



Commonwealth of Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services

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Contact: **Barbara Fox**
502-564-6786, ext. 3102

Beth Fisher
502-564-6786, ext.3101

First 72 On You - Preparedness for Pets

Week 4 of awareness campaign focuses on preparing pets, animal owners for emergencies

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Sept. 24, 2018) – The Department for Public Health (DPH), within the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS), has launched **First 72 Are On You** information campaign during the month of September – National Preparedness Month (NPM), to increase emergency preparedness efforts for Kentuckians and their families. This week’s spotlight is on preparing household pets and animals for disasters and emergencies.

“If you are like the many animal owners in Kentucky today, your pet is an important member of your household and the best way to protect your pet from the stress and disruption of an emergency is to have a disaster pet kit and a plan that includes whether you will stay at home or evacuate during an emergency event,” said Dr. Kelly Giesbrecht, state veterinarian for public health. “Being ready increases the likelihood of survival for all involved and reduces stress and worry for both pets and their owners.”

Planning for emergency preparedness measures for household pets and animals should take into consideration the following precautions to include:

- Assemble a pet emergency kit with basic survival items to keep your pet happy and comfortable. Be sure to include at least a three day supply of food and water specifically for your pets, first aid kit, collar or harness with ID tag, rabies tag and leash, crate or pet carrier, pet litter and litter box, food dishes, can opener, paper towels, trash bags, bleach, medicines and medical records, important documents such as animal registration and vaccination documents. In addition, be sure to include a picture of you and your pet together in case you become separated. Familiar items such as treats, toys and bedding can help reduce stress for your pet. Be sure to rotate the stock of items in your kit so they have not exceeded their expiration date. If you have a service animal, be sure to include work essentials for your service animal such as harness, vest and leash).

- Identify pet friendly lodging facilities in the area, along your evacuation route or boarding facilities or animal hospitals near your evacuation shelter. Keep this list in your pet's emergency kit.

- Locate a veterinarian or animal hospital in the area where you may be seeking temporary shelter, in case your pet needs medical care.

- Have your pet microchipped and make sure that you not only keep your address and phone number up to date, but that you also include contact info for an emergency contact outside of your immediate area. Attach your name and current emergency number to your pet's collar/ID tag.

- Most boarding kennels, veterinarians and animal shelters will need your pet's medical records to make sure all vaccinations are current.

- Take your pets with you if you evacuate because pets are unlikely to survive on their own.

·Don't leave your pets unattended because they may panic and run off, hide or bite/scratch when approached.

·Contact your local emergency management office, animal shelter or animal control office to get advice and information.

Throughout September, DPH has been spotlighting preparedness topics to include overall preparedness for families and seniors. Additional information about the campaign will be posted on the CHFS Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/kychfs> where Kentuckians are encouraged to like and share posts among their networks of friends.

The nationwide effort of NPM is organized each year by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to encourage citizens to prepare and plan for emergencies in their homes, business and schools. This yearly observance was founded after 9/11 to increase preparedness awareness in the U.S., a fitting time to join the effort to help communities prepare for emergencies, such as natural disasters and potential terrorist threats, and to encourage individuals to take action.

For more information about preparing your pet for emergencies visit <http://ready.gov/pets>.

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The Cabinet for Health and Family Services is home to most of the state's human services and healthcare programs, including the Department for Medicaid Services, the Department for Community Based Services the Department for Public Health, the Department for Aging and Independent Living and the Department for Behavioral Health, Developmental and Intellectual Disabilities. CHFS is one of the largest agencies in state government, with nearly 8,000 full- and part-time employees located across the Commonwealth focused on improving the lives and health of Kentuckians.

