

RELATED TERMS

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PRIMARY DISCIPLINES

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- Emergency Management

LESSON LEARNED

Veterinary Services: Providing Evacuation Information to Animal Owners

SUMMARY

Local animal services organizations should provide advance information to animal owners on the equipment necessary to move their pets or livestock in the event of an emergency. Public and private animal services organizations should also provide animal owners with information on appropriate evacuation sites and ingress/egress routes to those sites.

DESCRIPTION

On October 25, 2003, the worst firestorms in San Diego County history began. The firestorms burned nearly 400,000 acres, destroyed more than 3,000 structures, and claimed the lives of 14 civilians and one firefighter. San Diego County's Department of Animal Services faced an unprecedented number of animals needing evacuation. Public and private sector animal services organizations, their supporting agencies, and volunteers evacuated approximately 3,000 large animals (horses and livestock) and 500 small animals (dogs, cats, birds, etc.) during the firestorms. The Department of Animal Services then had to find shelter for the extraordinary magnitude of evacuated pets and livestock.

After the incident, the San Diego County Office of Emergency Services found that many owners were unprepared to evacuate their animals. Many horse and livestock owners had neither trailers to transport large animals, nor the means to haul them. Small animal owners also lacked evacuation plans, information on evacuation sites, and cages or crates to transport their pets.

Local animal services organizations should provide advance information to animal owners on the equipment necessary to move their pets or livestock in the event of an emergency. Public and private animal services organizations should also provide animal owners with information on appropriate evacuation sites and ingress/egress routes to those sites.

CITATION

- San Diego County Office of Emergency Services. San Diego County After-Action Report: Firestorms 2003. (LLIS.gov ID# [9052](#))

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