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NORTH QUEENSLAND SPECIALIST EQUINE SERVICE



STORM & CYCLONE SEASON



Rule number one: If it isn't safe for you, it isn't safe for your pets.

While everyone talks about preparing your home for the upcoming storm season it's also important that our pets both big and small are storm ready as well. Cyclones, storms and floods can often occur quickly with little notice so it's important to be well prepared.

Rule number two: Evacuate early

Don't be late, evacuate! In the case of a disaster, evacuate as early as possible and don't forget to take you pet with you! Remember if the weather isn't safe for your family, it is also not safe for your pets. Ensure that you are always prepared and have a Disaster Pet Preparedness Plan including an evacuation plan in place. For more information on keeping your pet safe see over for a Pets Emergency Action Plan

If you are required to evacuate, having a prearranged kennel or friend that your pet can stay with outside of the danger zone is very helpful, however often this isn't an option.

If you are required to leave your pet home alone, create a safe place and confine them to the safest room in the house, this is usually the bathroom. This also applies if you are home with your pet. Stay in the safest room and try to keep your pet as calm as possible. Don't tie your pets up outside – they can harm themselves trying to break free.

Ensure your emergency kit contains a first aid kit, plenty of non-perishable food items and water for at least five (5) days, in non-spill bowls. Ensure all microchip and tag details are up to date with your current address and phone number and keep the vets phone number close at hand. A basic first aid kit should include items such as bandages, gauze swabs, cotton wool, betadine, tweezers, scissors and gloves. If unsure you can always discuss with your vet at Townsville Vet Clinic the best items to place in a first aid kit.

Other items that are essential for preparing your pets for an emergency include;

- Any essential medications and medical records in a water proof container
- Photos and other information such as Vet details and feeding/medication schedules
- Collar, harness, lead or covered carry cage
- Litter tray and litter
- Toys, blankets, towels, bedding
- Treats



Emily is currently studying her certificate IV in Veterinary Nursing. Before starting her nursing career she was a professional groomer.

Emily has a strong passion for big and small animal veterinary medicine, and one day hopes to further her studies into veterinary science and become a mixed practice veterinarian.

Emily says she 'enjoys working at Townsville Veterinary Clinic and thrives on the challenge of working with such a large range of animals'.

After the disaster

Your home may be a very different place after the emergency is over, and it may be hard for your pets to adjust.

- **Don't allow your pets to roam loose.** Familiar landmarks and smells might be gone, and your pet will probably be disoriented. Pets can easily get lost in such situations.
- **While you assess the damage, keep dogs on leashes and cats in carriers inside the house.** If your house is damaged, your pets could escape.
- **Be patient with your pets after a disaster.** Try to get them back into their normal routines as soon as possible. Be ready for behavioural problems caused by the stress of the situation. If these problems persist, or if your pet seems to be having any health problems, talk to your veterinarian.
- **If your community has been flooded, check your home and yard for wild animals who may have sought refuge there.** Wildlife can pose a threat to you and your pet.

TRADING HOURS:

Monday to Friday

8.00am to 6.00pm

Saturday

8.00am to 4.00pm



What can I do to protect my horses?

Horses can be difficult to prepare for storms. As with household pets a well stocked emergency kit is essential and should also include a knife, wire cutters, rope and halters. You can get further information from our Vets at Townsville Vet Clinic.

Decide on a safe place to keep your horse and livestock prior to an emergency. In making the decision there are vital points to consider such as is the place prone to flooding, exposed to cyclonic winds, at risk of flying debris and whether it can be accessed after an extreme event. Either way, adequate identification is required in case your horse goes missing from fallen fences. Keep paperwork with proof of ownership in your waterproof emergency kit. Good ways to ensure lost horses make their way back to you are either tie luggage tags into the mane and tail or using stock paint to record your phone number, address. Don't forget micro-chipping.

Before the storm begins check the paddock for any hazards such as damaged fences, sharp items and potential projectiles. If you are planning to evacuate your horse do it well in advance. Moving your horses during an adverse weather event, can prove dangerous. Try to make sure that your horse is not left in a paddock where there are power lines in case they come down.

Make sure your horses have access to safe food and water to last at least a week. Do not rely on automatic water systems as power may be lost!

After the emergency

Survey the area for hazards such as sharp object, dangerous materials, live wires and contaminated water.

Check you horses for injuries and release them into a safe area only in daylight. Watch them closely for the next few hours. Scents and areas have changed and this can confuse your horses and alter their behaviour.

Introduce food slowly in small portions if your horse has been without for a long time. Make sure there is plenty of clean water available.

Allow plenty of uninterrupted rest to recover from the trauma and stress.



PETS IN EMERGENCIES

ACTION GUIDE

Your animals are your responsibility. It is up to you to prepare for the safety and welfare of your pets in case of an emergency.

BE PREPARED

- ▶ Include your animals in household emergency plans
- ▶ Properly identify your pets (eg name tags, microchip or band)
- ▶ Keep a list of emergency phone numbers on display
- ▶ Be aware that some evacuation centres may not accept animals so plan alternatives accordingly

ACT EARLY

- ▶ If moving animals to a safer place, do so early to avoid unnecessary risk
- ▶ Ensure there is access to plenty of food and water
- ▶ If staying at home secure animals in good time so that they do not take flight

BE CONSIDERATE

If you have to leave pets behind:

- ▶ If possible, leave your pets indoors
- ▶ Place pets in separate rooms with small or preferably no windows (eg laundry, bathroom)
- ▶ Provide adequate food and water in large heavy bowls
- ▶ If left outside, do not tie them up

ACT SAFE

- ▶ Your safety, and that of your family, is paramount
- ▶ Don't risk human life trying to find and protect pets

For more information refer to www.rspca.org.au

Australian Government
Attorney-General's Department
Australian Emergency Management Institute

www.ema.gov.au