

Pet Safety

At the GSLTC, we take pet welfare and safety seriously. And if you're like us, and millions of companion animal owners, you do too. Companion animals, just like people, are victims of injuries and accidents in the house, as well as large-scale disasters. Your pet's safety depends on you.

Hazards are all around your home. To pets, electrical cords are fun chew toys, anti-freeze tastes delicious, not poisonous, and they don't realize the trash may contain sharp objects.

Here are some quick tips from the American Humane Association on how to protect your pet inside your house.

Kitchens/bathrooms

- Use childproof latches to keep little paws from prying open cabinets
- Place medications, cleaners, chemicals, and laundry supplies on high shelves
- Keep trash cans covered or inside a latched cabinet
- Check for and block any small spaces, nooks, or holes inside cabinets or behind washer/dryer units
- Make sure your kitten hasn't jumped into the dryer before you turn it on
- Keep foods out of reach (even if the food isn't harmful, the wrapper could be)
- Keep the toilet lid closed to prevent drowning or drinking of harmful cleaning chemicals

Living/family room

- Place dangling wires from lamps, VCRs, televisions, stereos, and telephones out of reach
- Put away children's toys and games
- Put away knick-knacks until your kitten has the coordination not to knock them over
- Check all those places where your vacuum cleaner doesn't fit, but your puppy or kitten does, for dangerous items, like string
- Move common houseplants that may be poisonous out of reach. Don't forget hanging plants that can be jumped onto from nearby surfaces
- Make sure all heating/air vents have covers
- Put away all sewing and craft notions, especially thread

Garage

- Move all chemicals to high shelves or behind secure doors
- Clean all antifreeze from the floor and driveway, as one taste can be lethal to animals
- Bang on your car hood to ensure that your kitten (or any neighborhood cat) has not hidden in the engine for warmth
- Keep all sharp objects and tools out of reach

Bedrooms

- Keep laundry and shoes behind closed doors (drawstrings and buttons can cause major problems if swallowed)
- Keep any medications, lotions, or cosmetics off accessible surfaces (like the bedside table)
- Move electrical and phone wires out of reach of chewing
- Be careful that you don't close your kitten in closets or dresser drawers
- And look out for paws, noses, and tails when you shut doors behind you or scoot chairs.

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Unfortunately, animals are also affected by disaster. The likelihood that you and your animals will survive an emergency such as a fire or flood, tornado or terrorist attack depends largely on emergency planning done today. The best plan of action is the best for your animals.

Here are some quick disaster tips from FEMA:

- If you evacuate your home, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND!** Pets most likely cannot survive on their own and if by some remote chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return.
- If you are going to a public shelter, it is important to understand that animals may not be allowed inside. Plan in advance for shelter alternatives that will work for both you and your pets; consider loved ones or friends outside of your immediate area who would be willing to host you and your pets in an emergency.
- Make a back-up emergency plan in case you can't care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends and relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Be prepared to improvise and use what you have on hand to make it on your own for at least three days, maybe longer.
- Lastly, create an emergency kit for your pet.

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Below is more Information and Resources on how to keep your pet safe.

Disaster Preparedness, First Aid and Important Phone Numbers:

<http://www.apdt.com/petowners/resources/phone.aspx>

<http://www.apdt.com/petowners/resources/disaster.aspx>

http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/PrinterFriendly_Pets.pdf

http://www.ready.gov/sites/default/files/documents/files/pets_brochure.pdf

Disaster Plan Information Cards:

<http://health.mo.gov/emergencies/readyin3/pdf/petchecklist.pdf>

General Safety and Disaster Plans:

<http://www.americanhumane.org/animals/adoption-pet-care/safety/general-safety-rules.html>

http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/animal_rescue/tips/pets-disaster.html

Poisons:

<http://www.americanhumane.org/animals/adoption-pet-care/safety/pets-poisons.html>