

Prepare now to reduce stress later  
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Emergencies and disasters come in many forms and are not always predictable. They may require anything from a few hours to several weeks away from your home. The best thing you can do for your family and your pets is to be prepared.

When developing a family emergency plan, always include your companion animals. It is recommended that you have a three to seven day supply of food and water for each pet. You should also have an emergency kit that includes a litterpan, food and water dishes, a leash and collar and familiar toys. You can also reduce stress by having a blanket or towel that smells like home to be housed with your pet during an emergency. If you have a pet on a special diet or medication, be sure that you have a 15 day supply of medications on hand. Depending on the emergency, it may be several days before you may have access to your veterinarian or pharmacy and your pet's life may depend on getting his daily medication. Don't forget when making and storing emergency kits that some supplies do expire. You should check your pet emergency kits every three months and rotate supplies as needed.

If you own an unusual pet such as a reptile, bird or pocket pet, an emergency kit is especially important since they require special housing and care. You may be required to leave your pet at a temporary animal shelter and having the supplies your pet needs will help reduce not only the stress your animal suffers but yours as well.

Planning ahead and having an emergency kit in place for your companion animals is one way you can ensure that when disasters strikes, you are prepared.

For a list of supplies recommended for Pet Emergency Kits, please visit [www.slcoanimalservices.org](http://www.slcoanimalservices.org).