

Your Community & Emergency Response for Livestock & Pets

Agriculture and Forestry

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Objectives

- **Review the Government and Community lessons from dealing with animals during community evacuation**
- **Encourage Community pre-event planning to deal with pets and livestock**

Focus

- **Owned animals**
 - **Pets, companion animals and livestock**
 - **Excludes: wildlife and stray animals**

- **Emergency Management Priorities**
 - **People**
 - **Property**
 - **Environment**

Emergency Events, Pets and Reality

- **Human behavior**
 - **Some people will not be separated from their pets.**
 - **People will take big risks for animals often putting themselves and others at risk.**
 - **Well intended people can exhibit “rogue” behaviour.**
 - **Responders can be distracted and traumatized.**
- **Emergency response planning is evolving to include pets**

Emergency Events, Pets and Reality

- **Evacuation notices are often limited:**
 - **Slave Lake 15 – 30 min., High River/Fort McMurray 1 hr.**
- **With pets, there are a host of other issues**
 - **Health concerns/allergies ... with diverse evacuee's**
 - **Fear of animals**
 - **Risk of animal disease spread through commingling**
- **Expect the unexpected**
 - **unusual pets and a variety of needs – Horses, snakes, reptiles, sled dogs**

Legislation and Legal Authorities

- ***Public Health Act:*** separation of pets, people and food
- ***Emergency Management Act:*** outlines authority & scope of authority in an emergency
- ***Animal Protection Act:*** enforced by appointed peace officers, police and RCMP
 - Animals in distress, abandon or lacking care
- ***Veterinary Professions Act***
 - AB Veterinary Medical Association licenses veterinarians & ensures practice standards are met. Permission to treat.



Livestock Emergency Preparedness and Response

AP/The Canadian Press, Jeff McIntosh

Alberta

Realities

- **Livestock move around but it takes organization.**
- **On short notice ... challenging to make arrangements:**
 - **Trucking sector very spread out and it takes time to get trucks on site.**
 - **Farms are generally larger than in the past. More animals = More trucks**
 - **Biosecurity is a concern.**
 - **Moving animals is not always in their best interest.**
- **Farmers have 3 choices**
 - **Shelter animals in place (stay with them / come in/out)**
 - **Leave stock to fend for themselves**
 - **Evacuate people and animals**

The Community Role & Livestock in Emergencies

- Encourage operators to have an emergency plan & be aware of their plan.
- Your community needs to decide what it will or will not do to support livestock owners during a disaster.
- Manpower or support to producers
- Powers under State of Local Emergency (SOLE)
- Allow access after evacuations
- Identify alternate locations



Assistance to Communities

- **Support from local groups**
 - **Agriculture Societies**
 - Rodeo Grounds, Community Halls, Connection to other farmers and resources
 - **Industry Associations**
 - Poultry, Dairy, Swine, Beef, Equine
 - **Who else can help farmers in your community?**

PET EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE



Pets, Evacuations and the Community Response

- Experience has demonstrated - 2 distinct activities
 1. **People leave with their pets and go to Reception/Evacuation Centre**
 2. **People are forced to leave pets behind**
 - Home entry and collection (either as part of emergency/fire/flood response or as part of a community planned support to evacuated residents).
 - Care and Sheltering of pets inside the community.
 - Evacuation of pets separately from people to a place where appropriate care can be provided.

Pets and Your Reception Centre

- **Safety for all**
- **Registration – pets first**
- **Record keeping – avoid multiple systems**
- **Physical separation – btw pets and people**
- **Communication – if pets are welcome & the rules of engagement.**
- **Training**
- **Staffing & supplies – to accommodate both**
- **Alternate place?**

Extracting Pets from Homes

- What kind of pets are in your community? (pet stores)
- Which homes have pets?
- How will you register pets ? Which pets?
- Does the owner want you in their house?
- Who has appropriate skills to enter, capture and transport?
- Highly visible, potentially contentious activity. . .
 - Home security systems connected to peoples remote devices.
 - What if you find/suspect illegal activity?
 - Damage or mess from entry and responders.

Sheltering in Community of origin –

(separate from Reception Centre)

- Facility
- Staff
- Supplies, food, etc
- Veterinary care
- Connected into EOC
- On-going risk and operational period
- On-going communication with public and owners

Evacuation of Pets

- To where? Under who's authority?
- Who is accountable for the pets?
- Appropriate care enroute & during temporary sheltering
- Reunification with owners who may still be displaced
 - Secondary care options

Current Best Practices



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Your Reception Centre cannot handle Pets - Lessons from Community (no pets)

- Need a place where evacuee's can be close to their pets**
- Use same registration process for pets as for people**
- Some people chose to live in vehicles rather than be separated.**
- Have an excellent working relationship with local kennels and animal boarding facilities. Adopted out temporarily if you have robust relationships and clear authorities for care and control.**
- If you have a plan, do a quick read through when you start.**

Reception Centre can handle pets - Lessons from Community

- **Key lessons:**
 - **Need a detailed registration system for pets**
 - Electronic records allow for easy retention of information and forwarding if animals moved to care or other community
 - **Clear information on owner (contact, location, etc.)**
 - **Access to veterinarian/vet services**
 - **Cleaning schedule and staff**
 - **Good communication with rest of reception centre**
 - **Restricted access to pet area.**

Example of Pet Registration Form

Athabasca Evacuee Reception Centre – Pet Care Centre

To Whom It May Concern,

Due to the wildfires in the Lesser Slave River area and subsequent evacuation, I am currently unable to house my animal(s) at my current accommodations. As such, I require foster assistance for my animal(s). This service will be provided by FCSS in Athabasca, who have contracted this service out to the Second Chance Animal Rescue Service (SCARS).

I agreed to have my animal(s) cared for by a foster family and agree to allow the foster family to make appropriate care decisions for my animal while my animal(s) is/are in their care. I understand that when my accommodation circumstances allow for me to care for my animal(s), that my animal(s) will be returned to my care immediately. In order to recover my animal(s), I need to call the FCSS.

If I am unable to care for my animal(s), I will contact FCSS in Athabasca to advise them that I am surrendering my animal and it can be placed up for adoption.

Owner Information:

Name: _____

Address: _____ Postal Code _____

Home Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Type of Pet(s) _____

Name of Pet(s) _____

Gender of Pet(s) _____

Spayed/Neutered (which animals) _____

Vaccinations Due _____

Current Vet Clinic _____

Name of Owner: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Owner: _____ Staff signature: _____

The logo for the province of Alberta, featuring the word "Alberta" in a white, cursive script font. The text is set against a background of green and yellow geometric shapes, including triangles and polygons, which are part of the provincial emblem's design.

Managing Pets inside the Evacuation Zone - Lessons from Slave Lake 2011

- **Edmonton Humane Society (EHS) – deployed a team that worked with a group of volunteers:**
 - **request for assistance came through an unusual chain.**
 - **EHS never seemed to be integrated with the EOC**
 - Logistic support was minimal/inconsistent
 - No formal way to raise issues up to Incident Management Team
 - The entry into homes to check on pets left behind needs to be coordinated with local authorities (???)
- **Need a clear request/tasking process**
- **Could be integrated with local ESS as a subunit.**
- **Needs to be resourced and supported like any other operational activity re: safety.**

Community Evacuation - Extraction of Pets/Home

Entry Considerations — Lessons from High River and Fort McMurray

- **Use Peace/Police/Bylaw Enforcement Officers wherever possible**
 - **Used to legal aspects of taking control**
 - **Documentation usually better**
 - **Authorities for care and control of the animal in and out of zone**
 - Pictures of animals connected with address
 - Documentation of conditions
 - Moral high ground if anything untoward happens on the property.
 - E.g. previous break in, deceased pet, etc

Community Evacuation – Care, Stabilize and Evacuate Pets – Lessons from Fort McMurray

- **Collect and Stabilize**
 - **Cannot/should not transport animals in distress.**
- **To Where and into Who's care and Control?**
 - **Does the group that you are sending animals to have the skill/authority to care for the number of animals you are sending....**
Legal risk back on community, if not.
- **Method of Transport**
- **Documentation**
 - **Prior to departure**
 - **On arrival at drop off point.**
- **Plan for Enroute challenges**
 - **Aggressive or erratic behavior**
 - **Vehicle issues**

Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

- **Key lessons:**
 - **Establish job descriptions & authorities (extraction through to reunion).**
 - **Use a simple electronic registration system**
 - multiple users & locations, follows the animal, security & privacy settings, record of treatment & movement, contact & owner info, animal description and particulars.
 - **Veterinary Services**
 - Triage, shelter medicine/ rounds, referrals, records

Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

- **Key lessons:**

- **Animal Transport**

- Consider time in transit and fitness for transport
 - Special or critical cases
 - clean, climate controls
 - Food, water and support staff enroute
 - Consider crate / cage sizes

Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

- **Animal Reception Site**

- water, washing stations, dimmable lights, sealed flooring, climate control, power, noise, parking, exercise area
- animal receiving & triage, medical room, owner reception, storage & procurement, multiple rooms/areas by type of animal.
- restrict access to pet area
- donations can be overwhelming

- **Feeding, cleaning, exercise and husbandry**

- protocols & records (access to veterinary products)
- equipment (dishes, leashes, enrichment, etc.)
- garbage & laundry

Detailed considerations - Lessons Learned

- **Staff & volunteer coordination**
 - Scheduling, food, safety & training, liability/waivers
- **Procurement**
 - Ordering, financial controls, assigned
- **Communication** (more is better)
 - within the reception, with EOC and with the owners and public
 - directing donations - \$ and stuff
- **Protocols for contact with owners and key messages.**
 - When and who contacts owners
- **Secondary care**
 - How long will you operate
 - Criteria for secondary shelter

Plan Templates – *some communities have plans*

- E.g. Town of High River
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EOC Response Plan
ESF: Animal Rescue
2015-07-23

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Plan Templates

- **Ontario groups created - Animal Care Emergency Response Plan**
 - Fill in the blanks template.
 - Planning team includes local veterinarians and SPCA .
 - Local animal shelters part of Municipal Emergency Plan.
 - Supplies and personnel to set up temp housing.
- **Disaster Animal Response Team of Nova Scotia (DARTNS) – Shelter Manual**
 - Three levels of response – added to municipal animal staff.
 - Has a number of Standard Operating Procedures – how to set-up a temporary shelter, feeding, cage cleaning, etc.

Links

- Disaster Animal Response Team of Nova Scotia (DARTNS) – Shelter Manual - <http://www.dartns.org/dartnssheltermanual.htm>
- Noah's Wish - <http://www.noahswish.org/>
- American Veterinary Medical Association - <https://www.avma.org/kb/resources/reference/disaster/pages/default.aspx>
- US Department of Health and Human Services – links to other sites:
 - <http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/enviro/animals.html#a4>

Conclusion

- **A community evacuation will involve a number of animals – companion or otherwise.**
- **At least 62 percent of all US households have a pet & spending on pets exceeds \$60B in the US.**
- **Farm animal evacuation requires the farmer to plan & participate.**
- **Anticipate, plan ahead, be flexible**

Guiding Principles

- **As much as possible, use your day to day approach.**
- **Use & develop community relationships to address animals in emergencies.**
- **Prior planning and decision making is preferable to reacting in the heat of the moment.**

Questions?

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