

SHELTERING AND PETS

TOWN OF YARMOUTH

Primary Shelter and Animal Shelter:

Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School
210 Station Ave South Yarmouth MA,
02664

What about pets?

Red Cross people shelters cannot accept pets (though service animals are always welcome). This policy is designed to ensure that Red Cross shelters are safe and comfortable places for everyone. But the Cape Cod and the Islands Chapter of the American Red Cross realizes that, for many people, pets are considered members of the family. The Cape Cod and the Islands Chapter has taken part in a dialogue with local emergency managers and encouraged them to establish rooms or areas in the facilities which house both Red Cross shelters and where pet owners and their pets can stay separately. These pet-friendly facilities are located alongside, but are not under the control of Red Cross shelters.

A key element of the full-service regional shelter includes being able to provide shelter for pets, which is organized by the Cape Cod Disaster Animal Response Team (CCDART). The experiences in past emergencies show that some residents have been reluctant to leave for shelters because they don't want to leave their pets. Currently three out of the six regional shelters can accommodate pets but the plan calls for all six shelters to have this capability.

At the present time, emergency animal care during a declared emergency/disaster will be limited to three proposed Regional shelters with animal care components – **Dennis-Yarmouth High School (DY) in Yarmouth, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School in Harwich and the Oak Ridge School in Sandwich**. Animals admitted to these shelters will be limited to dogs, cats, ferrets and other small mammals (gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, mice, rabbits, potbelly pigs) brought to the shelters by owners or rescuers. Birds, reptiles, fish, arachnids, wild or feral animals, endangered or threatened species, and exotic pets are excluded. Other animal care shelters will be staffed as locations become available.

- Pet owners should come prepared with a disaster kit for each pet being admitted to the pet shelter. The pet disaster kit should include the following:
- Medications, a first-aid kit, and medical records stored in a waterproof container. A pet first-aid book is also a handy to have.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure that your pets can't escape. Carriers should be large enough for the animal to stand comfortably, turn around, and lie down. Your pet may have to stay in the carrier for hours as you weather out the storm at a shelter. Be sure to

have a secure cage with no loose objects inside it. These may require blankets or towels for bedding and warmth, and other special items.

- Current photos and descriptions of your pets to help others identify them, and to prove that they are yours.

- Bowls, cat litter and litter box, a manual can opener, and enough food and water to feed each of your pets for at least three days. Stock up on non-perishables well ahead of time and add any perishable items at the last minute.

- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and the name and number of your veterinarian.

- Pet beds and toys, if you can easily take them, to reduce stress.

- Other helpful items include newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grooming items, and household bleach.

- Once you have your items collected, keep them accessible and stored in sturdy containers (duffel bags, covered trash containers, etc.) that can be carried easily.

- In order to admit your pet(s) to the pet shelter, you **must** have a pet carrier, leash or halter/lead, litter pan, food and water bowls, medications, medical records, identification papers, a supply of food and some bottled water, etc., for **each animal**. Always keep them together in an easily reached place. Include photos of yourself with each animal to aid in identification later. Each animal needs ID -- you cannot possibly have too much identification on your animal!

- Owners must care for their own animals in a shelter, under CCDART supervision. Shelter Managers or their designees will normally require the following:

- o Only animals that are prepared – healthy, properly identified and vaccinated, manageable, and restrained (in a crate or cage and on a leash) – will be admitted to the emergency animal care center.

- o Owners are responsible for providing food, water, sanitation and hands-on care during approved visiting hours.

- o Owners are responsible for providing and administering all medications. (Medications generally will not be kept with the animal.)

- o Owners are responsible for cleaning up after their pets. Whether outdoors or indoors, owners must gather and dispose of pet waste and keep crates clean.

- o Once at the shelter, owners must sign a Pet Owner Sheltering Agreement.

- o For more information, please visit CCDART's website, www.capecoddart.org, or call **508-737-9467**.