Pets and Emergencies

If you evacuate, the best way to protect your pets is to evacuate them, too. Leaving pets behind, even if you try to create a safe place for them, is likely to result in them being injured, lost or worse.

- **Have a safe place to take your pets**

Red Cross disaster shelters cannot accept pets because of state regulations and other considerations. Service animals that assist people with disabilities are the only animals allowed in Red Cross shelters.

- Keep a list of pet friendly places, including phone numbers. Ask if no pet policies could be waived in an emergency at hotels or motels or a friend’s apartment complex.
- Ask relatives, friends or others outside the affected area whether they could shelter your animals in their homes.
- Bring all pets into the house when an emergency begins so that you won’t have to search for them if you have to leave in a hurry.
- Make sure all dogs and cats are wearing collars and securely fastened, up-to-date identification.

**Birds** should be transported in a secure travel carrier. Provide a few slices of fresh fruits and vegetables with high water content. Have a photo for identification and leg bands. Bring plenty of paper towels to collect waste in the bottom of the birds cage.

**Snakes** can be transported in a pillowcase but they must be transferred to more secure housing when they reach the evacuation site. Take a water bowl large enough for soaking as well as a heating pad.

When transporting **house lizards**, follow the same directions given above for birds.

**Small mammals** (hamsters, gerbils, etc.) should be transported in secure carriers. Take bedding materials, food bowls and water bottles.