

RUNNING HEAD: ESTABLISHING EMERGENCY PET SHELTERS

Establishing Emergency Pet Shelters during Manmade, Natural Emergency or Disasters

in the Worthington Fire Protection District

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CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

I hereby certify that this paper constitutes my own product, that where the language of others is set forth, quotation marks so indicate, and that appropriate credit is given where I have used the language, ideas, expression, or writings of another.

Signed: _____

Abstract

The problem is the Worthington Fire Protection District does not have any Emergency Pet Shelters established for use in emergencies.

The purpose of this research was to identify requirements and resources for establishing emergency pet shelters in the Fire District. This was a descriptive research project. The research questions were:

1. To identify what, if any, are the regulations for emergency pet shelters in the District.
2. To identify what, if any, locations in the District meet the emergency pet shelters regulations.
3. To identify what agency would determine the protocol for opening a pet shelter during an emergency.
4. To identify what, if any, role would District personnel play in an emergency pet shelter.
5. To identify how other jurisdictions are administering and operating emergency pet shelters and who is responsible.

The procedures included a review of regulations, emergency operations plans, and a survey of the National Society of Executive Fire Officers, where questioned regarding pet shelter administration and operations. The procedures also included interviews of emergency management and district personnel.

Each localities result varied. There were no consistency in operation and administration of shelters, even though FEMA has developed a pet shelter best practice.

The recommendations, based on this study were:

1. Direct the Worthington Fire Department Community Risk Division to work with Louisville Metro officials to designate “Animal Need Stations” within the District and to disseminate that information to the public.
2. Direct the Community Risk Division to work with Oldham County officials to designate Emergency Pet Shelters within the District and to disseminate that information to the public.
3. Work with Louisville Metro officials to provide Emergency Pet Training to residents of the Fire District.
4. Work with Oldham County officials to provide Emergency Pet Training to residents of the Fire District.

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Introduction

The Worthington Fire Protection District (WFD) is a combination fire department in Metropolitan Louisville, Jefferson County Kentucky. The mission of the Worthington Fire Department is to “provide quality and caring service to those who live, work and visit our community, which will minimize the loss of life and destruction of property through education, prevention, and mitigation of hazardous situations with professional, trained and competent personnel” (Worthington Fire Department Annual Report 2009). The mission statement infers that the fire department will provide services to minimize the loss of life.

As shown in the evacuation and emergency response during Hurricane Katrina and other later disasters, many people will not evacuate during an emergency if they have to leave their pets behind. So much so, that the Congress of the United States of America passed the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 (H.R. 3858). This Act amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5196b). It called for Local and State Emergency Management Agencies to ensure in their plans that the needs of individuals with household pets and service animal are provided for. The Act also allows the Director of FEMA to make financial contributions to State and Local authorities to create preparedness programs including assisting in the establishment and procuring of supplies for emergency pet sheltering facilities.

The problem is the Worthington Fire Protection District does not have any Emergency Pet Shelters established for use during manmade, natural emergencies, or disasters.

The purpose of this research is to identify requirements and resources for establishing emergency pet shelters in the Worthington Fire Protection District. This descriptive research project will include a survey of the National Society of Executive Fire Officers. This descriptive research project will also include interviews of emergency management personnel. Also included in this research is a review of current literature on the topic.

This research project will identify what, if any, are the state and local regulations for emergency pet shelters. It will identify what, if any, business locations in the Worthington Fire Protection District meet the state and local regulations for establishing emergency pet shelters. It will further identify what agency within, the Worthington Fire Protection District's jurisdiction, would determine the protocol for opening an emergency pet center during a manmade, natural emergency or disaster. It will also identify what, if any, role would the Worthington Fire Protection District play in an emergency pet shelter. The paper will also identify how, if anything, are other localities in the United States doing in the way of emergency pet shelters and who is responsible for these shelter and the staffing of said shelters.

Background and Significance

The Worthington Fire Protection District (WFD) was formed in 1943 to protect a farming community fifteen miles outside of Louisville, Kentucky. The area has now changed from a rural farming community to a diverse suburban district consisting of residential areas, two industrial areas consisting of factories and warehousing, three shopping malls, the Ford Kentucky Truck Plant, numerous railroad lines, a section of Interstate 71 and a section of Interstate 265. The population of the district has swelled to

over 32,000 residents. With a swell in human population, also comes a swell in the pet population.

The fire district covers 19 square miles in the northeastern corner of Metropolitan Louisville, Jefferson County, Kentucky and a small southwestern portion of Oldham County, Kentucky. It is a combination department with 40 volunteers, 23 career personnel, and 9 part-time personnel. Back in the 1990's the governments of the City of Louisville, and Jefferson County Kentucky merged. During that merger, the 19 suburban fire protection taxing districts were not included. Each of those districts has autonomy over fire operations in their respective districts. However, many agencies are responsible for emergency response and the more agencies involved sometimes lend to decreased interagency support.

This research project is being conducted as a requirement for the Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management curriculum at the National Fire Academy (NFA) located in Emmitsburg, Maryland. This Applied Research Project (ARP) relates directly with the course goal and to the United States Fire Administration operational objective to improve the fire and emergency services' capability for response to and recovery from all hazards, and to improve local planning and preparedness (NFA 2009).

Literature Review

The research material obtained for this project was obtained from numerous sources. The National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center was the main source of information including other Executive Fire Officer Applied Research Projects, and

periodicals. The Louisville Free Public Library provided good sources of information and the World Wide Web provided a number of resources.

Hurricane Katrina brought to light the issue of what to do with pets in a disaster. Gina Pace of CBS News (2006) reported that the Congressional Friends of Animal Caucus estimated that some 600,000 animals were left without shelter or died during Hurricane Katrina. Many pet owners were placed in danger and had to be rescued because they chose to stay with their pets at home.

And many saw the television shot of the little boy that had his small dog taken away from him by police as he tried to board a bus that was to take them away from the Superdome in New Orleans. The boy cried in anguish, “Snowball, Snowball” and was so grief stricken that he vomited (Business News – PR Leap, 2005). According to the Congressional Record of PETS (2006), the “Snowball” incident led US Representative Tom Lantos, D-California to introduce the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act into congress. He explained, “The scene from New Orleans of a 9-year old little boy crying because he was not allowed to take his little white dog Snowball was too much to bear. Personally, I know I wouldn’t be able to leave my little white dog Masko to a fate of almost certain death. As I watched the images of the heartbreaking choices the gulf residents had to make, I was moved to find a way to prevent this from ever happening again”.

Sandy Montorose, an ASPCA staff member who worked in New Orleans, stated “When you see these people who have lost everything and the only thing they have is their favorite loved one, it’s about something much larger” (Manning, 2005). The PETS Act requires state and local emergency planners to include in their evacuation plans how

they will deal with household pets and service animals. In order to qualify for future grants from FEMA, they are required to submit these plans to FEMA (Humane Society, 2005).

Preparedness is important not only at the federal, state, and local area, but preparedness begins at the home level. The individual or family needs to prepare for the onset of an emergency. “Most disaster research indicates that families evacuate as a unit”, (Heath, Voeks, and Glickman, 2001). Evacuating pets are more hinged on whether or not the pet is treated as one in the family. However, most non coastal families are not prepared for any sort of evacuation. A number of the associations and groups that service pets or families have developed checklists or have developed preparedness information for pet owners in hopes to make pet owners more self sufficient in cases of emergency.

The American Red Cross is one of the largest agencies that deal with sheltering during emergencies. Many localities, such as Metropolitan Louisville, Kentucky delegate shelter operations to the American Red Cross. The majority of shelters that are operated by the American Red Cross will not accept pets because of health and safety concerns. The only animals that are accepted in the majority of the Red Cross shelters are Service Animals. The Red Cross stresses preplanning for pet owners. Pet owners should develop plans of locations such as hotels, and motels that will take people and pets during an emergency. They also stress planning in advance with family members, boarding facilities, or veterinarians to house your pets. Families should have emergency supplies for their pets such as: (a) sturdy leashes, harnesses, or carriers; (b) food, drinking water, bowls; (c) medications and copies of medical records; (d) a first aid kit; (e) a current

photo of your pet; (f) list of feeding schedules, veterinarian name and number and; (g) pet toys and bed, if easily transportable . (Red Cross, 2010).

The Humane Society of the United States stresses many of the same points as the Red Cross, however, the Humane Society also stresses: (a) Finding a safe place ahead of time; (b) In case you are not at home, setting up with a trusted neighbor or family member to retrieve your pets; (c) When you evacuate, take your pets, even if you are only evacuating for an anticipated short time; (d) if you do not evacuate, find a safe place within your home where you can house everybody together. Even your pets; (e) after the emergency, do not allow your pets to roam, they may become disoriented, or display behavior problems due to the stress of the emergency (Humane Society of the US- 2009).

Pet Sitters International (2010) stresses that pet sitters need to get with the pet owners and understand the plan that the pet owners have devised and find out their part in the plan, so if the emergency happens while they are sitting the pet, they can understand what to do.

The National Hurricane Center (2010) advises that “Animals brought to a pet shelter are required to have: (a) proper identification collar and rabies tag; (b) proper identification on all belongings; (c) a carrier or cage, a leash; (d) an ample supply of food; (e) water and food bowls; (f) any necessary medications; (g) specific care instructions; (h) news papers or trash bags for clean-up.

The Kentucky Office of Homeland Security (2009) is the agency responsible for emergency management within the Commonwealth of Kentucky. They also stresses that individuals are responsible for their own pets during emergencies and that public shelters may not take pets. They stress individual preparedness and to not leave your pets behind.

The National Animal Disaster Summit was held in Washington D.C. in May of 2006. It reviewed the lessons learned from the 2005 hurricane season with regards to pet sheltering and rescue. Some of their recommendations were: (a) approaching the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to create a National Multi-Agency Coordination Group (NMACG) within the National Incident Management System (NIMS) with regards to animals. This group would be responsible to develop a “companion animal component for the National Response Plan”; (b) to increase communications between persons wanting to help, persons wanting to contribute, and the unmet need; (c) to create a standard logistic list of needed supplies following any emergency or disaster; (d) to credential workers, and manage volunteers; (e) once an animal is evacuated they are reunited with their owner as soon as possible and (f) providing security at separate pet shelters (Beaver, Gros, Bailey, and Lovern; 2006).

Procedures

This Applied Research Project began at the National Fire Academy (NFA) in December of 2009 during the Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management. During several visits to the Learning Resource Center (LRC), the problem and purpose statement development were begun. The author decided at that time that the descriptive research approach would be best suited for this project.

This paper was formatted based on the *American Psychological Association Publication Manual Fifth Edition* (2001).

The first procedure was to review the Emergency Operations Plan for Louisville/Jefferson County, Kentucky and the Emergency Operations Plan for the Commonwealth of Kentucky on plans in place for Emergency Pet Shelters.

The second procedure was to review Louisville/Jefferson County Ordinances and Kentucky State Law/Administrative Relations in regards to Emergency Pet Shelters.

The third procedure was to conduct a survey. This researcher conducted one survey to collect information and determine the potential solutions to the problem. Questions for the surveys were designed to solicit information from the group on how their locality handled the issues of Emergency Pet Shelters.

The survey was distributed to the membership of the National Society of Executive Fire Officers (Appendix A). The National Society of Executive Fire Officers (NSEFO) has 517 members. Five hundred seventeen surveys were distributed and fifty three, eleven percent, were returned for evaluation. Responses to the survey were collected and compiled. The data results were then organized, grouped, and analyzed to answer the survey questions.

The fourth procedure was to conduct personal discussions with Emergency service personnel in the Louisville/Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency, and the administration of the Worthington Fire Department. They were spoken to about the problems addressed in the problem statement.

Limitations and Assumptions

Several limitations should be acknowledged in the research and development of this applied research project. The author has limited experience in survey preparation, survey question development, and data compilation. This could lead to different results if the survey was completed and compiled by a researcher with significant experience. The survey was only completed by eleven percent of the National Society of Executive Fire Officers. The survey results could be different if a larger response was achieved.

An assumption was made that all respondents would understand the survey questions, have the knowledge and ability to answer the survey correctly and honestly, and would complete and return the survey within the time frame given.

Definition of Terms

Domestic Animals. Dog and cats

Emergency Pet Shelters. Shelter for pets during manmade, natural emergency, or disasters.

Exotic Animals. Snakes, Lizards, and Birds.

Livestock. Horses, Cows, Goats, Sheep. Generally animals found on a farm, and generally not pets.

Pocket Animals. Hamsters, Mice, Fish, Gerbils. The small animals that could fit into a pocket.

Service Animals. Those animals that have been trained to assist the disabled.

Results

The results of the literature review provided the following answers to research question one “what, if any, are the state and local regulations for emergency pet shelters”.

A review of Kentucky Revised Statues (KRS) Chapter 258, Animal Control and Protection (2010) does not mention anything about regulations for Emergency Pet Shelters.

A review of Chapter 91- Animal Ordinances for Metropolitan Louisville-Jefferson County Kentucky (2010) does not mention anything about regulations for Emergency Pet Shelters.

A search of all of the KRS and Metro Louisville Ordinances found no regulations for Emergency Pet Shelters.

The results of the literature review provided the following answers to research question two “what, if any, business locations in the Worthington Fire Protection District meet the state and local regulations for establishing emergency pet shelters”. Since there are no laws, ordinances, or administrative regulations governing Emergency Pet Shelters in Kentucky, or within the Louisville Metropolitan area, than any business locations in the Worthington Fire Protection District could house an Emergency Pet Shelter, as long as it didn’t violate current health codes that would normally prohibit pets, such as restaurants.

The results of the literature review provided the following answers to research questions three “what agency within, the Worthington Fire Protection District’s jurisdiction, would determine the protocol for opening an emergency pet center during a manmade, natural emergency or disaster”. The Commonwealth of Kentucky Office of Homeland Security, Division of Emergency Management is responsible for the development and implementation of the Commonwealth’s Emergency Operation Plan. Annex F of that Plan is Reception and Care (2008). The Annex states that the American Red Cross will be responsible for shelter management. The only mention of animals is listed in Appendix F-3 (2008) of the plan. This is the “Statement of Understanding between the American Red Cross and the American Humane Society”. The Statement of Understanding provides for the following: (a) the American Humane Society understands that the American Red Cross is tasked with Shelter operations; (b) the American Humane Society will accept responsibility for setting up “animal relief efforts” through local

animal shelters. They can also set up temporary shelters if needed and is responsible for coordinating through local shelters needed supplies, food, and veterinary services. The American Red Cross will not undertake or fund any of these functions; (d) both agencies will work with each other to meet these goals. The American Humane Society would be responsible for establishing pet sheltering in our Oldham County section of our district.

The Louisville and Jefferson County Metro Emergency Management Agency is responsible for emergency planning and management within Metropolitan Louisville, Kentucky. The Louisville/Jefferson County Emergency Operations Plan (2009) is broken down into two parts. Part one deals with the Basic Plan, Assumptions, and legal issues. Part two is broken down into Emergency Support Functions (ESF).

ESF # 6 is the emergency support function dealing with mass care. The primary agency responsible for Mass Care is the American Red Cross- Louisville Chapter. The support agencies are: (a) Amateur Radio Disaster Services (ARES); (b) Jefferson County Public Schools; (c) Louisville Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency; (d) Louisville Metro Call; (e) Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness; (f) Louisville Metro Emergency Medical Services; (f) Louisville Metro Finance and Budget; (g) Human Services; (h) Louisville Metro Police Department; (i) Louisville Metro Purchasing Department; (j) Louisville MetroSafe Communications; (k) Salvation Army; and (l) Transit Authority of River City. In ESF # 6, it is stated that “ESF 6 is closely coordinated with the other Emergency Support Functions that address basic needs of the impacted population: Food and Water (ESF 11), Volunteers and Donations (ESF 15), and Animal Services (ESF 16)”. Other than that quote, there are no other provisions for animals in the mass care, or sheltering ESF.

In ESF # 16- Animal Services assumes that “Human lives may be lost due to the refusal of owners to evacuate without their pets or livestock. Public Education by Louisville Metro Animal Services and other animal-related organizations is needed to make the people aware of pet sheltering facilities available, and the need to plan in advance”. It also assumes that “The large number of homeless/injured pets, livestock and exotic animals would be a health and nuisance/bite threat that would necessitate a response to address the capture and subsequent sheltering of these animals and sheltered animals will need to be re-united with their owners after the disaster.” ESF # 16 does state that only service animals may be permitted in public shelters. The primary pet shelter will be the Metro Animal Services Shelter, some 20 plus miles away from the Worthington Fire District. However, additional “Animal Need Stations” could be established. The primary agency is the Louisville Metro Animal Services. Additional support agencies are: (a) Jefferson County Extension Service; (b) Jefferson County Fire Protection Districts, including Worthington Fire Department; (c) Kentucky Veterinarian Association; (d) Louisville/Jefferson County EMA; (e) Louisville Fire and Rescue; (f) Louisville Metro Department of Public Health and Wellness; (g) Louisville Metro Parks Department; (h) Louisville Metro Public Works; (i) Louisville Metro Solid Waste Management; and (j) Louisville Metro Zoo.

The results of the literature review, and personnel communications provided the following answers to research questions four “what, if any, role would the Worthington Fire Protection District play in an emergency pet shelter”. The Louisville and Jefferson County Emergency Operations Plan ESF # 16 listed all of the Jefferson County Fire Protection Districts, including the Worthington Fire Department, and a support agency

for Animal Services. On page 225 of the ESF it states, “Louisville Fire & Rescue, Jefferson County Fire Protection Districts, and the Metropolitan Search and Rescue will support ESF 16 with coordination of specialized rescue such as water, and forest rescue, etc.” According to Lana Lynch of the Louisville and Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency (personal communications, May 5, 2010), the fire department’s role would be limited to rescue human and non human only. The fire department has no role in the establishment, and staffing of an animal need station.

According to Chief of the Worthington Fire Department Nolan Caudill (personnel communications, May 5, 2010), he sees the fire department being overtaxed during an emergency and would limit the departments involvement to response and rescue of human victims first, then animal victims second. He stresses that the department would only rescue animals if there were someone or someplace in our fire protection district to take them.

The results of the literature review, survey, and personnel communications provided the following answers to research questions five “how, if anything, are other localities in the United States doing in the way of emergency pet shelters and who is responsible for these shelters and the staffing of said shelters”.

Survey question one asked “Do you have provisions for Emergency Pet Shelters (shelters for pets during manmade, natural emergency, or disasters) outlined in your department, locality, or state emergency operations plan?”

Table 1 Do you have provisions for Emergency Pet Shelters (shelters for pets during manmade, natural emergency, or disasters) outlined in your department, locality, or state emergency operations plan? (Choose all that apply)

Yes, Department Plan	5
Yes, Locality Plan	27
Yes, State Plan	9
No	14
Totals	55

The Majority of those that answered stated they had a plan locally, but just as significant is the number of areas that didn't.

Survey question two asked "If yes, what types of animals can be sheltered at the Emergency Pet Shelter?"

Table 2 If yes, what types of animals can be sheltered at the Emergency Pet Shelter? (Choose all that apply)

Domestic Animals	30
Pocket Animals	12
Exotic Animals	5
Livestock	12
Service Animals only	5
Totals	62

The Majority of those that answered stated they took domestic animals at their pet shelters.

Survey question three asked "if you do not have Emergency Pet Shelters, why do you think that you do not have them?"

Table 3 If you do not have Emergency Pet Shelters, why do you think that you do not have them? (Choose all that apply)

Health & Safety Reasons	1
Haven't Planned for it	8
No one will take ownership	8
Too Expensive	1
Liability Reasons	2
Not enough volunteers/staff	8
Totals	28

The majority of the agencies that answered either hadn't planned for emergency pet shelters, didn't have an agency to take ownership of the issue or did not have enough volunteers or staff to have them. This has been a problem that was identified during Hurricane Katrina.

Survey question four asked "who is responsible for opening and staffing the Emergency Pet Shelter?"

Table 4 Who is responsible for opening and staffing the Emergency Pet Shelter?

(Choose all that apply)

American Red Cross	8
American Humane Society	7
Local Humane Society	13
Local Animal Services	19
Local Animal Veterinary	5
Fire Department	2
Local Emergency Management Agency	8
Local Health Department	3
Other Voluntary Agency	10

The majority of the agencies answering stated that the local animal services (i.e. dog catcher) opened and staffed the emergency pet shelter, followed by the local Humane Society.

Survey question five asked "how do you house the pets"?

Table 5 How do you house the pets?

In the same area/location as the owner	10
In the same building, but away from the owner	4
In a separate location. Pet and Owner in different buildings	17
We do not shelter pets	9

The majority of those answering house the pets in a separate location away from the owners. This is the practice that Louisville Metro Animal Services uses.

Survey question six asked “If you have emergency pet shelters, where do you locate them at?”

Table 6 If you have emergency pet shelters, where do you locate them at? (Choose all that apply)

Schools (Elementary, Middle and High)	11
Churches	2
Veterinary Clinics (Animal Hospitals)	11
Established Pet Hotels	4
Colleges	1
Horse/Dog Tracks	2
Animal Reservations	4
Motels/Hotels	0
Sports Venues (Baseball, Football, Basketball Stadium Arenas)	4

The majority of those answering establish their pet shelters at Schools or at Veterinary Clinics.

Survey question seven asked “what role, if any, does the fire department play in an Emergency Pet Shelter?”

Table 7 What role, if any, does the fire department play in an Emergency Pet Shelter? (Choose all that apply)

Assisting and/or opening shelter	6
Assisting and/or staffing shelter	1
Assisting and/or procuring equipment for shelter	4
Transportation to shelter for evacuees	3
Fire Department plays no role	31

The Majority of those agencies answering the question state that the fire department plays no role in an Emergency Pet Shelter. In Louisville, this is also the case.

Survey question eight asked “if you have any additional information that may be important to my research, please add it here.”

Jeff Davidson of the Mill Valley, CA Fire Department added: “Our parks and recreation department is responsible for care and shelter operation in our city emergency plan. We just did a community evacuation drill and had 300 residents from 158 homes participate. 60 of these people came through the animal care portion of the collection area. 3/4th of them didn't have a plan for their domestic animals.”

Michelle Caldwell of the Big Bear Lake, CA Fire Protection District added: “Although we do not have a City or Fire District plan, there is a county plan (San Bernardino County, CA) that can be utilized. To date, it has not been used locally.”

Donald Dominick of the Onalaska, WI Fire Department added: “We utilize our local animal shelter that is run by the county.”

Martin King of the West Allis, WI Fire Department added: “We have had experience with this when people from New Orleans were relocated and some people relocated with their pets. With fires, we have worked closely with Red Cross, who is

prepared for relocation of people and pets. We have also worked with the location Humane Society and organization that picks up strays (no local dog catcher, county wide organization). No formal plans or agreements though.”

Stephen Charles of the Berthoud, CO Fire Protection District added: “We don't have a formal plan or process. In the event of an emergency we assist the pet owner or humane society with locating housing for a pet (includes horses & other types of livestock).”

Vernon Owens of the Bellevue, WA Emergency Management/Fire Department added: “Our Parks Department takes the lead role in Pet Sheltering and currently writing the Pet Sheltering plan for the city. The document is not complete but much of the regional work is done at the county (King Co.) level. Because of the Howard Hanson Earthen Dam and Green River Flooding in Sounty King Co, regional planning, training and exercising have been ongoing with Livestock and Animal sheltering being one of the subjects the jurisdictions have been diligently working on. The Pet Shelter Plan for the City of Bellevue is in a draft format and the City's policy is not to release documents draft documents.”

Thomas Weber of the Port Orange, FL Fire and Rescue added: “We have both regular pet and owner shelters and special needs shelters with service pets.”

Steven Warrington of the County Fire Authority in Victoria, Australia added: “The fire department provides advice to pet owners prior to bushfire events and therefore places the responsibility for pet safety on the owner. Our responsibility is to provide advice.”

Coleman Bushnell of the Norfolk, MA Fire Department added: “Pets are housed in the owner’s vehicle at the emergency shelter. We have never implemented this plan in an emergency.”

Micheal Despain of the Fresno, CA Fire Department added: “Locations of pet friendly shelters are usually at community centers and pets are housed outside in protective cages.”

Floyd Green of the Powhatan County, VA Emergency Management added: “Our Red Cross People Shelter is in one portion of our High School while the pet shelter is located in a Vo-TEC center located at the far end of the complex. Therefore Red Cross does not count that part of the building as a part of their shelter.”

Michael Wallace of the Largo, FL Fire Rescue added: “The County Animal services houses the pets.”

Discussion

This study shows that there are many variables in the issue of emergency pet sheltering. According to Lana Lynch of the Louisville and Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency (personal communications, May 5, 2010), the Louisville Jefferson County ESF # 16 has only been implemented once and that was on a low scale. She advises that even though the plan calls for additional animal needs stations throughout the Metro, none of those agreements, and those locations have not been established. They are currently looking into the cost of mobile trailers for animal needs stations. Ms. Lynch also advised that this is still a fairly new topic for emergency managers and a topic that they are trying to get their hands around.

According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (2010), an estimated 62% of United States households have pets. In some incidents, there are more pets than people. In the Worthington Fire Protection District, there are approximately 32,000 residents; this could potentially result in possibly five thousand pets that could be uprooted in a disaster.

In Miami-Dade County (2010), they have established Pet-Friendly Hurricane Evacuation Centers (PHEC). There is an application package that has to be pre-filed, and one family member must stay with the pet in the center at all times. Once the evacuation order is given, then the owner and pet(s) must go to the designed shelter area with all of the items that are on their acceptance letter. “Any animals deemed a risk to humans or other animals, due to illness or behavioral problems will not be allowed to enter.” The pet will be examined at entrance into the shelter. While this is a good program for an area with the potential for a couple of weeks notice before a disaster hits, the Louisville/Jefferson County area generally have emergency’s that are more fluid and with less notice, such as flash floods, or tornados.

Dr. James Wenzel (2007) stated that Veterinarians that become involved in the disaster response must have a general understanding of NIMS and ICS in order to understand their role within the organizational framework. Dr. Kenneth Nusbaum., Dr. Bernard Rollin, and Dr. James Wohl (2007) stated that all responding veterinarians should have an initial training in ICS, and the state/local emergency plans they are operating under. Dr. Elizabeth Settles and Dr. Sarah Babcock (2007) stressed that veterinarians must understand the law in the areas they are practicing. Many states have differing laws in regards to pets and livestock. Dr. Lola Hudson, Dr. Helen Berschneider,

Dr. Kelli Ferris, and Dr. Sally Vivrette (2001) stated that after the response for Hurricane Floyd in 1999 that the State of North Carolina realized that they needed more advanced planning with regards to animals. They treated approximately 375 dogs, 75 cats, and 17 other animals as a result of the intense flooding as a result of Hurricane Floyd.

Dr. John Madigan and Jacqui Whittemore (2000) stated that it is the practitioner's role to assist in educating clients regarding disaster preparedness, especially when it comes to equine. Larger animals are harder to evacuate.

Whatever is done, the key is education. Educating pet owners on their role before and during a disaster is important. Educating all aspects of responders, especially those that are not normally in a response role is the key to a smooth operation. The Ready Campaign (2010) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Disaster Preparedness Series from the American Veterinary Medical Association (2010), the Disaster Preparedness brochure from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) (2010), and the American Red Cross (2010) all have excellent information for pet owners on how to take care of their pets during disasters.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2010) has developed a Best Practice for Pet-Friendly Shelter Operations. A pet-friendly shelter is a "public human emergency shelter that is located within the same area or facility as an emergency shelter for pets". Pet-friendly shelters have positive aspects to them in that when pet owners are allowed to care for their pets in a safe environment there is more of a likelihood that persons will evacuate. Less staffing is needed for pet friendly shelters.

The pet-friendly shelter best practice begins with pre-incident planning. You work the issue before the issue starts. A lead organization such as Animal Control or an Animal

Response Team made up of many organizations is chosen to begin the planning. Once you determine who is in charge, you need to establish partnerships.

The partnership has to be with the mass care provider (human sheltering). In order for pet-friendly shelters to work the mass care provider has to be assured that the pet-friendly shelter will be independent and self sufficient of the mass care section. The lead organization then has to create strong operating procedures and processes to manage their shelter operations. This will demonstrate to the mass care provider that the pet-friendly shelter will not be detrimental to the mass care operations. These procedure/processes would clearly delineate operations and administration.

The Best Practice then states that you next have to determine who is going to staff the shelter. These personnel must be qualified to handle animals. All designated personnel need to be trained in: (a) handling animals; (b) CPR/first aid; (c) first aid for animals; (d) disaster animal response; (e) ICS; (f) NIMS; (g) National Response Plan; and (h) the two modules of FEMA Animals in Disaster.

Once you have picked and trained your staff, you then have to determine what facilities that you can use. Ideally, you use the same building as the human shelter, but a different wing or floor. Once your location or locations are determined, then a pre-use walk through will need to be conducted. This would document the condition of the facility prior to use, plus determine that all of the needed infrastructure; such as running water, ventilation, and restrooms are in place.

During shelter operations, the Incident Command System (ICS) should be used and everyone should know what their job is and who they report to. This must be trained in advance, especially for those that have not been exposed to ICS. Also during shelter

operations, supplies must be identified and quantities maintained. Shelter must, in advance decide what supplies must be kept on premises and what will be required of the pet owners. Always take into account that someone will forget certain things and you should have some of each (food, toys, crates, etc.) in stock. Some localities, such as Arlington County, VA; have purchased trailers and have stocked those with the pet shelter supplies. This allows for easy movement of those supplies throughout the locality.

As with human shelters, the pet shelter managers must provide safety and security at the shelter site. This includes lock down times and 24 hour security.

Also, as with human shelters, the pet shelters must have a registration and intake process. This process must be easy and coordinated with the human shelter. Some localities, such as Hurricane prone areas, will allow for pre-registration. Pre-registration does work for those types of usage, but will not normally work for sudden incidents.

During the registration process, an animal intake card must be completed. This card will have all of the identifying information about the pet and a picture of the pet and their owner. Once registered the animal should be checked out by qualified person to make sure of their health. The shelter should have a veterinary to provide medical care at the shelter.

Animal housing areas must be easily cleaned and disinfected. Different types of animals must be segregated to reduce pet stress. Pet-friendly shelters allow for the owner to take care of their pet (feeding, walking, and playing). However there will be times that the staff will have to take care of these care needs. During the stay at the shelter the shelter staff will continuously monitor the pets for illness and aggressiveness. Aggressive animals will be handled by designated persons only.

The locality needs to develop a shelter map with information on what types of animals will be taken at specific shelters. There is no need for the public to take an animal to a shelter that will not take that species of animals.

The City of Alhambra, CA Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan Annex F- Animal Care (2010) outlines that their emergency pet shelters will be established at pre-identified locations, and that animals will be housed in as close proximity as possible. Their plan outlines that the Los Angeles County Animal Control is the lead agency for animal sheltering. The fire department does not have any duties for animal care.

The City of Alhambra stresses that “Emergency animal shelters may or may not be just a brick and mortar building”. They have provisions to set up a shelter outside under tents and traps if necessary. They stress making efforts to separate species by area to reduce stress.

One of the things that the City of Alhambra does that is unique is that they leave a notice form on the door of a structure if they have to remove or evacuate an animal. This allows the pet owner to know exactly where the pet is for pickup.

Powhatan County, VA in their Emergency Management Plan Annex 3- Animal Care and Control Support (2007) outlines that the Powhatan County Sheriff’s Office-Animal Control Division is their lead agency. Their pet-friendly shelter is set up at their Animal Control Shelter. What is unique about their document is that they set a 10 day post disaster limit on the pet. If after 10 days the owner does not take possession, then the pet becomes the property of Powhatan County.

There are many variables in Emergency Pet Shelter management.

Recommendations

The research conducted for this ARP has resulted in recommendations. The first recommendation is to direct the Worthington Fire Department Community Risk Division to work with the Louisville- Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency and the Louisville Metro Animal Control to designate “Animal Need Stations” within the Worthington Fire Protection District and to disseminate that information to the public.

The second recommendation is to direct the Worthington Fire Department Community Risk Division to work with the Oldham County Emergency Management Agency and the Oldham County Humane Society to designate Emergency Pet Shelters within the Oldham County section of the Worthington Fire Protection District and to disseminate that information to the public.

The third recommendation is to work with the Louisville- Jefferson County Emergency Management Agency to provide Emergency Pet Evacuation/Disaster Training to residents of the Worthington Fire Protection District.

The fourth recommendation is to work with the Oldham County Emergency Management Agency to provide Emergency Pet Evacuation/Disaster Training to residents of the Oldham County section of the Worthington Fire Protection District.

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Appendix A

National Society of Executive Fire Officers

Survey

This survey is for use in an Applied Research Project for the Executive Analysis of Fire Service Operations in Emergency Management class as part of the Executive Fire Officer Program at the National Fire Academy. Your participation is greatly appreciated. Please return completed surveys to the attention of Division Chief Kevin Jump.

Please provide the following Demographical Information.

- Name
 - Department
 - City/Town
 - State
 - Email Address
 - Phone Number
1. Do you have provisions for Emergency Pet Shelters (shelters for pets during manmade, natural emergency, or disasters) outlined in your department, locality, or state emergency operations plan? (Choose all that apply)
 - Yes, Department Plan
 - Yes Locality Plan
 - Yes, State Plan
 - No
 2. If yes, what type of animals can be sheltered at the Emergency Pet Shelter? (Choose all that apply)
 - Domestic Animals (Dogs/Cats)
 - Pocket Animals (Hamsters, Mice, Fish, Etc.)
 - Exotic Animals (Snakes, etc.)
 - Livestock
 - Service Animals only
 3. If you do not have Emergency Pet Shelters, why do you think that you do not have them? (Choose all that apply)
 - Health & Safety Reasons
 - Haven't planned for it

- No one will take ownership
 - Too expensive
 - Liability Reasons
 - Not enough volunteers/staff
4. Who is responsible for opening and staffing the Emergency Pet Shelter? (Choose all that apply)
- American Red Cross
 - American Humane Society
 - Local Humane Society
 - Local Animal Services (i.e. dog catcher)
 - Local Animal Veterinary
 - Fire Department
 - Local Emergency Management Agency
 - Local Health Department
 - Other Voluntary Agency
5. How do you house the pets?
- In the same area/location as the owner.
 - In the same building, but away from owner.
 - In a separate location. Pet and owner in different buildings.
 - We do not shelter pets.
6. If you have emergency pet shelters, where do you locate them at? (Choose all that apply)
- Schools (Elementary, Middle and High School)
 - Churches
 - Veterinary Clinics (Animal Hospitals)
 - Established Pet Hotels
 - Colleges
 - Horse/Dog Tracks
 - Animal Reservations
 - Motels/Hotels
 - Sports Venues (Baseball, Football, Basketball Stadiums/Arenas)
7. What role, if any, does the Fire Department play in an Emergency Pet Shelter? (Check all that apply)
- Assisting and/or opening shelter.
 - Assisting and/or staffing shelter.
 - Assisting and/or procuring equipment for shelter.

- Transportation to shelter for evacuees.
 - Fire Department plays no role.
8. If you have any additional information that may be important to my research, please add it here.

If you have any copies of emergency Pet Shelter rules/regulations, or plans you can email them to me at:

kjump@worthingtonfire.com

I appreciate your help in this matter.