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Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan

2018

# Types of Emergencies covered by this plan

The Charleston Animal Society (CAS) facility located at 2455 Remount Rd, North Charleston, is susceptible to various emergencies as addressed in this plan. The types of emergencies are listed here, and specific plans for each are contained in the following pages.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Type of disaster | Timeframe | Impact on Staff and Volunteers | Impact on Operations | Refer to Page |
| I. Tropical Storms, hurricanes, and other emergencies with warning time | May occur anywhere from a few hours to multiple days | Phased release of personnel to go home or evacuate. Return to work when safe to do so | Phased shut-down of operations. Stop all but emergency surgeries. Stop all incoming animals from Animal Control, foster returns, citizens, etc. If available, transfer animal to out-of-area partner shelters | 3 |
| II. Tornadoes | A few minutes to a few hours | Possible temporary shelter-in-place in hallways | Possible immediate stoppage of all operations | 7 |
| III. Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) incidents and major transportation emergencies | No warning | Anticipated shelter-in-place until all-clear is given, or rescue by emergency personnel | Potential, temporary shut-down of non-emergency operations, until emergency passes or the all-clear is given | 8 |
| IV. Immediate Danger Evacuation (Bomb threats/Criminal Activities) | No warning | Immediate evacuation of all personnel, unless emergency is outside the facility (requiring shelter-in-place) | Immediate shut-down of all operations to ensure personnel safety | 10 |
| V. Fires | No Warning | Immediate evacuation of all personnel | Immediate shutdown of all operations to ensure personnel safety | 11 |

# **I. Tropical Storms, hurricanes, and other emergencies with warning time**

Tropical storms and hurricanes are traditionally the type of disaster that require the most preparation and have the greatest overall impact to our region – and potentially to operations. Tropical storms and hurricanes bring driving rain, strong winds, and flooding as they make landfall, and may affect CAS whether they make direct landfall or pass relatively close to the coast.

Because there is usually warning that a large storm is anticipated, the process for preparation of the shelter begins in the days before a storm is expected. Using a staff-oriented volunteer process, CAS will prepare the shelter for the storm and recruit a small cadre of staff to return to the shelter and initiate cleaning and animal care after the storm has passed. CAS will use a “phased” system to help organize the emergency response.

## Communications Plans

### External communication

The external communication plan applies to the general public and partner organizations.

CAS will provide press releases to the public to inform them of our operational status, before landfall and after the storm has passed.

CAS will post the shelter status on our website and update Facebook, including when we are closing prior to landfall, and the anticipated opening date and time (when known).

### Internal communications

The internal communications plan applies to staff, foster parents, and volunteers.

Staff will receive in-person briefings as often as the situation warrants, plus follow-up e-mails and/or texts for status updates.

E-mails will be sent to volunteers and fosters as soon as it is determined they need to be informed of shelter status/closing, as well as updates as often as new, relevant information is received.

Staff, fosters, and volunteers will be provided instructions via recorded messages on the CAS phone system.

## Phase 1: Preparation for Storm

The shelter has been built to withstand hurricane force winds. Because of this capability, CAS is not *required* to transport animals out of the area; we may, however, transport some animals to out-of-area shelters if conditions warrant and there is sufficient warning time. We will provide care to the animals remaining in the shelter in preparation for the storm and prior to sending all personnel home, and will resume animal care once the threat has passed. We will secure the building and property during the three days before a storm is supposed to hit.

### Staff Coordination

Ideally, all employees will work normal hours and will be released to go home well ahead of anticipated landfall of a hurricane or tropical storm. However, storms are unpredictable, and modified hours for employees to continue storm preparation may be developed.

A list will be created ahead of storm season for employees who are willing to help stay at the shelter outside of normal hours to prepare for the storm, and to return and feed animals and clean immediately after the storm. Employees should determine if they intend to evacuate the area or if they feel they will be immediately able to return to work once safe travel is possible, and to notify their supervisor of their intent. The Sr. Director of Animal Operations will determine how to best allocate resources and which employees will stay. These volunteer employees are not guaranteed to stay; instead, they will be notified by the Sr. Director of Animal Operations if selected to stay late in preparation for the storm.

Depending on the storm, management may a few pre-identified, salaried employees to stay at the shelter in lieu of going home during the storm. These employees must supply their own emergency supplies, including bedding, clothes, personal hygiene products, crates and food for their own pets (if they bring them along), medications, cash, appropriate phone chargers, water for any humans and pets, non-perishable food items, etc.Spouses can accompany any volunteer employee. **No children** will be allowed for safety and logistical reasons.

### Tropical Storm Preparation Timeline

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| Area | Actions | Responsible |
| **By June 1st Each Year** | | |
| Communications (See page 4) | Briefing for staff | Senior Management |
| Send standard message to volunteers & fosters about CAS actions during a storm | Foster care team / Volunteer Coordinator |
| Animals | Pre-identify volunteers & fosters to evacuate animals | Foster care team / Volunteer Coordinator |
| People | Pre-identify staff to stay at the shelter during storm | Director of Human Resources |
| **5-7 Days before Landfall** | | |
| Communications (See page 4) | Staff briefings at Wednesday meetings | Senior Management |
| Communicate with SC officials | Director, No Kill South Carolina |
| Communicate with Charleston County officials | Senior Director of Animal Care |
| Contact out-of-area partner shelters & transport | Senior Director, Anti-Cruelty and Outreach |
| Supplies | Order supplies | Senior Director of Animal Support |
| **72 Hours before Landfall** | | |
| Facility / Exterior | * All loose debris, tarps, shade cloths secured * Check generator * Dumpster emptied * Simon’s Rig in warehouse, other trailers in front of sally port | Logistics Coordinator / Facilities Manager |
| Facility / Interior | * Laundry area clean & dry * Electronics & important items off the floor | Department Heads |
| Supplies | 55-gallon water containers filled (5/pod, 7 for cats) | Logistics Coordinator / Facilities Manager |
| Confirm food for 1 week | Senior Director of Animal Care |
| Confirm leashes & collars are available | Behavior Team |
| * Set up cleaning station * Make sure batteries & flashlights are available, radio is operational | Senior Director of Animal Support |
| Animals | Stop intake & notify Animal Control | Senior Director of Animal Care |
| Cancel public spay-neuter appointments | Senior Director of Veterinary Care |
| Contact fosters to keep their foster animals | Foster Care Team |
| Contact volunteers to take animals | Volunteer Coordinator |
| Communications (See page 4) | * Prepare public messaging & media alerts * Prepare constituent messaging * Post anticipated actions on Facebook, website | Director of Community Engagement / Media & Marketing Consultant |
| Periodic staff meetings (2x/day) | Senior Management |
| Confirm communications are open with police & county EOC | Senior Director, Anti-Cruelty and Outreach |
| **48 Hours before Landfall** | | |
| Animals | Adoptable animals transferred to other shelters | Senior Director, Anti-Cruelty and Outreach |
| Foster rechecks complete | Foster Care Team |
| Determine outcomes for animals in shelter | Veterinarians / Senior Management |
| Facility | No un-cremated remains in freezer | Logistics Coordinator / Facilities Manager |
| **24 Hours before Landfall** | | |
| Facility | Exterior & interior preparations complete | Senior Management |
| All vehicles fueled | Logistics Coordinator / Facilities Manager / Assigned Drivers |
| People | Stop/release volunteers | Senior Management |
| Admin | Ensure petty cash is on hand | Chief Financial Officer |
| **8-12 Hours before Landfall** | | |
| People | Release all staff (unless pre-identified to stay) | Senior Management |

## Phase 2: During/Immediately following storm

During the storm, the shelter will not allow anyone who is not on the official staff and volunteer list (and their spouse, if appropriate) to be on the property; the number of people at the shelter should be limited to only essential personnel. Volunteers should be encouraged to stay home or evacuate the area, as needed. The contact person will be the Senior Director of Operations.

When the time is appropriate, all employees will be asked to return to the shelter to feed and clean animals. Animal care will resume when it is safe to do so.

## Phase 3: Recovery after the storm

When staff who evacuated the area are able to safely return (per authorities), they should call the Sr. Director of Operations to be scheduled for work. Cleaning up debris, fixing facility damage, and normal shelter functions will all need to be addressed. The Charleston Animal Society CEO and Sr. Director of Operations will determine when the fully functioning shelter will open again to the public. Public messaging should be used to convey the resumption of operations.

# II. Tornadoes

Tornadoes usually, but not always, have short warning times. The danger period for tornadoes is typically a few minutes to a few hours, until the storm has passed.

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| Tornadoes |  |
| Description | * Tornadoes are concentrated areas of extremely high winds, often funnel-shaped * Tornadoes may also include, for this plan, straight-line winds of high intensity that also cause minor to major damage to buildings and danger to people |
| Actions | * When the warning is given by the National Weather Service, all staff, volunteers, and visitors should gather in the hallways (near surgery and the kennels), as far away from external windows and doors as possible * The exterior of the building should be quickly checked for people who did not hear the warning * Do not lock front doors – stranded people may need to enter the building at the last minute to get away from dangerous winds * Secure loose animals when the signal is given to shelter-in-place, but do not spend additional time with the animals * Some animals may need to be brought to the hallway with personnel when there are short warning times |

# III. Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) incidents and major transportation emergencies

These incidents typically have no warning, and may cause all personnel, volunteers, and visitors to shelter-in-place until the threat has passed or the all-clear is given by proper authorities.

The following summarizes the emergencies and the anticipated effects:

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| Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) | |
| Description | * Hazardous Materials include both airborne and ground-based materials that may cause harm to human and animal health if contacted or breathed in. * HAZMATs may be released accidentally through a failure of measures intended to prevent their release (i.e., a gas pipeline break, an accidental dumping of jet fuel, etc.). * HAZMAT incidents typically require long periods of time (hours to weeks or months) to properly be removed. * A HAZMAT incident may force staff, volunteers, and visitors to initially shelter-in-place for their own protection, and to be eventually released when the immediate danger is contained. |
| Actions | During the shelter-in-place period, all personnel should anticipate staying inside until the all-clear is given, and the following will likely need to be enforced:   * No one should be allowed to open any doors, especially when the material is airborne. * Dogs in the shelter will not be able to be walked outside. * Food and other supplies will not be able to be brought in. * No one will be allowed to go outside to smoke, take a break, etc. * Ventilation systems may need to be temporarily shut-off by operations/management personnel, if the threat is airborne and upon advice of emergency personnel. |

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| Major Transportation Emergencies | |
| Description | * The Charleston Animal Society facility sits adjacent to an international airport/US military base, and train tracks run the length of the north side of the property. * 2 major highways are near the facility. * Shelter operations and personnel safety have the potential to be affected if there is a major transportation emergency caused by a train derailment or an airplane crash, and to a lesser degree by a major highway incident. |
| Actions | * Like a HAZMAT incident, personnel should expect to shelter-in-place until the all-clear is given. * If the incident is very close to the facility, roads into and out of the shelter may be blocked or rerouted, which will cause disruptions to normal operations. * Operations may resume after a period of hours to days while the incident is managed. * The shelter may have to be shut down or minimally staffed while the impact to the area is assessed. The CEO and Sr. Director of Operations will assess the impact on staff and provide further instructions. |

# IV. Immediate Danger Evacuation (Bomb threats/Criminal Activities)

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| Bomb Threats/Criminal Activity with Weapons | |
| Description | * Bomb threats (and similar threats) are often called in to a facility by a criminal and require staff to take immediate action to protect lives. * Staff discovering the threat will make an announcement (i.e., “Red Dog, meet in the Education Room”) |
| Actions | * If you hear the alarm or an announcement (“RED DOG”), you must immediately stop what you are doing. * All people in the facility (staff, volunteers, visitors) will need to evacuate. All personnel should be aware of who may need to be notified. Supervisors will account for staff based on staff scheduled and present during the day. * Law enforcement should be called from another phone while the person taking the call gathers information from the person calling-in the bomb threat. * Criminal activity involving weapons will need to be called-in to law enforcement personnel (i.e., call 911) immediately when it is safe to do so. * Per direction of law enforcement, any staff, volunteers, and visitors will either need to evacuate the facility immediately, or shelter-in-place while awaiting further instructions. If evacuating, do not stop to secure animals that are out of their kennels. * Meet at designated meeting point outside the facility and check in with your manager/contact person; at the sign outside the building for fires and of whatever location is announced for any other emergency (education room, lobby, etc.). * DO NOT LEAVE THE CAS GROUNDS. If you are not accounted for, firefighters may unnecessarily risk their lives to come in and rescue you. You will receive further instructions and details when you reach the meeting point. |

# V. Fires

Note that the entire facility is covered by sprinklers. There are also adequate fire extinguishers throughout the facility. The Fire Marshall inspects the facility annually.

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| Fires |  |
| Description | * Fires may occur in any place of business. * During this type of emergency as others, **human safety** takes top priority. * The facility should be evacuated in an orderly manner, and animals should not be removed from the facility. * If there is a fire or your manager receives word of an emergency you will be alerted with either the fire alarm (in case of fire) or by an announcement |
| Actions | * All personnel should evacuate the facility immediately upon hearing the alarm, and are not to try to fight the fire. * Close all internal and external doors as you leave; do not lock doors. * If you notice a fire, immediately pull the alarm in the hallway. * If you hear the alarm or an announcement, you must immediately stop what you are doing. * Turn off any water/lights and close doors. Make sure as you exit all doors are closed in the building. Do not run; walk calmly. If you are properly trained to use the fire extinguishers you may use them as you exit the building. Do NOT try and “find” the fire. * Meet at designated meeting point (front of the building, near the road entrance on Remount Road) outside the facility and check in with your manager/contact person * DO NOT LEAVE THE ANIMAL SOCIETY GROUNDS. If you are not accounted for, firefighters may unnecessarily risk their lives to come in and rescue you. You will receive further instructions and details when you reach the meeting point. |

## Frequently Asked Questions during a fire:

### What if I have a dog out?

If you have taken a dog out of its kennel replace it into a secure area, without other animals closest to your location. You may also move the dog to a kennel on your way out of the building/to the meeting location. Do not walk back through the shelter just to replace dog in its kennel.

### What if I am outside walking an animal?

In case of fire, stay outside. You may place animal in outside kennel if needed. Do not risk your life by re-entering the building. If an announcement is made for a meeting place inside the building (i.e., for shelter-in-place actions), immediately return dog to the nearest inside enclosure on your way to the designated meeting place.

### What if we are in surgery?

Turn off the oxygen in the clinic. Turn off all anesthesia machines. Close doors and turn off water as in other areas of the facility. It is at the discretion of the veterinarian about how to proceed or discontinue the current surgery on the table. All recovering animals can be left on the beach, although they may be taken along if there is no danger to people or delay in evacuation. If a dog is particularly dangerous you may move it into the rubber room.

### Why can’t I take animals with me?

This creates risks to your life and the lives of other people (like firefighters). We have separate areas and a good sprinkler system to minimize casualties due to an emergency. Any dog that is removed can be a legal issue for the shelter. Also, rescuers will have to devote resources to saving people that might try to go after animals, delaying actual resources to combat the fire and save all the other animals’ lives.

Contact lists:

1. **Staff contact information**

The staff contact list, including names, e-mail addresses and phone numbers, is periodically reviewed by Human Resources and/or the Director of Emergency Services for accuracy. A list may be generated as needed

1. **Volunteer/Foster lists**

Volunteers and Fosters are contacted regularly via e-mail messaging. Various personnel from Charleston Animal Society have the ability to reach volunteers and fosters remotely via the internet if access to the shelter is denied. Lists of volunteers and fosters can be generated as needed

1. **Key personnel list**

Key personnel, by position, are listed below. Actual contact information is shared between them.

* Chief Executive Officer (Joe Elmore)
* Board President (Elizabeth Bradham)
* Sr. Director, Animal Operations (Pearl Sutton)
* Sr. Director, Finance and Accounting (Joy Huber)
* Director, Media Relations and Community Engagement (Kay Hyman)