

# Animal Care and Control Annex

## Primary Agency

Local Animal Control Officers  
Law Enforcement Agencies  
SPCA

## Supporting Agencies

Emergency Management  
Fire & Rescue Agencies  
Local Veterinary Clinics

## Introduction

### Purpose:

To provide guidelines for rapid response to disasters affecting the health, safety, and welfare of animals both domestic and livestock. Resources in emergency preparedness, response and recovery include but are not limited to, small and large animal care, facility usage and displaced pet/livestock assistance.

The Animal Disaster Plan coordinates public and private sector resources to meet the animal-service needs that may arise during an emergency including:

- Rescue and capture of animals that have escaped confinement
- Evacuation/transportation
- Sheltering
- Veterinary care for the sick and injured
- Quarantine of infectious or contaminated animals
- Disposal of dead animals

### Scope:

The *Hazard Analysis for Virginia* identifies natural disasters and hazardous material dumps/storage as the hazards posing the greatest threat to the county. All could create the need to evacuate people from their homes, which would also displace companion animals. These hazards could also cause injury or death to animals and allow animals to roam unattended.

The duration of these hazards is variable as is their affect on the county. Any one of the potential hazards could cause the separation of animals from their owners for several days, perhaps weeks. Secondary events, such as power outages, could prolong the situation.

Smaller scale events, such as a fire at an animal care facility or an animal transportation accident could also require emergency animal care.

## Pet Population Estimates

### A. Frequency of animal ownership in the United States

Species	Percentage of US households owning pets
Dogs	36.1
Cats	31.6
Birds	4.6
Horses	1.7

### B. Average number of animals per household

Species	Average number of pets per pet-owning household
Dog	1.6
Cat	2.1
Birds	2.1
Horses	2.0

Source: U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook, Center for Information Management. American Veterinary Medical Association. Schaumburg, IL 2002

## Concept of Operations

### Organization:

Animal Disaster Plan Manager: Coordinates all evaluation planning activities and assists, as appropriate, the animal care and control agency staff's efforts to,

- Identify facilities that may be used to house evacuated animals.
- Protect and care for animals during and following catastrophic emergencies, as well as participate in the evacuation of animals at risk during catastrophic emergencies.
- Disseminates to the public appropriate action(s) that should be taken to protect and care for companion and farm animals that are to be evacuated or left behind.

Rockbridge County, City of Buena Vista, and City of Lexington Animal Control:

Obtain information for dissemination to the public on the appropriate action that should be taken to protect and care for companion and farm animals during disaster situations. Disseminates information on appropriate actions to protect and care for companion animals that are to be evacuated or left behind. Makes public announcements about availability of animal shelters and their locations. Coordinates the

preparedness actions that should be accomplished in order to feed, shelter, and provide medical treatment for animals during and after catastrophic emergencies. Upon notification by the Animal Disaster Plan manager (Virginia Cooperative Extension Service agent) at the EOC, provides a listing of the location of the animal shelters that have been opened to house and care for companion animals. Feed, shelter, and secure veterinary treatment for animals during catastrophic emergencies. Provides information to owners about shelters that have been opened to house and care for animals.

Central Shenandoah Health District: To address health concerns as well as sanitary and safety issues as appropriate. Recommend methods of proper isolation of diseased animals and disposal of dead animals. Supervise prevention and control of epizootic and zoonotic diseases.

Develop procedures to handle all aspects of animal care and control in disaster and major emergency situations. These include establishing animal shelters; rescue and evacuation; health care, food and water, disposal; identification and reuniting pets with their owners; and protection of citizens from any dangers (illness or injuries) posed by domestic pets during and after a disaster.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS:

1. Normal Operations: Develop and maintain plans to provide animal care and control in time of emergencies.
  - A. The Rockbridge County/City of Buena Vista/ City of Lexington Emergency Operations Plan provides an organizational structure, chain of command, and outlines the duties and responsibilities of the designated Animal Disaster Plan Manager involved in implementation of the response to a disaster or major emergency. The Virginia Cooperative Extension Service Agent shall be designated as the Animal Disaster Plan Manager.
  - B. Develop procedures for public information and education on animal disaster preparedness, to include a directory of recognized animal health care responders, licensed veterinarians and guidelines for individual owners on appropriate responses to disasters.
  - C. Assign emergency duties and provide training of volunteers as appropriate.
  - D. Identify essential shelters and develop procedures to provide for their security in time of emergency. Identify individuals qualified to make determinations regarding animal behavior with respect to legal authority and knowledge to make those decisions.
  - E. Review and update plans and procedures, if necessary, as time permits.
2. Increased Readiness: A natural or man-made disaster is threatening the local area.
  - F. Alert on-duty personnel
  - G. Monitor the situation and be prepared to mobilize, if required.
  - H. Request stand-by of volunteers
3. Mobilization Phase: Conditions continue to worsen requiring full-scale mitigation and preparedness activities.
  - I. Alert all personnel
  - J. Activate resources as needed
  - K. Activate Animal Care Units
  - L. Implement evacuation, if requested by landowner
4. Response Phase: Disaster strikes. An emergency response is required to help protect lives and property. The appropriate designee of the animal disaster plan team and/or volunteers will:

- A. Maintain effective communication with the EOC, shelters and field personnel.
  - B. Search, rescue and transport animals to shelters.
  - C. Receive and care for animals.
  - D. Identify, control and, if necessary, recommend the destruction of animals to the proper authorities that pose hazards to the well-being and safety of citizens. Recommend methods of proper disposal of dead animals in coordination with the Health District/Environmental Health Officer, the animal control officer and local veterinarians.
  - E. Register, tag and maintain accurate records.
  - F. Provide food, water, and waste disposal for small and large animals at the shelter.
  - G. Provide care for sick and/or injured animals. Maintain secure veterinary medical facilities and supplies.
  - H. Recommend methods and supervise prevention and control of epizootic and zoonotic diseases in conjunction with the Central Shenandoah Health District.
5. Recovery Phase:
- A. Identify and dispose of dead animals.
  - B. Provide documentation of injuries and deaths of animals and cascading events resulting from emergencies and disasters and report this information to the state through the EOC.
  - C. Reunite animals with owners.
  - D. Open long-term shelter of animals for homeless owners.
  - E. Report disaster related expenses to state agencies.
  - F. Deactivate shelter.
6. Evaluation Phase:
- M. Determine what worked well and what improvements need to be made.
  - N. Evaluate whether or not the individuals responsible for the plan kept their commitments.
  - O. Revise the plan if necessary.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. The Animal Disaster Plan Manager (Virginia Cooperative Extension Service representative) will:
  - A. Contact the Emergency Management Coordinator and/or the Deputy Emergency Management Coordinator to coordinate response activities with the recognized animal-care responders.
  - B. Manage the public and private sector efforts to meet the animal service needs that arise including: Rescue and capture of animals that have escaped confinement, evacuation, sheltering, care of the injured, sick, and stray and disposal of dead animals.
  - C. In coordination with the State Veterinarian and the USDA (located at the Virginia Department of Emergency Management office), assist in the isolation, euthanasia and disposal of diseased animals.
  - D. Handle inquiries regarding actions to protect and care for companion animals, farm animals, (location of animal shelters, provisions and requirements, - e.g. use of leashes and cages – for transportation of companion animals, etc.) and available emergency assistance including how and where to get help for companion and farm animals.
2. Caring for Creatures will:
  - A. Prepare a resource list that identifies the agencies/organizations that are responsible for providing the supplies (medical, food, and other necessary items) needed to treat and care for injured and sick animals during large-scale emergencies and disasters to include state and national resources.
  - B. Activates emergency response teams (evacuation, shelter, medical treatment, search and rescue, etc.) as needed.

3. Animal Control Officers will:
  - A. Assist with transportation of animals to shelters.
  - B. Assist in animal rescue operations.
4. Health Department/Environmental Health will:
  - A. Provide support when dealing with the safe isolation of diseased animals and coordinates with the animal care agencies and animal control to dispose of these animals when necessary in cooperation with the USDA.
5. VDOT will:
  - A. Provide assistance in the disposal of diseased animals in disaster operations as requested by the licensed State representative at the local level.

#### ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

1. Coordinate preparedness activities with the appropriate public and private sector organizational representatives. The activities include planning that addresses provisions for protection of companion and farm animals, and animals in animal shelters. Coordination with State and National animal protection volunteer groups will be necessary to ensure the needs of animals are met during disaster situations, as well as providing volunteer training opportunities.
2. Assess the situation and make a decision on the number and location of shelters that will be used to house animals. Typical facilities include the jurisdiction's animal shelter(s), veterinary hospitals, boarding kennels. Facilities for agricultural animals could include boarding stables, horse farms, and dairy farms, and/or public land (after obtaining clearance through the EOC).
3. Make provisions for purchasing, stockpiling, or otherwise obtaining the essential stocks (food, water, medical, etc.) needed to support an extended stay (3-14 days) in shelters within the risk area or in mass care facilities.
4. Based on information on the high-hazard areas in the jurisdiction, make an initial estimate of the numbers and types of animals that may need to be evacuated.
5. Coordinate the actions needed to obtain sufficient personnel to staff animal shelters, as needed.
6. Ensure each animal shelter has a highly visible identity marker and sign that identifies its location, with signs from major intersections directing people to shelter(s).
7. Coordinate with the EOC to facilitate dissemination of information to the public on the location of the companion animal shelters that will be opened.
8. If appropriate, coordinates with personnel in public shelters to act as a referral source for individuals with service animals.
9. Open shelters and provide food, water, and medical care, as needed, for the animals in the shelter.
10. Keep shelters open as long as is deemed necessary by the animal control shelter manager.
11. Ensures each shelter receives the necessary supplies to sustain itself.

12. Forms emergency response teams (evacuation, shelter, veterinary treatment, search and rescue, etc.) that include trained professionals and volunteers to accomplish necessary actions during response operations.
13. Coordinates the services and assistance provided to the animal victims. Activities may include the protection, care, and disposal (if appropriate) of animal victims impacted by disasters.
14. Coordinates to arrange travel routes and schedules the timing for evacuation of farm animals, animals in kennels, veterinarian hospitals, animal shelters, etc. from the risk area.
15. As appropriate, mobilizes transportation vehicles (stock trailers, trucks equipped with animal cages, etc.) that may be used to evacuate the animals, to include transportation accommodations for large breed animals.
16. Implements evacuation by sending evacuation team(s) to load and transport the animals being evacuated.
17. As appropriate, dispatches search and rescue teams to look for animals left behind by their owners, stray animals, and others needing transportation to a safe location, in areas other than a mandated evacuation area. This need assessment will determine subsequent rescue efforts.
18. Coordinate with the Environmental Health on the location, collection, and disposal of dead animals.
19. When appropriate, terminate shelter operations and close the facility.

**Tab 1 to Animal Care and Control Annex**

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF EMERGENCY RESPONSE FOR ANIMALS

