

**(September 7, 2012 ☐☐ Stillwater, OK)** – According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, September is National Disaster Preparedness Month. When your family prepares a disaster plan, remember to include provisions for your beloved pets and all livestock.

Here are some tips from the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA):

- Develop an evacuation plan for all of your animals and practice the plan so that small animals are familiar with cages/carriers and large animals are familiar with being loaded onto a trailer.
- Prearrange an evacuation site for your animals outside your immediate area (pet friendly hotel or relative, stables, fairgrounds, etc.).
- Apartment dwellers, make sure your animals are on record with management and are able to go up and down the stairwell.
- Identify alternate sources of food and water.
- Have working backup generators for use in food-animal production operations.
- Keep emergency cash on hand.
- For horses or livestock, good barn and field maintenance can reduce danger.
- Make sure you have proper identification on your pet, such as a collar with ID tags that include the owner's name and phone number. Microchip identification is highly recommended to ensure your pet is properly identified in case the animal is separated from its owner.
- For livestock, make sure your animals have identification (brand, ear tag, etc.).

The AVMA suggests making an “evacuation kit.” The kit should contain photocopies of vaccination records and medical histories, registration information, adoption papers, proof of purchase, strong leash and muzzle. To prove ownership, you may want to include photos of you with your pets. Make a list of addresses and 24-hour contact numbers of people you may want to reach in an emergency and keep this in your evacuation kit as well. In an emergency, you won't have time to look up your emergency contact phone number, your veterinarian's clinic name and number, a local boarding facility, etc. A supply of canned pet food is recommended along with bottled water and a list of any medications including dosage.

In the event that you have to evacuate your home, be sure you have identified a safe place to go, and remember that Red Cross disaster shelters can't accept pets. Keep a list handy of the nearby hotels that will allow pets. Pets can react to changes in their environment and stressful situations by trying to run away or hide. Always keep pets under control with a leash or in a carrier while you are evacuating and at your safe place, especially if it is a public location.

Disaster can strike at any time often with little notice. Be prepared to minimize the effects on you, your family, your pets and livestock. For more information, visit [https://ebusiness.avma.org/saving\\_family\\_brochure.pdf](https://ebusiness.avma.org/saving_family_brochure.pdf)

*The Oklahoma State University [Center for Veterinary Health Sciences](#) is the only veterinary college in Oklahoma. One of 28 veterinary colleges in the United States, it is fully accredited by the Council on Education of the American Veterinary Medical Association. The center's [Boren Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital](#) is open to the public and provides routine and specialized care for small and large animals. It also offers 24-hour emergency care and is certified by the American Animal Hospital Association. For more information, visit [www.cvhs.okstate.edu](http://www.cvhs.okstate.edu) or call (405) 744-7000.*