Pets & Disasters: Sheltering Options in Mass Evacuations

Training Guide

SART Training Media
Pets in Disaster: Sheltering Options in Mass Evacuations
Training Guide

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**SART Training Media** are available for download from the Florida SART Web site <www.flsart.org>. 
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About Florida SART

- SART is a multi-agency coordination group.
- SART is made up of over 25 partner agencies (state, federal and non-governmental organizations).
- SART provides preparedness and response resources for Emergency Support Function 17 [(ESF 17) Animal and Agricultural Issues].
- SART statutory authority
  - State Emergency Management Act (Section 252.3569, Florida Statutes)

SART Mission

Empower Floridians through training and resource coordination to enhance all-hazard disaster planning and response for animal and agricultural issues.

SART Goals

- Support the county, regional and state emergency management efforts and incident management teams.
- Identify county resources available for animal and/or agricultural issues.
- Promote the cooperation and exchange of information of interested state, county and civic agencies.
Specific Learning Objectives

At the end of this training module, participants will be able to:

- Review sheltering in previous disasters
- Review options for emergency shelters
- Explore other options such as foster care
- View the operation of a model shelter
- Join in planning for shelter improvements
Resources

The following are sources of additional information about the subjects mentioned in this introduction.

For a complete listing of SART Training Materials, visit the Florida SART Web site:
www.flsart.org

The following is a source of additional information about the subjects and agencies mentioned in this module.

Florida Division of Emergency Management Emergency Response Team
http://www.floridadisaster.org

Resources directly related to animals and disasters include:

American Red Cross
http://www.redcross.org/services
Topics include Pets and Disaster — Be Prepared, First Aid for Pets and Barnyard Animal Rescue Plan.

Animal Management in Disasters, Sebastian E. Heath, Mosby, 11830 Westline Industrial Drive, St. Louis, MO 64164.
Available through many Internet booksellers.

Missing Pet Network
http://www.missingpet.net

Triumph Over Tragedy, Disaster Handbook Video Series: Helping Four-Legged Friends Survive the Storm (18 minutes).
The video can be viewed in its entirety at the National Ag Safety Database Web site, http://www.cdc.gov/nasd/

Humane Society of the United States Personal Planning
www.humanesociety.org/make-disaster-plan-your-pet
Resources, continued

The National Ag Safety Database has articles on handling horses and livestock safely. Go to "animals" under "Locate by Topics" at http://nasdonline.org/

Hawkins Guide on Equine Emergencies and Horse Trailering on the Road
Blue Green Publishing Co., PO Box 1255, Southern Pines, NC 28388

Equine Trailer Rescue video, Horse Park of New Jersey,
PO Box 548, Allentown, N.J. 08501

Animals in Disasters: Module A, Awareness And Preparedness, IS 10. Access this course at: https://training.fema.gov/is/courseoverview.aspx?code=IS-10.a


The following are sources of information on emergency management in general.

Federal Emergency Management Agency
http://www.fema.gov

IFAS Disaster Handbook, prepared by the University of Florida’s Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.
http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu

Other parts of Triumph Over Tragedy, Disaster Handbook Video Series are: Surviving the Storm—Coordination Communication and Cooperation (30 minutes) A Community Response to Managing Post-Disaster Stress (45 minutes)
Resources, continued

Extension Disaster Education Network (EDEN)
https://eden.lsu.edu/

Occupational Safety & Health Administration’s (OSHA) Emergency Preparedness and Response Page

Other resources related to agricultural safety are listed below:
National Agricultural Safety Database (NASD)
http://nasdonline.org/
Pets & Disasters: Sheltering Options in Mass Evacuations

Appendix A - Training Slides

SART Training Media
Pets & Disasters

Sheltering Options in Mass Evacuations

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Appendix A: Slides 1-3
Learning Objectives

• Review sheltering in previous disasters
• Review options for emergency shelters
• Explore other options such as foster care
• View the operation of a model shelter
• Join in planning for shelter improvements

Making the Connection

Animal issues are people issues
• Supporting people by taking care of what’s important to them
• Not putting animals above people

Pet Owners ...

• Won’t evacuate or delay evacuation if can’t take animals
• Attempt to go home & retrieve pets
• Won’t seek shelter if animal care unavailable

Appendix A: Slides 4-6
Hurricane Andrew

- People told to leave pets behind
- Homes blown apart
- Pets escaped

Hurricane Andrew
MASH Animal Compound

- Created by Humane Society & Citizens Against Pet Overpopulation
- Operated 6 weeks

MASH Compound Statistics

- 600 animals taken in
- Vets saw 2,000
- Most pets & owners never reconnected
- Held 30 days before adoption
Hurricanes of 2004

- Shelters with people & pets in the same building used in many counties
- Animal-only shelters also used
- Some pets flown out of state for adoption

Options for Emergency Shelters

- People & pets in same room
- People & pets in separate spaces in same building
- Animal-only shelters
- Large animal/livestock facilities

People & Pets in Same Room

- Least labor-intensive
- Owners feed, exercise & clean up after pets
- Rules about keeping pets in crates, waste disposal & so on
People & Pets in Same Room

Benefits
• Avoid separating people & pets
• Many pets do better with owners taking care of them

Recommended procedures
• Tell people pets are allowed
• Direct people who are uncomfortable around animals or have allergy problems around animals to non-pet shelter

People & Pets in Same Building
• Owners in same building, but separate area
  – Still care for pets
• Somewhat labor-intensive
  – Owners not immediately available
• Used in many Florida counties during 2004 hurricanes
• However, if space is limited in an area where pets can be housed, it may be best for the owners to stay in a nearby location instead of with their pet(s). Then the available space can be used for the largest number of animals.
People & Pets in Same Building

Vanguard High School in Marion County, Fla. in 2004

Animal-Only Shelter

- Often based at an existing animal shelter
- More labor intensive
  - Staff cares for animals
  - Sometimes expanded role for shelter staff

Animal-Only Shelter

Not only owned animals
- Rescued pets
- Owner give-ups
- Fostering requests
- Emergency animal hospital
- Large animals & livestock
Discussion of Sheltering Options

• What are the current options?
• Which ones should be explored?

Shelter Requirements

• Meet safety standards
• Conducive to housing animals
  – Solid, non-porous floors
  – Good ventilation
• Free of other obligations during declared emergencies

Potential Shelter Locations

• Fairgrounds
• Ball fields
• Vacant stores
• Pastures
• Schools (gyms)
• Warehouses
• Parking lots
Locations

Make sure shelters are accessible & easy to find

Discussion of Locations

• What locations should be considered?
• What challenges exist for using these locations?

Marion County Case Study

Appendix A: Slides 22-24
Marion County
Animals Accepted . . .

• Dogs under 80 lbs.
• Cats
• Birds

Marion County
Animals Excluded

• Exotics
• Reptiles
• Aggressive animals

Marion County* – Pet Census

<table>
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<th>Hurricane</th>
<th>Cats</th>
<th>Dogs</th>
<th>Other</th>
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<td>140</td>
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<tr>
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<td>211</td>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeanne</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Vanguard School
Marion County Preparing Building

- Placing rubber runner

Marion County Completing Arrangements

- Assembling cages
- Setting up registration area
- Lining garbage cans
- Filling litter bins
- Filling dog food barrel

Marion County Registration

- Completing forms & instructing owners
Marion County Registration
Fastening armbands on owners & neckbands on dogs

Marion County Identification
Photos show pets & owners

Marion County Owners Caring for Pets
Marion County Lessons Learned

What’s needed
• Comfortable bedding is a must!
• Provide large industrial fans
• Comforts from home are important

Marion County Lessons Learned

Staffing
• Hard work
• Long hours
• More volunteers needed for relief
• Volunteer cooks are important

Marion County Lessons Learned

Policies & procedures
• Be ready to restock fast
   – Don’t know when next storm is coming
• Post rules
• Post opening & closing times
• Have in/out sheet for staff & volunteers hours
Other Options

- Temporary day-care facilities
  - Owners returning to disaster area or applying for assistance
- Foster care
  - Animal owner may be staying in human evacuation shelter or other housing where animals not allowed

Foster Care

- Check homes thoroughly to ensure safety of animals & foster families
- Match pets & families as in pet adoptions
- Keep excellent records so owners & pets can reunite

Specialized Care

- Recruit organizations familiar with large animals & animals with special needs
- Provide care on-site or have animals moved
Expanding Involvement

• Broad involvement is crucial
• Levels of involvement
  – Core group
  – Support network
  – General public

Expanding Involvement

High priority contacts
• Animal services
• Humane Society
• Emergency management
• Other animal groups & organizations

Expanding Involvement

Work with social service agencies
• Experienced with mass care
• May refer pet owners to animal shelters
• May provide supplies such as cots, food & water
Expanding Involvement

Other contacts
- Government & educational institutions
- Key communicators
- Nonprofit agencies, civic groups & businesses

Worksheet 1 – Contact List

Planning Considerations
- Security
- Staffing
- Funding
- Pet owners’ responsibilities
- Owner preparation
- Problems with owners
- Supplies
- Areas of shelter
Worksheet 2
Organizing a Planning Meeting

• When should a planning meeting be held?
• How can attendance be promoted?
• What other preparation is needed for the meeting?
• What opportunities should be pursued immediately?

Resources

• SART Web site
  – www.flsart.org
• Animal-related resources
• Emergency management resources
• Ag safety resources
• FEMA training
Thank You!

Appendix: Planning Consideration

The appendix that follows outlines planning considerations for sheltering in mass evacuations.

The appendix may be used in one of two ways:

1. In a second part of this meeting
2. In a planning meeting that is held later

Sheltering Option in Mass Evacuations

Appendix: Planning Consideration
Security

• 24/7
• Restrict access

Staffing

• Experienced with animals
• Vet (optional, but ideal)
• Vet tech or animal health tech

Funding Issues

• Staff overtime
• Volunteers — housing, equipment & supplies
• Government reimbursement — local, state & federal
• Track volunteer & staff hours
• Record expenses
**Donation Management**

- Control intake of supplies
- Locate off-site storage facilities for large shipments

**Pet Owner Responsibilities**

- Conduct pre-disaster training
  - *Pets & Disasters: Personal Planning*
- Provide crates or cages large enough to stand, sit & turn around
- Supply medications

**Owner Prep**

- Documented medical history
- Cat litter/newspapers
- Chew toys or other comfort items
- Collars, tags, leashes, harnesses & muzzles

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Appendix A: Slides A5-A7
**Unprepared Owners**

- Owners may arrive without necessary supplies
- Emergency shelter should stockpile basic animal supplies

**Problems with Owners**

Plan for owners breaking rules:
- Not providing food & water
- Not confining & controlling pets
- Not cleaning
- Not letting dogs relieve themselves
- Verbally or physically abusing animals

**Dealing with Violations**

If animal owner violates rules:
- In pet-friendly shelter, remove animal to another part of facility or to animal shelter
- Have staff provide all care
- Deny owners access to animals
**Supplies**
- Crates & cages — all sizes
- Food — different types
- Water — drinking & cleaning
- Bowls
- Collars, leashes & muzzles
- Cat litter/newspapers
- Plastic sheets
- Paper towels

**Supplies Continued**
- First aid kits
  - Human & pet
- Office supplies & paperwork
- ID tags
- Transport carts
- Waste disposal bags
- Blankets, towels & sheets
- Communication devices
- Cleaners & disinfectants

**Shelter Areas**
- Animal intake & registration
- Animal housing — separate by species
- Isolation — sick, injured, stressed & aggressive
Shelter Areas

• Vet care & first aid
• Food prep
• Food storage by species
• Dog relief area with tile or other hard surface & drain

Areas of Pet-Only Shelter

• Equipment storage – extra leashes, bowls & crates
• Animal visitation – quiet area
• Animal exercise
  – Hall indoors
  – Outdoors, if weather permits

Shelter Procedures

Animal intake
• Forms on owners completed
• Identification photos taken of animals & kept with paperwork
• IDs attached to animals & cages
• Owners given ID numbers of animals

Appendix A: Slides A14-A16
### Procedures — Pet Only Shelters

- Allow only animal owners to visit
- Schedule visits—feeding, cleaning, exercise & relief
- Log care by owners
- Limit interaction with animals not their own
- Monitor animals’ condition
  - Notify veterinary staff of any medical problems