

## Top 10 Disaster Preparedness Essentials for Cat Care

**Before earthquakes, destructive storms, floods, fires, mudslides or other catastrophes strike, prepare your cat with these essential items.**

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Cats can experience emotional trauma during an emergency. Learn how to help them. Thousands of dogs and cats go missing when earthquakes, tsunamis, destructive storms, floods, fires, mudslides and other catastrophes suddenly strike. With natural disasters on the rise, learn how to protect your cat or kitten by preparing for an emergency situation.

The national nonprofit animal rights organization Last Chance for Animals prepared essential must-have items to help cat owners protect their cats or kittens in the event of a natural disaster:

1. **Cat ID.** Cats must wear a collar with current contact information, such as a cat ID tag. Because collars can come off, another way for a lost cat to be identified and returned is to microchip or permanently tattoo "collar" information on a cat's inside rear leg.
2. **Cat Food Reserve.** You might not find your regular cat food in an emergency situation, so keep one week's worth of cat food on hand, especially for cats that may be traumatized and may not eat a new brand of food.
3. **Water.** Have extra bottles of fresh water on hand for your cat to last at least one week.
4. **Medication.** Have all your cat's medications easily available and have enough extra to last a week or so in case your cat's veterinarian or source of your medications is wiped out due to the emergency.
5. **Cat Carrier.** Have a sturdy cat carrier readily available that your cat is accustomed to. Make sure your cat is used to it beforehand so he is not scared when you try to put him in it. Make sure the carrier locks and is escape-proof.
6. **Cat's Personal Items.** Bring your favorite cat toys, blankets, etc., and have extra towels or thick gloves on hand for handling cats. Sometimes, even the most docile cat will bite when terrified.
7. **Cat Shelter Location List.** Know the locations of all cat shelters or places that could take you and your cat. Also, leave a note on your home that says how many animals live there, as well as a current photo of your cats, in case you get separated.
8. **Cat Caregivers.** Arrange friends or family to take care of your cat ahead of time, much like you would with a Will. Let the people know that you are entrusting them with your cat, and make sure that all the parties involved, including your cat and the new caregivers, are comfortable with one another ahead of time.
9. **Evacuation Practice.** Know your evacuation routes out of town; line up multiple routes. Practice an evacuation ahead of time and learn how long it takes you to gather your family and cats. Acustom your cats, so when the they will be a lot less stressed and a lot more manageable.
10. **Emotional Support.** In an emergency situation, your cat is likely to be scared and nervous. Treat them like you would a small child, as they are totally dependent upon you for their survival. Provide them with lots of attention, including soothing, reassuring words. Read your cat's nonverbal communication as some cats might wish to hide and be left alone, while others may be clingy and want to be by your side at all times.

Last Chance for Animals has experienced emergency relief first-hand in the nuclear exclusion zone following the tsunami in Japan. Watch a video, [here](#).