

Prepare your pets during Preparedness Month

DES MOINES – September’s Preparedness Month is an opportunity to encourage Iowans to take steps to make sure they and their families are ready for disasters. But it’s also an opportunity to talk about preparedness for other important members of our families: our pets.

According to the Animal Rescue League (ARL) of Iowa, the best way to protect your pets is to make sure they are part of your family’s preparedness preparations.

“As we have seen in far too many disasters, many people risk their own safety in order to help their pets. With proper planning, these situations can be avoided or minimized since much can be done in advance to ensure that both people and their pets are prepared in the case of a disaster,” said Tom Colvin, Executive Director for the Animal Rescue League of Iowa. “The ARL works with agencies across the state to assist with the pet element of disaster planning, as well as offer pet owners a variety of pet supplies in our retail store that are needed for disaster planning.”

Here are some pet preparedness tips:

- Put together an emergency supply kit for your pet. Include enough food for a few days, current vaccination records, medications, and treats and small toys to make your pet more comfortable in a stressful or unfamiliar setting.
- Make a plan for your pet. Prepare a list of hotels, kennels, friends and family members outside your immediate area where your pet may be able to stay in an emergency. Many emergency shelters do not accept pets.
- When bad weather or other emergency threatens, don’t wait until the last minute to take action. Make sure dogs and cats are wearing collars and identification tags. Have leashes and carriers, along with your pet’s disaster supplies, ready in case you need to evacuate.

For more information on emergency preparedness for pets, visit the [Ready Iowa website](#) or the [Animal Rescue League of Iowa’s website](#).

The Animal Rescue League of Iowa will host a session on disaster preparedness for pets on Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2014, from 5:30 to 7 p.m. at its main facility in Des Moines. For information and to register for this free session, visit the [event page on the ARL’s website](#).

Iowa’s Preparedness Month is held in conjunction with National Preparedness Month, which was created by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in an effort to educate the public on how to prepare for emergencies. For more information on Preparedness Month and how to be better prepared for emergencies, visit the [Ready Iowa website](#).

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