

- ▶ Disaster equipment such as a cell phone, flashlights, portable radios, and batteries
- ▶ Other safety and emergency items for your vehicles and trailers
- ▶ Food, water, and disaster supplies for your family

Your local humane organization, agricultural extension agent, or local emergency management agency may be able to provide you with information about your community's disaster response plans.

Barn Fires

The Most Common Disaster

Preventing barn fires and being prepared in the event of fire can mean the difference between life and death for your livestock.

Prevention Is Key

- ▶ Prohibit smoking in or around your barn.
- ▶ Avoid parking tractors and vehicles in or near your barn. Store other machinery and flammable materials outside of the barn.
- ▶ Inspect electrical systems regularly and immediately correct any problems. Rodents can chew on electrical wiring and cause damage that can quickly become a fire hazard.
- ▶ Keep appliances to a minimum in the barn. Use stall fans, space heaters, and radios only when someone is in the barn.
- ▶ Install a sprinkler system.
- ▶ Be sure hay is dry before storing it. Hay that is too moist may spontaneously combust. Store hay outside of the barn in a dry, covered area when possible.



Be Prepared

- ▶ Mount fire extinguishers in all buildings, especially at all entrances. Make sure they are working and your family and employees know how to use them.
- ▶ Keep aisles, stall doors, and barn doors free of debris and equipment.
- ▶ Have a planned evacuation route for every area of your farm, and familiarize all family members and employees with your evacuation plans.
- ▶ Post emergency telephone numbers at each telephone and at each entrance. Include your veterinarian, emergency response personnel, and qualified livestock handlers on the list. Also keep your barn's street address clearly posted to relay to the 911 operator or your community's emergency services.
- ▶ Be sure your address and the entrance to your farm are clearly visible from the main road.
- ▶ Install smoke alarms and heat detectors in all buildings and hook them up to sirens.
- ▶ Host an open house for emergency services personnel in your area to familiarize them with the layout of your property. Provide them with tips on handling your animals—or hands-on training.
- ▶ Familiarize your animals with emergency procedures and common things they would encounter during a disaster. Try to desensitize them to flashlights and flashing lights.



In the Event of a Barn Fire

- ▶ Immediately call 911 or your local emergency services.
- ▶ Don't enter any building already engulfed in flames.
- ▶ If it's safe for you to enter your barn, begin evacuating the most accessible animals.
- ▶ Move animals quickly to a fenced area far enough from the fire and smoke. Never let animals loose where they are able to return to a burning building.



[Emergency Services]



For more information about disaster preparedness, write to Emergency Services, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037; call 202-452-1100; or visit humanesociety.org/emergency.

Celebrating Animals | Confronting Cruelty



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

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humanesociety.org

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DISASTER Preparedness for Livestock



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
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Livestock and Disasters

Why Livestock Owners Should Be Prepared

Disaster preparedness is important for all animals, but it's particularly important for livestock because of their size and special shelter and transport requirements. You don't have to live in a floodplain, near an earthquake fault line, or in a coastal area to be affected—disasters can happen anywhere at any time. It's imperative that you be prepared.



Take Precautions

- ▶ Make a disaster plan to protect your property, facilities, and animals. Create an emergency telephone number list, including your employees, neighbors, veterinarian, poison control office, local animal shelter, animal care and control office, county extension service, local agricultural schools, trailering resources, and local volunteers. Include a contact outside the disaster area. Give family members and employees copies.
- ▶ Make sure every animal has durable and visible identification.
- ▶ Ensure that poultry have access to high areas in which to perch, as well as to food and clean water.
- ▶ Reinforce your house, barn, and outbuildings with hurricane straps. Perform regular safety checks on all utilities, buildings, and facilities.
- ▶ Use only native and deep-rooted plants and trees in landscaping to prevent storm damage.
- ▶ Remove all barbed wire, and consider rerouting permanent fencing so that animals can move to high ground in a flood and to low-lying areas in high winds.
- ▶ Install a hand pump and obtain enough large containers to water your animals for at least a week in the event of municipal water supply contamination.
- ▶ Identify alternate water and power sources. A generator with a safely stored supply of fuel may be essential, especially if electrical equipment is necessary for your animals' well-being.
- ▶ Secure or remove anything that could become wind-blown debris, including trailers and propane tanks. If you have boats, feed troughs, or other large containers, fill them with water before any high-wind event.
- ▶ Make sure the wiring for heat lamps or other electrical machinery is safe and any heat source is clear of flammable debris.
- ▶ Label hazardous materials and place them all in the same safe area. Provide information about their location to local fire and rescue and emergency management authorities.
- ▶ Remove old buried trash, which can be a source of hazardous materials that may leech into crops, feed supplies, water sources, and pasture during flooding.
- ▶ Review and update your disaster plan, supplies, and information regularly.



Sheltering in Place

If evacuation isn't possible, you must decide whether to confine large animals to available shelter on your farm or leave them loose in pastures. While it may seem that animals will be safer inside barns, in many circumstances confinement can reduce their ability to protect themselves.

Survey your property for the best location for shelter. If your pasture area meets the following criteria, your large animals may be better off in the pasture than being evacuated:

- ▶ No nonnative trees, which uproot easily
- ▶ No overhead power lines or poles
- ▶ No debris or sources of blowing debris
- ▶ No barbed-wire fencing (woven-wire fencing is best)
- ▶ Not less than one acre in size (if less than an acre, your livestock may not be able to avoid wind-blown debris)

If your pasture area doesn't meet these criteria, you should evacuate. Whether you evacuate or shelter in place, make sure that you have adequate and safe fencing or pens to separate and group animals appropriately.

Work with your state department of agriculture and county extension service. If your animals can't be evacuated, these agencies may be able to provide on-farm oversight. Contact them well in advance to learn their capabilities and the most effective communication procedure.

Evacuation Planning

The leading causes of death of large animals in hurricanes and similar events are collapsed barns, dehydration, electrocution, and accidents resulting from fencing failure. Take precautions to protect your farm animals from these hazards no matter what the disaster potential for your area.

- ▶ Evacuate animals as soon as possible. Be ready to leave once the evacuation is ordered. In a slowly evolving disaster such as a hurricane, leave no later than 72 hours before anticipated landfall, especially if you will be hauling a high-profile trailer such as a horse trailer. Remember: Even a fire truck fully loaded with water is considered "out of service" in winds exceeding 40 mph.
- ▶ Work within your community to establish safe shelters for farm animals. Potential facilities include fairgrounds, other farms, racetracks, humane societies, and convention centers. Survey your community and potential host communities along your planned evacuation route.
- ▶ Contact your local emergency management authority and become familiar with at least two possible evacuation routes well in advance.
- ▶ Set up safe transportation including trucks and trailers suitable for livestock and appropriate for each type of animal, along with experienced handlers and drivers.
- ▶ Take all your disaster supplies with you or make sure they will be available at your evacuation site. These include feed, water, veterinary supplies, handling equipment, tools, and generators, if necessary.
- ▶ If your animals are sheltered off your property, make sure that they remain in familiar groupings, securely contained and sheltered from the elements.

Farm Disaster Kit

Make a disaster kit so you have supplies on hand in the event of a disaster. Place the kit in a central location and let everyone know where it is. Check the contents regularly to ensure fresh and complete supplies. Include the following items:

- ▶ Current list of all animals, including their location and records of feeding, vaccinations, and tests
- ▶ Proof of ownership for all animals
- ▶ Supplies for temporary identification of your animals, such as plastic neckbands and permanent markers to label them with your name, address, and telephone number
- ▶ Basic first aid kit
- ▶ Handling equipment such as halters, cages, and appropriate tools for each kind of animal
- ▶ Water, feed, and buckets
- ▶ Tools and supplies needed for sanitation