

Keeping Pets Safe When a Tornado Strikes

Original content by Kathy Covey

- Have pet supplies in the family's tornado-proof room or cellar – these items can be similar to those in your disaster/emergency kit
 - Food, water, and treats in sufficient quantities should the town's infrastructure be diminished and you are unable to get to the store
 - Sanitation items, such as a litter box and litter or puppy pads, in case an excited or frighten pet has an accident
 - Crates for a cat or a frightened dog to provide the animal with a cozy, secure hiding place to weather the storm
- Keep visible and current identification on pet at all times
- Practice getting the entire family to the tornado safe area during calm weather
 - Train your dog to go to the area on command or to come to you on command regardless of distractions
 - Learn how to quickly and safely secure your cat
 - Know your pet's hiding places and how to safely extricate him/her
- Make your tornado safe area pet friendly
 - Eliminate unsafe hiding areas that frightened cats may find
 - Remove dangerous items such as tools or toxic products stored in the area
- Have family and pet disaster kits available should you need to evacuate the area due to heavy destruction

Facts (according to NOAA):

- An average of over 1,000 tornadoes are recorded each year in the United States.
- Tornadoes have been recorded in every state in the country.
- Tornado Alley refers to an area including central Texas to northern Iowa and from Kansas and Nebraska to western Ohio.
- Tornadoes most often occur in the afternoon and early evening.
- There is no "tornado" season like hurricane season.