

## **DISASTER PLANNING for RABBITS**

Animals in Disasters 602-909-7153  
Empty Bowl Pets, Disaster Service

### **1. IN THE MIDST OF A DISASTER IT IS ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND SHELTER FOR YOUR COMPANION ANIMALS SO YOU MUST PLAN AHEAD.**

Companion animals are not accepted at shelters. Only service animals are accepted. Keep a list of "pet friendly" hotels and motels immediately outside of your area. Include phone numbers and directions. Put this information with your other disaster supplies. Make sure you check on species, size, and number restrictions. Ask if these restrictions or "no pet" policies can be waived in an emergency. If you are forewarned of a disaster, call ahead for reservations.

### **2. ASSEMBLE A RABBIT DISASTER KIT IN A WATERPROOF CONTAINER THAT CAN BE CARRIED EASILY. IT SHOULD INCLUDE:**

Food and water to last for a minimum of 72 hours: Keep pellets and hay in water-tight containers. If it is possible to take vegetables, seal salads in plastic bags and keep them in a cooler.

Sturdy, top and front opening carrier to evacuate your rabbit safely.

Food and water dishes.

Rabbit first aid kit, current medications, prescriptions, and medical records.

Proof of ownership, pictures of your rabbit, and pictures of you with your rabbit.

Lost posters in case you get separated from your rabbit.

Harness and leash (if you can get your rabbit to tolerate this) with ID tag on it.

Blank ID tags, adhesive tape, and indelible ink pen to write temporary information on the tags. Write the name of a relative or friend outside of the disaster area. Put the tag on the harness or the carrier.

If your rabbit has a micro chip, note that on the ID tag that is on the carrier.

List containing important telephone numbers, feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, name of telephone number of your rabbit's vet in case you have to foster or board your rabbit.

Litter boxes, paper towels, small amount of white vinegar to use as a sanitizer, plastic bags to dispose of waste.

Favorite toys, blanket, fleece pad, etc.

### **3. Rabbit Specific Suggestions**

Have a decent supply of food and water accessible in the rooms where your buns roam. This supply is in containers that can easily be taken while transporting the buns. Most importantly is keeping a supply of pellets in an airtight container WITH the carrier cage and sealed bottled water with small ramekin (rubber/sticky/or velcroed bottom is good so they don't knock it over).

Keep a couple of towels in the room. That way if you have to evacuate immediately you can throw them over the buns, and even if they are in panic, you can wrap them up tight burrito style and keep them from injuring

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themselves. Then if time is too tight you can leave with two wrapped buns in a towel, held tight, nothing else. If you have a bit more time you can put them into their carriers.

Keep the carrier cage in the rabbit's living quarters or next to a cage if you cage if you have to cage them. This way you can take that towel bundled with them in it tight and place it in the carrier. They don't have much time to struggle and they have some movement in the cage so they don't hurt themselves. Inside/beside the cage attached to the carrier, keep a roll of paper towels in addition to the supply of pellets and water. This is for comfort if you do not have access to clean the cage easily or if you have lots of buns to transport. At least you can clean up major messes. If you can leave Carefresh/or other limited mess bedding in the carrier that may also be beneficial but will only work for at most 2 days.

**Other environmental factors too prepare for if evacuating/total loss of power:**

-COLD: if you had to evacuate in -20F temperature it would be harrowing for the buns. Wrap the entire carrier cage with a towel. This will only provide a few extra minutes of warmth and protection but it is a start especially if it is windy outside.

-HEAT: if it is HOT and low humidity a portable mister, a battery powered portable fan, ice/cold pack, if you can grab them, will help the buns.

-SMOKE: there is a special plastic bag style hood with smoke filter to give you precious few minutes to breath and escape. If need be, keep the bun in a towel. Place him/her inside this hood and hold them tight in there. Smoke will affect them much faster than it will affect a human. The cheaper and more logical way would be to wet the towel you are going to grab them with and keep them in it but if you have multiple buns this may be difficult or impossible. You can get them in a carrier and then cover the entire carrier with a wet towel all around.

**3. IN CASE YOU ARE NOT AT HOME WHEN DISASTER STRIKES**

Ahead of time, ask a trusted neighbor if they would be able to transport your rabbits to meet you at a prearranged location. Make sure this neighbor knows where your rabbit is, is comfortable with him/her, knows where your disaster supplies are kept, and has keys to your home. If you have a pet sitter, find out well in advance if s/he is available to help.

Ensure that your rabbit has access to plenty of water. Top off his/her water bowl every day before you leave for work. Leave out an extra bowl of clean water.

Give you rabbit a bigger meal at breakfast and a smaller one in the evening to balance out. Keep plenty of hay available in several different places.

Carry the telephone numbers of your local police and fire stations. You can authorize them to enter your home and rescue your rabbits.

Buy a timed feeder to dispense pellets for your rabbit. They are available in most pet stores and provide food up to three days.

[HRS article on micro chipping, "Thumper Come Home." At Rabbit References, click on "Care, Feeding, Tips," and then select topic "Outdoor Exercise."](#)