SEVERE WEATHER
COMMUNITY ANIMAL RESPONSE PRIORITIES (CARP)

Severe weather, such as floods and tornadoes, can occur anywhere with little or no warning and cause catastrophic loss of life and property. Floods and tornadoes can cause financial and environmental damage to communities, especially when they occur in densely populated areas. 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 preparations. Including animals in emergency planning efforts is a vital part of overall community emergency preparedness.

Here are some severe weather-related issues which should be considered as part of your local emergency planning:

OVERVIEW

1. Floods will fill structures with rapidly rising waters, mud, and debris, and may sweep structures off their foundations.
2. Floods/tornadoes can cause people and animals to be displaced and in need of temporary sheltering, housing, feeding, and care.
3. Structures, fences, barns, and pens will be destroyed, allowing animals to escape confinement.
4. Roads and bridges will be damaged or destroyed.
5. Animals will be injured or drown in rising waters, waterborne debris, and by trying to escape confinement.
6. Animal carcasses will require proper disposal.
7. Downed or damaged power lines will injure people and animals and will disrupt power and communications.
8. Do you include animals and agriculture in your local disaster declaration?

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 small 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 and care for animals (livestock and pets) that have escaped confinement?
- Are animal transport vehicles locally available?
- 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?

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- How will veterinary care be provided for rescued or injured animals?
- What is the surge capacity of local veterinary facilities?

SHELTERING ANIMALS

- 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 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?
- Have local facilities for holding livestock in your community been identified?
- 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 carcass transport vehicles available from the local jurisdiction?

RESOURCES

- Texas Animal Health Commission: 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

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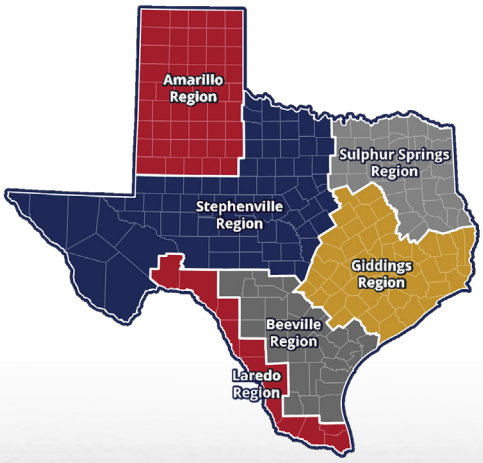
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