

## **Section 14: Pet Sheltering**

### **General Category**

#### **A. Scope**

The Swift County Pet Sheltering section is designed to cover the jurisdictional boundary of Swift County, Minnesota but also identifies state resources that can be used in county-level sheltering. The scope of this plan addresses solely the sheltering of household pets.

#### **B. Agencies**

##### **I. Primary (Lead)**

- Swift County Veterinarians
- Swift County Local Pet Sheltering Managers

##### **II. Secondary (Supporting)**

- American Red Cross
- Local farm supply stores
- Local farm organizations (FFA, 4-H, etc)
- Minnesota Animal Disaster Coalition
- Minnesota Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA)
- Minnesota Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management (HSEM)

#### **C. Planning Assumptions**

1. This plan is designed for traditional household pet populations and does not account larger livestock and exhibition animals.
2. Many, but not all, owners of pets, when notified of an upcoming disaster, will take reasonable steps to shelter and provide for their pets without the assistance of outside agencies.
3. Service Animals will remain with their owners at all times and will be allowed in all areas of a human shelter in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.
4. Most human shelters will not have the capability or be equipped to support the requirements of sheltering a significant pet population.
5. People may try to re-enter an area to retrieve animals left behind, putting themselves as well as emergency personnel at risk.
6. For the first 72 hours, it may be necessary to set up pet shelter operations without the assistance of outside groups such as a humane society or local animal group.
7. Up to 50% of people would not evacuate if they couldn't bring their pet.

## **Standard Operating Procedures for Section 14 Pet Sheltering**

### **I PURPOSE**

A. The purpose of this animal sheltering plan is to identify the locations and resources that are available in Swift County in the event of an emergency or disaster that requires the sheltering of animals from an effected area to a safe zone. This plan also identifies the roles and responsibilities, and an overall concept of operations for varying agencies and organizations in Swift County whose duty it is to provide household pet sheltering services for these animals.

### **II PET SHELTER LOCATIONS (\*36)**

A. The following facilities will be used as pet shelter locations in the event of a disaster requiring sheltering for household pets. Their contact phone information can be found in the contact list on page 5 of this section.

1. H&H Veterinary Services, Benson, MN
2. Benson Veterinary Clinic, Benson, MN
3. Appleton Veterinary Clinic, Appleton, MN
4. Swift County Fairgrounds, Appleton, MN

### **III PET EQUIPMENT LIST/RESOURCES (\*36)**

A. Pet owners are expected to provide sufficient caging/kenneling for their pets upon arrival at the shelters. Food, water, and other supplies can be provided for shelters through local farm supply stores.

B. Pet owners are expected to take care of their animals while being sheltered, unless the owner is indisposed and then would need to make sufficient arrangements with one of the shelter volunteers/workers.

C. Minnesota Region IV has a cache of pet supply equipment including kennels, food and water dishes, and more.

### **IV STAFF ID/TRAINING FOR PET SHELTER OPERATIONS**

A. Pet shelter staff will be a combination of paid veterinary workers and volunteers from local farm organizations such as the FFA and 4-H. Veterinary workers have paid training to deal with household pets and will be able to shelter them using their prior experience and training. Volunteers will be trained under the veterinary workers or other experienced individuals for basic needs as necessary.

### **V MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

A. All pet sheltering related MOU's can be found in the Resource Manual.

## Pet Population

It is estimated that 65% of all households in the United States owns at least one pet (Human Society, 2016). For planning purposes, it is important to note the general pet population estimates. According to the AVMA, 36.5% of households own dogs, 30.4% cats, 3.1% birds, and 1.5% horses. Based on Swift County’s 2010 Census population of 9,783 residents and 4,821 households, the following table can be assumed.

**Swift County Estimates (AVMA)**

Animal	# of Households	Pet Population
Dogs	1,760	2,820
Cats	1,446	3,100
Birds	150	340

<https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Statistics/Pages/US-pet-ownership-calculator.aspx>

In general, only about 3% of the population will use a public shelter after a disaster occurs. (Handbook of Emergency Response, 2014). Using the estimated number of pets in Swift County, it is possible to get closer evaluation of exactly how many household pets may need to be sheltered in a worst-case scenario, were the entire county to be affected by an event.

Animal	# Needing Sheltering
Dogs	85
Cats	93
Birds	10

### A. Definitions

*(FEMA, Minnesota Disaster Animal Coalition)*

**Household Pet:** A domesticated animal, such as a dog, bird, rabbit, rodent, or turtle that is traditionally kept in the home for pleasure rather than for commercial purposes, can travel in commercial carriers and be housed in temporary facilities. Household pets do not include reptiles (except turtles), amphibians, fish, insects/arachnids, farm animals (including horses), and animals kept for racing purposes.

**Service Animals:** Any guide dog, signal dog, or other animal individually trained to provide assistance to an individual with a disability, including, but not limited to, guiding individuals with impaired vision, alerting individuals with impaired hearing to intruders or sounds, providing minimal protection or rescue work, pulling a wheelchair, or fetching dropped items.

### B. Notification Procedures

This section of the plan will be activated in the event of a disaster or catastrophic event requiring sheltering of people and pets. Notification will follow the

established ICS structure and be dispersed through the Public Information Officer along with other disaster related messages.

### **C. Agency Specific Responsibilities (\*36)**

(Alphabetized)

#### **American Red Cross**

1. Human Sheltering

#### **Countryside Public Health**

1. Donations Management
2. Administration and Support
3. Shelter Set-up (in conjunction with Southwest Emergency Coalition)

#### **County Local Veterinary Services**

1. Household Pet Sheltering

#### **Local Farm Supply Stores and Feed Elevators (Glacial Plains Coop)**

1. Provide feeding of pets in shelters
2. Provide other pet supplies

#### **Local Farm Organizations (FFA, 4-H, etc)**

1. Operate shelters

#### **Minnesota Animal Disaster Coalition**

1. Duties as necessary (*Not a Response Group*)

#### **Minnesota Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps (MNVMRC)**

1. Veterinary Care

#### **Swift County Sheriff's Office/Emergency Management**

1. Coordination and Control
2. Administration and Support
3. Donations Management

### **D. Communication**

- a. The Swift County Public Information Officer (PIO) will be responsible for the coordination of all media activities and press releases associated with pets through the EOC or Joint Information Center (JIC) Responsibilities include:
  1. Contributing information to the public before, during, and after a disaster regarding pet needs and issues.
  2. Notifying the public of pet shelter locations, availability, and operability.

### **E. Sheltering**

- a. When the need for a pet shelter is present, the Operations Section Chief of the EOC will let the Public Information Officer know the available pet sheltering locations.
- b. The Operations Section Chief of the EOC will let the designated shelters know they are to be activated in the event of a disaster.
- c. Volunteers for maintaining the pet friendly shelter will be provided through local farm organizations such as 4-H and the FFA.

## F. Veterinary Care

- a. There are three veterinary service facilities in Swift County. The veterinary facilities will be in charge of sheltering household pets to the best of their ability.
- b. If a veterinary service facility is for some reason unable to take in pets, they will be asked to manage the pet shelter.

## G. Coordination & Control

- a. The Operations Section Chief in the EOC will delegate a representative to ensure human safety regarding pet issues for all citizens in a disaster.
  1. Coordinating agencies to manage pet needs and issues in disasters.
  2. Coordinating personnel, equipment, and supplies needed to manage pet needs during a disaster.
  3. Serve as the point of contact for responding agencies.

## H. Administration & Support

- a. Administrational support will happen in the Emergency Operations Center in conjunction with the general functions of that office.

## I. Contact List

Below is a list with direct phone lines to local, regional, and state resources that could potentially be used after a disaster to implement this sheltering plan.

Remember, many of these resources will be dispatched via the **Minnesota Duty Officer** who can be reached 24 hours a day at **1-800-422-0798**.

Level	Agency	Name/Location	Phone
Local	H&H Veterinary Services	Benson, MN	320-842-5960
Local	Benson Veterinary Clinic	Benson, MN	320-842-7501
Local	Appleton Veterinary Clinic	Appleton, MN	320-289-2484
Local	Swift County Fairgrounds	Swift County Sheriff's Department Appleton, MN	320-843-3133* <i>(Sheriff's Office Dispatch to Locate Keyholder of Fairgrounds)</i>
Regional			
State	MN Animal Disaster Coalition	Minneapolis, MN	612-876-1797
State	MN Veterinary Medical Association	St. Paul, MN	651-645-7533
State	MN Board of Animal Health	St. Paul, MN	651-296-2942
State	Farm Service Agency	St. Paul, MN	651-602-7700
State	MN Humane Society		651-665-9311

**For additional Disaster Resources reference:** *MVMA-MVMRC Disaster Resource Guide (2014)*, located in folder compiled by AREMA for Pet-Sheltering.