

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Earthquakes, Hurricanes, and Wind... Oh My!**

*NAPPS Provides Disaster Preparation Advice for East Coast Pet Parents*

MOUNT LAUREL, N.J., August 25, 2011 – Natural disasters often leave a path of devastation, and the recent earthquake and threat of Hurricane Irene across the East Coast underlines the importance of preparedness for these potentially life-changing events. The National Association of Professional Pet Sitters (NAPPS), a national nonprofit dedicated to promoting the welfare of animals, encourages pet parents along the East Coast to take precautions to protect the lives of their pets.

“Past natural disasters gave us a clear indication we need to have a survival plan for our entire family, including our pets,” said president of NAPPS, John D’Ariano. “Being prepared for these disasters – like earthquakes and hurricanes – can save lives and make rebuilding an easier process. With this in mind, we encourage pet parents to review NAPPS’ free Emergency Planning Guide at <http://bit.ly/EmergencyGuide>.”

#### **Hurricane Preparation**

When preparing for a hurricane – or even flash floods – it is important to create an emergency supply kit for your pet, including a pet identification form with photos, microchip number, shot records, food, water, veterinarian and emergency contact information (including one contact outside of the emergency area,) first aid supplies, and a three-week supply of medications. Keep the emergency kit in a sealed, waterproof bag or container.

Determine sheltering options for you and your animals — consider the following in your area and within a 100-mile radius. Keep in mind that some sheltering options could reach full capacity and a second or third option might be necessary. Options can include: motels/hotels/shelters that allow pets; boarding kennels; veterinary offices with boarding facilities; or grooming shops. If you have horses or livestock, make arrangements ahead of time for a temporary shelter, such as parks, animal shelters, rodeos, fairgrounds, or family and friends’ homes may be options available to you. Pack portable fencing for a temporary corral.

- Set up a buddy system with friends or relatives outside your area where an animal can be safely evacuated.
- If possible, keep a large animal trailer hitched at all times to a dedicated vehicle with a full gas tank for a smooth and quick evacuation with horses and livestock.
- Do not leave animals behind, even if you are not sure where to take them.
- Do not attempt to evacuate during a hurricane — stay indoors, in windowless rooms or hallways. Keep your small animals in carriers or confined areas.
- After the hurricane, dispose of perishable, contaminated or water-soaked pet foods. This will ensure stray or wild animals are not attracted.
- If there is a “boil water order” in effect, do not drink or give animals tap water unless you know it is safe. Official notices will be given about the safety of the water supply.
- Avoid loose or dangling wires, and report them to the power company. Inspect areas where animals are kept for loose wires.
- Make any temporary repairs necessary to prevent further losses, including repair to fencing needed to keep animals confined. Ensure substantially damaged structures are elevated above the base flood elevation or relocated when reconstructed.

#### **Earthquake Preparation**

- Do not place dog runs or other animal enclosures underneath things that might fall on them during an earthquake, such as a chimney or a heavy retaining wall. Include a pair of bolt cutters in your emergency kit. Gates can sometimes become damaged and unable to be opened.
- Prepare a family earthquake plan and conduct family earthquake drills. Include animals in these exercises.
- Be prepared to survive for 72 hours without any assistance. Remember to include supplies and medication for your animals.
- If you take your dog or cat to a boarding kennel or have a pet sitter come to your home in your absence, make sure they are familiar with your earthquake preparedness plans.
- Check to make sure that fences used to confine animals are intact. If animals have escaped, they will often return to their regular feeding site at mealtime and may be recaptured.
- Keep animals safely confined until debris is removed.
- Do not eat or drink from open containers near shattered glass and do not offer these to animals either. Remove any contaminated sources of food or water so that animals cannot get to them. If there is a “boil water order” in effect, do not drink or give animals tap water until the officials announce that it is safe to do so. Let water from pipes run several minutes once the boil water order is lifted.
- Be prepared for additional aftershocks. While the aftershocks are usually smaller than the main shock, some may be large enough to cause additional damage.
- Do not go sightseeing. Stay away from beach and waterfront areas where seismic sea waves (tsunamis) may strike.

NAPPS provides the NOAA's National Weather Service alerts through the [NAPPS website](#), as well as a free 20-page downloadable [guide to disaster preparation](#) for pet parents at <http://bit.ly/EmergencyGuide>. The guide includes disaster preparation tips, pet identification forms, disaster preparation checklists, and preparation information for specific natural disasters.

In addition to disaster preparation, NAPPS equips pet parents with the tools to face everyday pet emergencies through its [pet parent resource page](#) on its website. Visit [www.PetSitters.org](http://www.PetSitters.org) for further information.

**About NAPPS:** NAPPS is the only national nonprofit trade association dedicated to serving the needs of professional pet sitters. The Association aims to help the pet owning public, those interested in pet sitting, and professionals engaged in the in-home pet care industry by fulfilling its vision statement, serving as “the most respected authority in professional pet sitting.” It does so by providing the tools and support to foster the success of its members. Additionally, pet parents can benefit from NAPPS’ free resources including a disaster preparedness guide, tips on how to select a pet sitter, and a nationwide referral service,. To find a pet sitter in your area, check out NAPPS’ nationwide “Pet Sitter Locator” at [www.petsitters.org](http://www.petsitters.org). For more information on NAPPS, please follow [@TheNAPPS](#) on Twitter or join us on Facebook at [facebook.com/TheNAPPS](https://facebook.com/TheNAPPS).

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