

**I. PURPOSE**

Although the protection of human life is the highest priority in emergency response, recent disasters and follow-up research have shown that proper preparation and effective coordination of animal disaster welfare issues enhances the ability of emergency personnel to protect both **human and animal health and safety**. It is much more efficient to address animal issues prior to an incident rather than during one.

The purpose of this Animal Emergency guideline is to coordinate the effective use of public and private partnerships for the care and well being of animals during and after a natural or technological disaster. The guideline addresses issues concerning companion animals (pets), livestock (including horses), exotic animals and wildlife. Other guidance is being developed to address situations where animal diseases (Foot and Mouth Disease, for example), or illegal/terrorist acts affect the human and animal population. Activation of the animal emergency guidelines will be considered when there is an emergency situation/event that requires shelter or care of animals. Consideration should also be given to activating the animal emergency guidelines whenever the state's congregate care guidelines are implemented.

This document serves as a guideline for coordination between emergency managers and their animal welfare organization partners. Organizations within this document are encouraged to develop their own emergency operations policies and procedures, as required.

**II. ANIMAL POPULATION ESTIMATES**

Based on the state's human population of approximately 4,920,000 (1,856,603 households) and formulas developed by the American Veterinary Medical Association, the following are estimates of the numbers and types of animals in Minnesota:

A. Companion Animals (Pets)

|                   |           |
|-------------------|-----------|
| Dogs              | 991,426   |
| Cats              | 1,110,249 |
| Birds             | 233,932   |
| Horses            | 74,264    |
| Rabbits & Ferrets | 42,702    |
| Rodents           | 42,702    |
| Reptiles          | 27,849    |
| Fish              | 116,965   |

B. Livestock/Large Animals The USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) has gathered the following Minnesota livestock data in a 1997 Agriculture Census (Updated in 2001):

|              | Farms  | Animals     |
|--------------|--------|-------------|
| Dairy Cattle | 7,800  | 500,000     |
| Beef Cattle  | 15,500 | 410,000     |
| Hogs         | 6,500  | 5,700,000   |
| Sheep        | 2,400  | 160,000     |
| Chickens     | 1,964  | 15,803,000  |
| Turkeys      | 359    | 11,000,000* |

\* Number of turkeys at any one time during the year. The total number of turkeys in Minnesota during the year is approximately 44,000,000.

- C. Exotics and Other Captive Animals There are many breeders of exotic animals in the Minnesota, but documenting their numbers is difficult. Large zoological gardens are located in Apple Valley (Minnesota Zoo), St. Paul (Como Zoo), and Duluth (Duluth Zoo). The species and their numbers are documented by those facilities. Minnesota also has many breeders of exotic animals, many of whom are known to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. However, there also exists a significant number of unknown private owners of exotic animals. Therefore, it is difficult to accurately assess their numbers.
  
- D. Wildlife Per the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA APHIS), Minnesota has significant populations of deer, bear, lynx and a wide variety of birds, waterfowl, and small migratory mammals, including skunks, gray squirrels, raccoons and foxes. Several varieties of snakes can be found in the state, including populations of Timber and Masassauga Rattlesnakes that inhabit the Root and Mississippi River valleys in Southeast Minnesota.

**III. RESPONSIBILITIES**

| <b>Responsibility Summary</b>                             |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Agency</b>   | <b>Responsibility</b>  |
| DHSEM   | <b>P:</b> Oversees animal rescue, health and welfare<br><b>C:</b> Establishes a State Animal Coordinator (SAC)   |
| DPS   | <b>C:</b> Provides assistance with movement of animals.<br><b>C:</b> Fulfill the duties of the state PIO; support the PIO.<br><b>C:</b> Oversee implementation of the community relations program.   |
| BAH   | <b>C:</b> Coordinates animal disease prevention and disposal of animal carcasses.  |
| MDA   | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with sheltering, support and welfare of livestock   |
| DNR   | <b>P:</b> Fulfill the duties of the state PIO in case of wildfire.<br><b>C:</b> Work with interagency partnerships (MNICS) and the national wildfire Incident Command System (ICS) to prepare and implement wildfire communications plans.                       |
| MPCA  | <b>S:</b> Provides advice about the disposal of dead animals (following BAH guidance)  |
| MDH   | <b>S:</b> Provides advice on zoonoses  |
| MDMA  | <b>S:</b> Assists with transporting animals<br><b>S:</b> Assists with animal rescue  |
| DHS   | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with decontaminating evacuees and their animals.<br><b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with sheltering evacuees and their animals.  |
| AHA   | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with animal rescue and support issues.  |
| HSUS  | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with animal rescue and support issues.  |
| MACA  | <b>C:</b> Provides trained State Animal Coordinators for the EOC.<br><b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with animal rescue and support issues.   |
| MNVOAD  | <b>C:</b> Coordinates animal disaster responders through other voluntary agencies and emergency management.  |
| Animal Humane Society (Golden Valley/ Coon Rapids)        | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with coordination of animal efforts.<br><b>C:</b> Provides facility space and transportation for animal supplies and equipment.<br><b>S:</b> Provides professional personnel for capture, care and treatment of animals |
| MN. Horse Council   | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with horse issues   |
| MVMA  | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance regarding liaison with state veterinary community.  |
| U of M Veterinary School                                  | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with veterinary issues.   |
| MN. Zoological Assn.                                      | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance on issues related to zoo animals or exotic animals.   |
| MN. Ag Extension  | <b>S:</b> Provides advice and assistance with sheltering, support and welfare of livestock.  |
| Red Cross   | <b>C:</b> Coordinates sheltering of people along with service animals.   |
| <b>P = Primary      C = Coordination      S = Support</b> |  |

- A. Primary Agency – The Minnesota Department of Public Safety, Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (DHSEM), oversees animal rescue and welfare efforts when this guideline is activated. Specifically, DHSEM:

1. Designates (with the approval of the State Incident Manager (SIM)/State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) Operations Chief), an individual to serve as a State Animal Coordinator.
  2. Works with support agencies and animal organizations to coordinate response efforts and donations of animal supplies and equipment, in cooperation with Donations Coordination Team (DCT).
- B. Support Agencies – The following agencies/organizations play a major role in support of the Animal Disaster Plan:
1. **Minnesota Department of Public Safety (DPS)** – Provides support to State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC)
    - a. Minnesota State Patrol – Advice and assistance with movement of animal rescue/support personnel and equipment into and out of secured areas.
    - b. Director of Communications – Through the SEOC Joint Public Information Center (JPIC), coordinates messages about animal rescue/support efforts, donations of animal-related supplies, equipment, veterinary goods and volunteers necessary to assist with animal relief.
  2. **Minnesota Board of Animal Health (BAH)** – Advice and assistance with animal disease and disease prevention issues. Coordinates with the Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA), to advise and assist with donations of animal vaccines, medicines and medical equipment and with offers of assistance from the veterinary community (vets and technicians) and response protocol issues.
  3. **Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)** – Advice and assistance with issues concerning livestock and with offers of animal feed and other animal care products. Assists with interactions with US Dept. of Agriculture (USDA)
  4. **Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** – Advice and assistance with issues concerning wildlife. Assists with interactions with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).
  5. **Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA)** – Advice and assistance concerning the disposal of dead animals. Assists with interactions involving the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
  6. **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)** – Advice and assistance on animal issues that may also have a bearing on human health.
  7. **Minnesota Department of Military Affairs (MN National Guard)** – Advice and assistance with animal issues, including the possible transportation of rescued animals. Use of Guard facilities (or tents) as animal holding facilities, on a case-by-case basis, with prior approval.
  8. **Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS)** – Advice and assistance with issues concerning evacuees and their animals at radiological emergency reception centers and decontamination facilities. Also provides advice and assistance during other emergency situations where evacuation of people and their animals to shelters becomes necessary.

9. **American Humane Association (AHA)** – Advice and assistance with animal rescue and support issues.
  10. **Humane Society of the United States (HSUS)** – Advice and assistance with animal rescue and support issues.
  11. **Minnesota Animal Control Association (MACA)** – Supplies trained State Animal Coordinators (SAC), and assists with animal rescue and support issues that arise during emergency situations.
  12. **Minnesota Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (MNVOAD)** – Advises and assists with coordination of animal disaster responders and those of other voluntary agencies and emergency management.
  13. **Animal Humane Society (Golden Valley/Coon Rapids)**– Advice and assistance with coordination of animal efforts, facility space for animal supplies and equipment when appropriate.
  14. **Minnesota Horse Council** – Advice and assistance with horse (and other similar animal) issues that arise during emergencies.
  15. **Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA)** – Advice and assistance regarding liaison with the state veterinary community during emergency situations.
  16. **University of Minnesota Veterinary School (College of Veterinary Medicine)** – Advice and assistance regarding veterinary issues during emergencies.
  17. **Minnesota Zoological Association** – Advice and assistance with emergencies that affect zoos, animal attractions or exotic animals.
  18. **University of Minnesota, Agricultural Extension Service** – Advice and assistance concerning sheltering, support and welfare of livestock during emergency situations.
  19. **The American Red Cross** – Advice and assistance with issues concerning evacuees with pets and pet-friendly congregate care facilities.
- C. State Animal Coordinator (SAC)
1. Preparedness Functions
    - a. The State Animal Coordinator (SAC) is responsible for maintaining and managing the Minnesota Animal Operations Emergency Guideline.
    - b. The SAC arranges for public education and training on animal disaster issues.
    - c. The SAC develops standardized animal registration/intake and reporting forms for use by animal shelters initiated in an emergency.
    - d. The SAC also promotes the development of a communications system among responding animal organizations, to ensure coordinated efforts between responding animal organization personnel, and between responding animal organizations and other emergency personnel.

2. Emergency Response Functions

- a. The SAC assists the Volunteer Resource Coordinator and SEOC leadership with efforts to coordinate activities of animal welfare organizations and others that come to help during emergencies. The SAC works with the donations and volunteer management functions to handle offers and requests for donations of animal-related goods and services. The SAC will assess the situation regarding animal issues during the disaster and will recommend recovery actions to the SEOC staff for implementation.
  - b. Whenever the congregate care (evacuation) plan is activated, the SAC also works with representatives of congregate care agencies and the MNADC to make sure that animals brought to evacuation sites are properly sheltered and cared for. They will work in cooperation to develop a strategy to identify and provide housing for companion animals owned by disaster evacuees staying in congregate care facilities. Whenever possible, animal housing selected should be co-located or found as near to the congregate care facility as possible. Standardized forms and procedures will be adopted at each shelter established.
  - c. The SAC is responsible for coordinating the dissemination of information with the SEOC Joint Public Information Center and the Department of Public Safety (DPS) Public Information Officer. Some possible topics of such messages would include evacuation options and responsibilities of animal owners, mitigation and recovery actions for domestic animals, how to report animal needs and incidents observed in the community and donations needed by responding organizations.
  - d. When required, the State Animal Coordinator makes requests for additional assistance and support. When a disaster situation in an affected county exceeds its locally available resources, the County Emergency Management Director may request assistance and support from other recognized state and national-level agencies through the SEOC, providing animal care and shelter. The State Animal Coordinator will evaluate assistance requests based on feedback from the County Animal Coordinator and other animal assistance agency responders. The request will be processed through SEOC Logistics and Operations channels.
  - e. The SAC will submit situation reports to the Operations Chief in the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) to inform other emergency management personnel of activities, operations and plans.
  - f. The SAC coordinates with local/county/state health departments, the MN Board of Animal Health and the MN Pollution Control Agency on the removal and disposal of dead animals.
  - g. The SAC will notify appropriate animal welfare organizations to assist with animal rescue. The county animal coordinator will coordinate search and rescue for animals in the disaster area
- D. Minnesota Animal Disaster Coalition (MNADC) - The MNADC is made up of representatives of Animal Control Officers, City and County Emergency Managers, representatives of responding animal welfare organizations and others who wish to assist with animal issues during a disaster.

1. Preparedness Functions

- a. To assist in animal guideline development, exercise, review and improvement efforts, at local and state levels.
  - b. To assist with efforts to identify facilities, locating resources and recruiting personnel that may be of assistance when responding to animal issues during disaster situations.
  - c. To participate in training and exercises that build capacity to respond to animal-related emergencies.
2. Emergency Response Functions
- a. MNADC members will advise and assist the State Animal Coordinator with the development of strategies to deal with issues that arise during disasters and emergency situations that involve animals.
  - b. MNADC members will gather information regarding the status of animals during the disaster situation and on the scope of the disaster, providing reports and updates as necessary to the SAC.
  - c. MNADC members may be called upon to perform State Animal Coordinator (SAC) duties during long duration events, relieving the initially appointed coordinator.
  - d. MNADC members may be called upon to assist with screening, decontamination, sheltering and care of animals evacuated from affected areas.
- E. University of Minnesota Agricultural Extension Service – May be contacted for advice and assistance concerning support (including possible sheltering) for livestock and other animals during emergencies.
- F. Wildlife Rehabilitators
1. Individual wildlife rehabilitators, networking organizations and wildlife rehabilitation centers are a valuable source of information and help when wild animal issues arise in disaster situations. Individuals and/or facilities familiar with specific species of wildlife can give emergency advice on what to do with orphaned, injured, or nuisance wildlife and on how to capture and care for wild animals and birds affected by a disaster situation.
  2. Depending upon the situation, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) may impose restrictions on and procedures for handling protected mammals and birds that may affect rescue efforts.
- G. Veterinary Community - The SAC, with assistance from the MN Board of Animal Health and advice from the MNADC, will coordinate with the veterinary community for their services, including the treatment of minor and severe injuries, illness, and animal contamination issues. A triage veterinarian may be assigned to determine whether to provide care at the clinic or the shelter facility. Veterinarians may charge a fee to the pet owner or responding agencies for services, including sheltering and medical services.

- H. Responding Animal Assistance Organizations – Are **required** to establish and maintain contact with EOC/Incident Command staff, through the State Animal Coordinator, the MNADC representative or another assigned voluntary agency liaison/representative. All responding organizations are encouraged to work within the established unified incident command system.
- I. Important Messages – Include the following messages in press releases for disaster relief efforts where animal issues are of concern. The SAC and Public Information Officer, depending on the situation, may also craft other messages.
1. All companion animal owners should have a plan to house and care for their animals when disasters/emergencies strike. These arrangements are best made before disasters actually strike. When disasters do strike, evacuees should take their companion animals with them when they leave their home. In the event this cannot be done, owners should identify in advance places where they could possibly shelter their animals.
  2. Humane Associations and veterinarians may charge animal owners for lodging and veterinary services provided.
  3. All responding animal organizations must contact government emergency managers where they are working to properly coordinate their efforts with those of other responders. At the state level, they must coordinate their operations with the State Animal Coordinator.
- J. Evacuation – Animal owners should be encouraged to plan in advance to take their animals (and appropriate health/vaccination and ownership records) with them, or arrange privately for a place to care for their animal if a future evacuation should become necessary. For those not able to do this:
1. Preparedness Measures – Owners should purchase appropriate cages for their animals, maintain a supply of medicines or special foods that the animal requires and should make sure that the animal wears identification at all times, in case disaster should strike.
  2. Response Actions
    - a. *Small Animals* – If evacuation becomes necessary, small animal owners shall be encouraged to transport their own animals to an animal shelter site. When not possible, the SAC, MNADC and responding organizations may be able to coordinate transportation to an animal shelter.
    - b. *Large Animals* - If evacuation of large animals becomes necessary, owners of large animals shall be encouraged to transport their own animals to a large-animal shelter site. When not possible, the affected County Agricultural Extension Office may be able to coordinate transportation to a shelter for large animals.
    - c. *Exotic Animals* – Owners of exotic species are highly encouraged to transport their own animals to possible shelter sites, because of special equipment and handling skills that may be required to do so.



K. Sheltering of Animals During a Disaster/Emergency – Responding agencies operating animal shelter facilities are responsible for reuniting sheltered animals with their owners when the emergency situation passes. Responding organizations should maintain the following records for animals sheltered during a disaster or emergency, to address public health issues and to aid in the quick return of an animal to their owners after the emergency situation has passed:

1. Animal Records

- a. A description, including type and breed, color and sex of animal being cared for. Also note the sterilization status, if known.
- b. Information from identification tags, collars, tattoos and microchips, as available.
- c. Pet immunization record
- d. Identification/location of owner or caregiver, if known.

2. Rescue Records

- a. Location (city/township) or address where animal was found/rescued. The location should include the building found in if there are multiple buildings at the address.
- b. Rescuer's and/or rescuing agency's name and contact information.
- c. A record of veterinary assistance, immunizations, medications given and other care given while under care of emergency responders.
- d. Identification/location of owner or caregiver, if known.

L. Dead Animal Disposal

Disposing of animals that have died requires great care (especially in site selection) because as carcasses decompose, they release materials that can contaminate the environment or cause diseases, particularly if large volumes are involved. Should disposal of dead animals become necessary, the State Animal Coordinator and MNADC will work with officials from MN DHSEM, local and county state emergency managers, health officials and the Minnesota Board of Animal Health and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to determine the best methods for disposing of animal carcasses.

**IV. RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY PLAN (REP) INCIDENTS**

An incident involving the possible release of radioactive materials from either of Minnesota's two nuclear generating plants will require special actions to care for humans and animals in the affected areas.

A. Sheltering of Animals

1. At a Site Area Emergency (SAE) owners of animals will be instructed to shelter their animals and place them on stored feed and water.

**B. Evacuation**

1. At a General Emergency, residents in the Emergency Planning Zone around the nuclear plant are directed to evacuate.
2. When residents are ordered to evacuate, they will be directed to take their animals with them. Residents with animals that cannot be evacuated will be directed to shelter their animals and leave them behind.
3. Animals that are evacuated will be checked for radiological contamination, decontaminated if necessary, and cared for at the Pet Care Facility.
4. Owners, through a re-entry pass system, will care for the animals that were not evacuated. The re-entry system's set up and operation will depend on the plant's conditions and the conditions in the affected areas.

**C. Location of Key Facilities**

1. For Emergencies Involving the **Monticello** Nuclear Generating Plant
  - a. *Reception Center*  
Osseo Junior High School, 10223 93<sup>rd</sup> Ave. N., Osseo, MN
  - b. *Animal Care Facility*  
Osseo-Brooklyn School Bus Company Garage, 11800 95<sup>th</sup> Ave North, Maple Grove, MN
2. For Emergencies Involving the **Prairie Island** Nuclear Generating Plant
  - a. *Reception Center*  
National Guard Armory, 8180 Belden Blvd., Cottage Grove, MN
  - b. *Animal Care Facility*  
ISD 833 Transportation Department, 8585 West Point Douglas Rd., Cottage Grove, MN

**D. Special REP Media Messages**

1. Evacuees with animals will proceed directly to the Animal Care Facility.
2. In addition to bringing pets, evacuees should bring animal identification, animal health and immunization records, travel cages and other equipment necessary to handle the animal. If the animal does not have an identification collar, one will be provided.
3. Do not bring supplies of the animal's food, unless prescribed by a veterinarian.
4. Bring any medicines prescribed for the animal.

**V. UNIQUE SITUATIONS INVOLVING LIVESTOCK AND POULTRY**

- A. **Infectious Animal Diseases** – Will be handled in accordance with the “State Agency Plan for Infectious Animal Disease Response” (DRAFT)
- B. **Terrorist Incidents** – Will be handled in accordance with the Minnesota Emergency Operations Plan, supported by this guidance document.