business plan to address their needs during an evacuation. While it is not the responsibility of the local government to support businesses during an evacuation, educating business owners or organization leaders may save lives and money in the event of a disaster. Public education that applies to self-evacuees and self-evacuees with livestock can apply to animal-related business owners. Examples of animal-related businesses in the community include:
- Veterinary clinics
 - Stables
 - Pet stores
 - Boarding kennels
 - Groomers
 - 4-H or FFA Farms
 - Riding clubs

IV. Demobilization of Evacuation Assets and Post Event Planning

1. Plans to demobilize the evacuation operation must be implemented when the operation begins. Tasks to consider include:
 - a. Estimate the length of time the in which the evacuation must be conducted
 - b. Estimate the amount of resources and time available to conduct the operation
 - c. Collect evacuation equipment:
 - Inventory equipment and supplies
 - Clean and disinfect equipment
 - Return equipment to storage or to the original owner
2. Conduct an after action-review and write an after-action report with the evacuation responders.
 - a. Note processes that were successful and plan to sustain them.
 - b. Discuss processes that need improvement and plan to correct them.
 - c. Amend existing plans to show the corrections.
 - d. Ensure animal plans continue to coincide with existing emergency management plans in the community

3. Continue to exercise evacuation plans.

Animal-related Terms, Acronyms, and Links

Acronyms:

ACO – Animal Control Officer

AIC – Animal Issues Committee

EOC – Emergency Operations Center

ICS – Incident Command System

MOU/MOA – Memorandum of understanding/agreement

PSA – Public service announcement

SOP – Standard operating procedure

TAHC – Texas Animal Health Commission

TXSART – Texas State Animal Resource Team

Web Links

- To locate links on public preparedness related information go to:

www.txsart.org

www.ready.gov

- To locate links to Animal Issues Committee planning materials go to:

www.tahc.state.tx.us

- To locate information on local emergency management planning annexes go to:

<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem/pages/index.htm>

- To locate information on zoonotic diseases or procedures to report animal bites go to:

www.dshs.state.tx.us

- To locate training for animal responders in the community go to:

www.fema.gov

- Pet Ownership Calculator:

www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/ownership_calculator.asp