Community Emergency Response Team



Pet Response and Preparedness

Released: 20 February 2023 **Lamorinda CERT**

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Community Emergency Response Team

- Personal safety is ALWAYS the number one priority
- Show up prepared
  - Wear appropriate clothing and footwear, have WATER
  - Wear PPE – your personal protective equipment …gloves, helmet, goggles, mask, boots, etc.
  - Have at least one communications device: cell, radio, etc.
- Work as a team
- Size-up - maintain situational awareness
- The CERT goal is to do the **Greatest Good for the Greatest Number**
- *Hope for the best but plan for the worst!*

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CERT Pet Encounters are Frequent

- 67% of U.S. households own pets
  - Dog
  - Cat
  - Fish
  - Bird
  - Small animal
  - Reptile
- In a CERT search and rescue operation, you are likely to encounter household pets







(2019-2020 Study APPA National Pet Owners Survey)

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Pets Impact People in a Disaster

2005
Hurricane Katrina

- Pets viewed as non-essential
- 44% of residents refused to obey the mandatory evacuation because of their pets
- 100,000 pets were separated from families and 70,000 perished
- Separated pets impact health and safety during a disaster

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Pets Impact People in a Disaster
2006
PETs Act
Pets Evacuation & Transportation Act makes it mandatory for states and local governments to include plans for pets in their emergency procedures
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Pets Impact People in a Disaster
2017
Hurricane Harvey
Humans and animals welcomed at evacuation centers or pets housed in adjacent facilities
ASPCA expanded disaster response divisions
Responders viewed animals as part of the family unit, improving evacuation success
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Safe CERT Pet Handling

What you will learn:

- The importance of responder safety when CERTs encounter animals while conducting light search and rescue operations
- Knowledge needed to perform CERT tasks that may involve handling dogs and cats

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Why CERTs Train in Animal Handling

- Following a disaster, abandoned and stressed animals create risks for responders
- Infectious disease risk increases when abandoned pets roam freely following a disaster
- Animals help reduce owner trauma, sense of displacement, and long-term post traumatic stress
- Evacuation operations are more effective when families and pets are treated as an intertwined unit
- **Pets Matter, Because People Matter…**

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Approaching an Unknown Animal

When confronted with non-aggressive animals:

- Size up the situation
  - What is your objective
  - Is the injured owner able to help you talk to or direct the animal?
  - Assess whether you can contain the animal (capability, your team size, available time, supplies)
  - How will you keep your egress clear?
  - How is the animal behaving?
  - What will you do with the animal once contained?

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Approaching an Unknown Animal

When confronted with non-aggressive animals:

- Maintain a relaxed, controlled environment
  - Avoid prolonged direct eye contact
  - Do not show fear
  - Always use a soft, calm voice – try to gain their confidence
  - Do not reach out to the animal, let them come to you
    - Tip: tap on a food can or use treats if available
  - Do not loom over an animal or grab it by the collar

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Approaching an Unknown Animal

When confronted with non-aggressive animals:

- Approach with your body turned sideways, minimize your profile to the animal
- Use a slip leash to control a dog, use a towel or pillowcase to pick up a cat
- Always wear your PPE – gloves and eye protection
- Use the least restraint force needed

IMPORTANT: Never attempt to approach or restrain an **aggressive** animal. Report the location of pets left behind so their welfare can be monitored by others later.



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Approaching an Unknown Animal

When encountering –

Frightened animals:

- Seek assistance unless you are experienced
- Don't approach unless others can assist you
- Move slowly, try to get the animal to come to you

Aggressive animals:

- Do not approach, back away slowly
- Notify your CERT supervisor



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Keeping Pets With Owners - Documentation

- Before transporting:
  - Ensure you have the proper transportation capability
  - Know the location of your organization's animal intake center
  - Complete documentation including owner's information and intake number, pet information and intake number



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Transport Decisions

- Preparation begins before the disaster strikes. Pet owners should make advance preparations for alternative care of their pets should the need arise
- Both the owner and the driver must feel comfortable and safe in transporting the pet in the driver's private car
- If a pet is left behind, CERTs should document its location and condition using SAR markings and/or follow your jurisdiction's protocols



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Transporting Animals - General

- Make sure crates are of adequate size
- Allow only one animal per crate
  - Exception in case of mother and babies
- Control climate within vehicle
  - Keeping any animals in stationary vehicles in hot weather can result in death
- Cats should always be in a carrier
- Dogs may be tethered if not in a crate; *do not use slip leads to secure the animal*

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A Warning about Transporting Pets

- Car temperatures can be deadly!
- How hot is my car (degrees Farhenheit)
- At 120° the pet may suffer irreversible organ damage or die

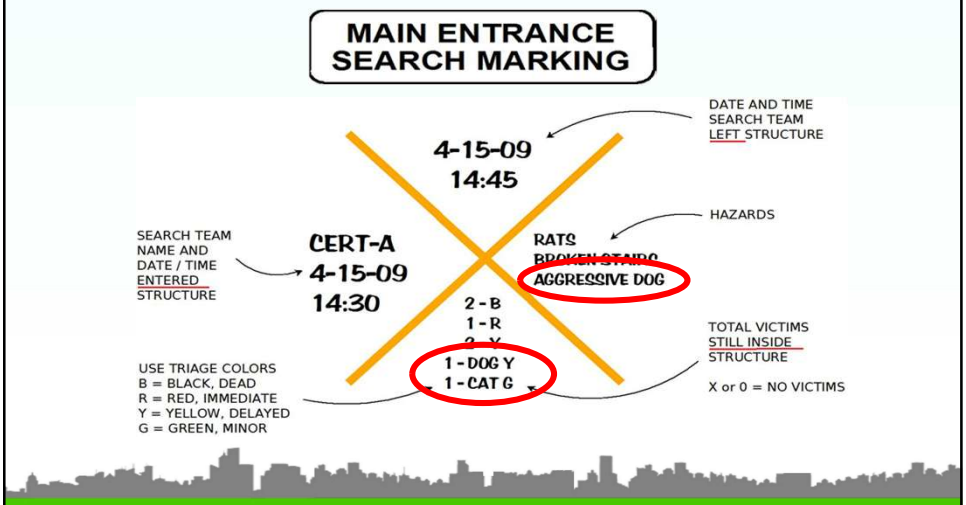
Outside Temp	Inside 10 Minutes	Inside 30 Minutes
75	94	109
80	99	114
85	104	119
90	109	124
95	114	129

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Search Marking

- If you must leave a pet behind, remember to note them in your Search Marking



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Animal-Inflicted Injuries

- In the event of any animal attack, report to your CERT supervisor
- If facing an aggressive dog, try basic commands, such as sit, stay, or down
- If possible, put an object or distance between yourself and dog
- Back away; do not run away
- If you fall, curl up and cover your head
- Do not scream or yell

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Animal-Inflicted Injuries

- Wash any animal scratch, bite, or injury immediately with soap and water
- Administer first aid as appropriate
- Seek immediate attention for any bite
- Report all injuries to your CERT supervisor immediately and seek professional medical attention



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Personal Pet Preparedness

- Plan for your animals, your home may be compromised
- Create a controlled environment
- Have kennels/Evac-Sacs in a safe, accessible place
- Assign retrieval tasks to family members
- Have a Buddy System
  - Exchange Keys / Plans With Neighbor / Pet Sitter (in possession of your pre-authorization letter)
- Identify safe outdoor holding area
- Obtain materials to create a holding area



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ID Your Animals **and** Yourself

- ID your pets
- Put an ID tag on collar
- **Microchip each pet** (**new law**)
- Vet contact
- Vaccination records / spayed or neutered
- Register your pet
- Authorization letter for pet sitter



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ID Your Animals **and** Yourself

- ID yourself with your animals
  - Take photos of yourself with your pets
    - In wallet
    - In emergency kit (go-bag)
    - With loved ones outside local area
- Maintain these important items in waterproof container like a Ziplock bag
  - LOST Poster
  - Animal license (copy)
  - Last veterinary invoice showing vaccination dates

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Travel ID Baggie

LOST

Please help us find this animal:



Species: Canine	Breed: Brittany	Sex: Female, spayed
Colors: White / Orange	DOB: 03/2013	Collar/Tags: Patterned nylon collar with ID, Rabies tag and license
Weight: 29 lbs	Micro Chip: AVID*014*017*782	

Last seen:

If you have any information pertaining to this animal, please contact:

Name: Lorem and Ipsum Dolor
Address: 1234 Consectetur Ln
Blandit CA 90909

Phone Numbers: (625) 123-4567
(529) 766-9876

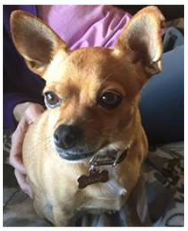
Please do not remove this poster. Write down the information.

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Evacuation

- Evacuate with your animals
  - PETS Act: Mandatory evacuation of companion pets with humans
- If you are not home
  - You may not be home when the evacuation order comes; find out if a trusted neighbor would be willing to take your pets and meet you at a prearranged location
- Leave a letter with your trusted neighbor or sitter, authorizing them to retrieve and/or care for your pet



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Identifying Evacuation Locations

- Safe distance from home
- Coordinate with neighbors
- Identify and confirm pet friendly hotels:
  - bringfido.com or 877-411-FIDO
  - dogfriendly.com or 888-281-5170
  - doginmysuitcase.com or 888-0254-0637
  - pet-friendly-hotels.net or 866-966-3046
  - pets-allowed-hotels.com or call 800-250-1625
  - petswelcome.com
  - tripswithpets.com
- Identify Boarding Kennels and Ranches

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Keep Your Animals Alive

- Store animal food (2 weeks)
  - Airtight, waterproof containers
  - In secure area



- Store extra water (2 week supply)
  - Not in direct sunlight
  - Water that is unfit for human animals is unfit for ALL animals
- Food and water bowls
- Paper towels, dish soap, disinfectant



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Keep Your Animals Healthy

- Pet first aid kit
- Medications
- Blankets
- Toys and treats
- Protective Booties (infant socks)
- Plastic poop bags or cat litter and litter trays
- Ask vet about his/her disaster plan





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Provide a Clean, Safe Place

- Dogs and cats
  - Collapsible crate or kennel
  - Harness, leash, muzzle, cable screw / stake
- Horses, swine, cattle
  - Halter and lead rope
  - Bedding material
  - Manure fork
- Birds, reptiles, rabbits
  - Cage liners
  - Evacuation cage or carrier
- Fish?



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Pets Left in Cars

Section 597.7 of the Penal Code Signed into law 26 Sept 2016

- (a) A person shall not leave or confine an animal in any unattended motor vehicle under conditions that endanger the health or well-being of an animal due to heat, cold, lack of adequate ventilation, or lack of food or water, or other circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause suffering, disability, or death to the animal.
- (b) (1) This section does not prevent a person from taking reasonable steps that are necessary to remove an animal from a motor vehicle if the person holds a reasonable belief that the animal's safety is in immediate danger from heat, cold, lack of adequate ventilation, lack of food or water, or other circumstances that could reasonably be expected to cause suffering, disability, or death to the animal.
- (2) A person who removes an animal from a vehicle in accordance with paragraph (1) is not criminally liable for actions taken reasonably and in good faith if the person does all of the following:
  - (A) Determines the vehicle is locked or there is otherwise no reasonable manner for the animal to be removed from the vehicle.
  - (B) Has a good faith belief that forcible entry into the vehicle is necessary because the animal is in imminent danger of suffering harm if it is not immediately removed from the vehicle, and, based upon the circumstances known to the person at the time, the belief is a reasonable one.
  - (C) Has contacted a local law enforcement agency, the fire department, animal control, or the "911" emergency service prior to forcibly entering the vehicle.
  - (D) Remains with the animal in a safe location, out of the elements but reasonably close to the vehicle, until a peace officer, humane officer, animal control officer, or another emergency responder arrives.
  - (E) Used no more force to enter the vehicle and remove the animal from the vehicle than was necessary under the circumstances.
  - (F) Immediately turns the animal over to a representative from law enforcement, animal control, or another emergency responder who responds to the scene.

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Questions



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Takeaways
Pets matter because people matter
Only assist in evacuating a companion animal if you can do so safely
Keep your own animals safe
Secure your animals
ID your animals with yourself
Identify evacuation locations
Get additional training
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