WILDFIRES
COMMUNITY ANIMAL RESPONSE PRIORITIES (CARP)

Wildfires can occur anywhere at any time. They can cause catastrophic loss of life and property, while also damaging communities financially and environmentally. Wildfires affect animals when they damage homes, barns, agriculture production facilities, veterinary clinics, animal shelters, and others. Animals may be displaced and need temporary sheltering, feeding, and care. They may also be injured or deceased and need veterinary attention or disposal. Community wildfire 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.

OVERVIEW

1. People and animals will be displaced by fires and will need temporary sheltering, housing, feeding, and care.
2. Structures, fences and pens will be destroyed by fire, allowing animals to escape confinement.
3. Animals will be injured or killed by the fire and/or by trying to escape confinement.
4. Animal carcasses will require proper disposal.
5. Local veterinary practitioners and clinics in your communities may be affected.
6. Are animals and agriculture included in your emergency public information messages and disaster declaration?

ANIMAL SEARCH AND RESCUE

- Will first responders knock down fences to prevent the spread of fire to homes?
- Will first responders cut fences to prevent injury to livestock?
- 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?

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- Have local purchasing authorities identified suppliers of feed, 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

- How will animal owners be transported to off-site shelters?
- Are local facilities available to serve as expedient small animal shelters?
- Are animal transport vehicles locally available?
- Have local facilities for holding livestock been identified in your community?
- How will additional animal care and shelter supplies be acquired?
- Can local animal shelters operate during extended hours?
- 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?

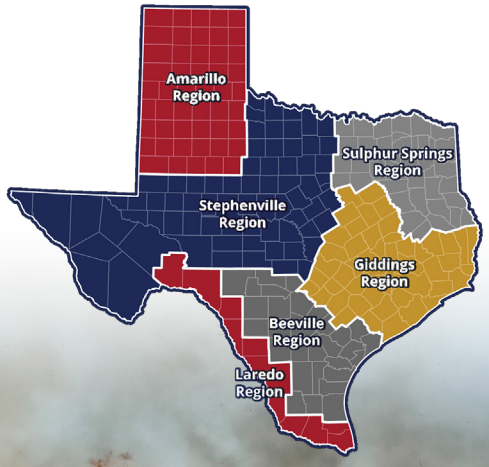
CARCASS DISPOSAL

- 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 from the local jurisdiction?
- Has a supplier of transport vehicles been identified?
- Has a licensed carcass transporter been identified?
- Is there a licensed rendering facility in the community?

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

Emergency Management Department:
512-719-0700
emcoord@tahc.texas.gov

Amarillo.....806-641-7000
Beeville.....361-358-3234
Giddings.....979-212-5440
Laredo.....956-568-5741
Stephenville.....512-556-6277
Sulphur Springs.....903-919-3748