



Public Safety Brief



June 2012

Emergency Services Director Marty Flemion

Emergency Preparedness for Pets

1. Get a Kit of pet emergency supplies.

Just as you do with your family's emergency supply kit, think first about your pets basic needs for survival, particularly food and water.

- ✓ Food: Keep at least three days of food in an airtight, waterproof container.
- ✓ Water: Store at least three days of water specifically for your pets, in addition to water you need for yourself and your family.
- ✓ Medicines and medical records: Keep an extra supply of medicines your pet takes on a regular basis in a waterproof container.
- ✓ First aid kit: Talk to your veterinarian about what is most appropriate for your pet's emergency medical needs. Most kits should include cotton bandage rolls, bandage tape and scissors; antibiotic ointment; flea and tick prevention; latex gloves, isopropyl alcohol and saline solution. Include a pet first aid reference book.
- ✓ Collar with ID tag, harness or leash: Your pet should wear a collar with its rabies tag and identification at all times. Include a backup leash, collar and ID tag in your pet's emergency supply kit.
- ✓ Important documents: Place copies of your pet's registration information, adoption papers, vaccination documents and medical records in a clean plastic bag or waterproof container and also add them to your kit.
- ✓ Crate or other pet carrier: If you need to evacuate in an emergency situation take your pets and animals with you, in a crate or other pet carrier.
- ✓ Sanitation: Include pet litter and litter box if appropriate, newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags and household chlorine bleach to provide for your pet's sanitation needs. You can use bleach as a disinfectant (dilute nine parts water to one part bleach), or in an emergency you can also use it to purify water. Use 8 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water, stir well and let it stand for 30 minutes before use. Do not use scented or color safe bleaches or those with added cleaners.

Special Dates & Information:

Thursday, June 14, 2012: Flag Day

Sunday, June 17, 2012: Father's Day!

Saturday, July 7, 2012: City of Laurel 4th of July Celebration. Starting with a parade at 11:00 A.M. and fireworks at 9:15 P.M.

City of Laurel

Municipal Center

8103 Sandy Spring Road

Laurel, Maryland 20707

City website:

www.laurel.md.us

Phone: 301-725-5300

Laurel Police Department:

Emergency: Call 911

Non-Emergency: 301-498-0092

Laurel Volunteer Fire Department website:

www.laurelvfd.org

Laurel Volunteer Rescue Squad website:

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- ✓ A picture of you and your pet together: If you become separated from your pet during an emergency, a picture of you and your pet together will help you document ownership and allow others to assist you in identifying your pet. Include detailed information about species, breed, age, sex, color and distinguishing characteristics.
- ✓ Familiar items: Put favorite toys, treats or bedding in your kit. Familiar items can help reduce stress for your pet.
- ✓ Consider two kits. In one, put everything your pets will need to stay where you are and make it on your own.
- ✓ The other should be a lightweight, smaller version you can take with you if you and your pets have to get away.

2. Make a Plan for what you will do in an emergency.

Plan in advance what you will do in an emergency. Be prepared to assess the situation. Use common sense and whatever you have on hand to take care of yourself and ensure your pet's safety during an emergency.

For more information, visit ready.gov or call 1-800-BE-READY

Prepare For Emergencies Now:

Information for Pet Owners

Evacuate. Plan how you will assemble your pets and anticipate where you will go. If you must evacuate, take your pets with you, if practical. If you go to a public shelter, keep in mind your pets may not be allowed inside. If a pet shelter is available, please note that access may be denied if your pet is not in an appropriate carrier.

Secure appropriate lodging in advance depending on the number and type of animals in your care. Consider family or friends outside your immediate area who would be willing to take in you and your pets in an emergency.

Other options may include: a hotel or motel that takes pets or some sort of boarding facility, such as a kennel or veterinary hospital that is near an evacuation facility or your family's meeting place. Find out before an emergency happens if any of these facilities in your area might be viable options for you and your pets.

Develop a buddy system. Plan with neighbors, friends or relatives to make sure that someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so. Talk with your pet care buddy about your evacuation plans and show them where you keep your pet's emergency supply kit. Also designate specific locations, one in your

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immediate neighborhood and other farther away, where you will meet in an emergency.

Talk to your pet's veterinarian about emergency planning. Discuss the types of things you should include in your pet's emergency first aid kit. Get the names of vets or veterinary hospitals in other cities where you might need to seek temporary shelter. Also talk with your veterinarian about microchipping. If you and your pet are separated, this permanent implant for your pet and corresponding enrollment in a recovery database can help a veterinarian or shelter identify your animal. If your pet is microchipped, keeping your emergency contact information up to date and listed with a reliable recovery database is essential to you and your pet being reunited. Gather contact information for emergency animal treatment.

Make a list of contact information and addresses of area animal control agencies including the Humane Society or ASPCA and emergency veterinary hospitals. Keep one copy of these phone numbers with you, and one in your pet's emergency supply kit.

Obtain "Pets Inside" stickers and place them on your doors or windows, including information on the number and types of pets in your home to alert firefighters and rescue workers. Consider putting a phone number on the sticker where you could be reached in an emergency. And, if time permits, remember to write the words "Evacuated with Pets" across the stickers, should you evacuate your home with your pets.

3. Be prepared for what might happen.

Some of the things you can do to prepare for the unexpected, such as assembling an emergency supply kit for yourself, your family and your pets, is the same regardless of the type of emergency. However, it's important to stay informed about what might happen and know what types of emergencies are likely to affect your region. Be prepared to adapt this information to your personal circumstances and make every effort to follow instructions received from authorities on the scene. With these simple preparations, you can be ready for the unexpected.

Those who take the time to prepare themselves and their pets will likely encounter less difficulty, stress and worry. Take the time now to get yourself and your pet ready.

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Stay safe when traveling

At the airport

- **Stay alert** and watch your bags and computer carefully at all times. Don't let anyone but uniformed airline personnel handle or watch your bags.
- **Always carry proper identification** such as a state issued driver's license or passport.
- **Do not bring anything on board for another person** unknown to you or not traveling with you, however innocent or small the package or item may appear.
- **Carry your purse close** to your body or your wallet in an inside front pocket. Better yet, use a money pouch under your clothes.
- **Watch out for staged mishaps** like someone bumping into you or spilling a drink. Often it's a ploy to divert your attention from your valuables.
- **Keep a separate record** of the contents of checked luggage in case your luggage is lost or tampered with. And keep anything of value in a carry-on that stays with you.
- **To avoid problems** when passing through customs or security checkpoints, keep medicines in their original, labeled containers. Bring copies of your prescriptions and the generic names for the drugs. If a medication is unusual or contains narcotics, carry a letter from your doctor attesting to your need to take the drug. If you have any doubt about the legality of carrying a certain drug into a country, consult the embassy or consulate of that country before you travel.

At your destination

- **Don't answer the door** in a hotel or motel room without first verifying the identity of the person at the door. If the person claims to be an employee, call the front desk.
- **When returning to your hotel** or motel late in the evening, use the main entrance of the hotel. Be observant before entering parking lots.
- **Lock the door** whenever you are in your room.
- **Don't display guest room keys** in public or leave them on restaurant tables, at the swimming pool, or other places where they can be easily stolen.
- **Do not draw attention to yourself** by displaying large amounts of cash or expensive jewelry.
- **Check to see** that any sliding glass doors or windows and any connecting room doors are locked. Keep all hotel doors and window locked.

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- **Discretely carry a map** and be familiar with the area you are visiting. If driving, keep maps and rental agreement concealed, not lying on the seat or the dashboard.
- **Don't leave purses or pocketbooks** on the back of a chair when dining out; keep them in your lap.
- **Don't announce room numbers** in public. Insist that hotel personnel write down your room number at check-in rather than stating out loud the number of your room.
- **Before taking a cab**, ask the staff about directions and estimated costs to familiarize yourself with the area.
- **Only take taxis** clearly identified with official markings. Beware of unmarked cabs. Compare the face of the driver with the one on his or her posted license.
- **Keep car doors locked** while you are driving.

When Traveling Abroad

General information

- **Check country-specific information** and travel warnings and alerts at the [State Department's Website](#).
- **Always try to travel light**, so you can move quickly and keep a free hand.
- **Carry the minimum number of valuables**, and plan places to conceal them. When you have to carry your cash, passport and credit cards, you may wish to put them in various places rather than all in one wallet or pouch.
- **Bring travelers checks** and one or two major credit cards instead of cash.
- **Use covered luggage tags** to avoid casual observation of your identity or nationality.
- **Don't bring anything you won't need** during your trip. Remove unnecessary credit cards, irreplaceable family photos, your library card and similar items from your wallet.
- **Make two photocopies** of your passport identification page, airline tickets, driver's license and the credit cards that you plan to bring with you. Leave one photocopy of this data with family or friends at home; pack the other in a place separate from where you carry the originals. Pack an extra set of passport photos to make replacement easier if your passport is stolen.
- **Leave a copy** of the serial numbers of your travelers' checks with a friend or relative at home. Carry your copy with you in a separate place and, as you cash the checks, cross them off the list.
- **Try to stay** in larger hotels that have more elaborate security. Consider booking a room from the second to seventh floors high enough to deter easy entry from outside, but low enough for fire equipment to reach.

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- **You can register** your travel with the State Department so you can be contacted in case of emergency at <https://travelregistration.state.gov>
- **Ask your credit card company** how to report the loss of your card from abroad, as 1-800 numbers generally do not work from other countries.
- **Avoid scam artists** by being wary of strangers who approach you and offer to be your guide or sell you something at bargain prices.
- **Try to seem purposeful** when you move about. Even if you are lost, act as if you know where you are going. Try to ask for directions only from individuals in authority.
- **Know how to use** a pay telephone and have the proper change or token on hand.
- **Do not flash large amounts of money** when paying a bill. Make sure your credit card is returned to you after each transaction.
- **Deal only with authorized agents** when you exchange money, buy airline tickets or purchase souvenirs. Do not change money on the black market.
- **If your possessions are lost or stolen**, report the loss immediately to the local police. Keep a copy of the police report for insurance claims and as an explanation of your plight.

On public transportation

- **Well-organized, systematic robbery** of passengers on trains along popular tourist routes is a problem in many countries. It is more common at night and especially on overnight trains.
- **If you see your way being blocked** by a stranger and another person is very close to you from behind, move away. This can happen in the corridor of the train or on the platform or station.
- **Do not accept** food or drink from strangers. Criminals have been known to drug food or drink offered to passengers.
- **Where possible, lock your compartment.** If it cannot be locked securely, take turns sleeping in shifts with your traveling companions. If that is not possible, stay awake. If you must sleep unprotected, tie down your luggage and secure your valuables to the extent possible.
- **Do not be afraid** to alert authorities if you feel threatened in any way. Extra police are often assigned to ride trains on routes where crime is a serious problem.
- **The same type of criminal activity found on trains** can be found on public buses on popular tourist routes. In some

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countries, whole busloads of passengers have been held up and robbed by gangs of bandits.

When renting a car

- **Choose a type of car** that is commonly available locally. Avoid cars that are marked as rentals. If available, choose a car with universal door locks and power windows, which give the driver better control of access.
- **Rent a car with an air conditioning** to allow you to drive with windows closed. Thieves snatch purses through open windows of moving cars.
- **Avoid driving** at night.
- **Never pick up** hitchhikers.
- **Carjackers and thieves** operate at gas stations, parking lots, in city traffic and along the highway. Be suspicious of anyone who hails you or tries to get your attention when you are in or near your car.
- **Criminals sometimes pose** as good Samaritans, offering help for tires that they claim are flat or that they have made flat. They may flag down a motorist, ask for assistance, and then steal the rescuer's luggage or car. They often work in groups, one person carrying on the pretense while the others rob you.
- **Some criminals try** to drive victims off the road, or causing an "accident" by rear-ending you.
- **In some urban areas**, thieves simply smash car windows at traffic lights, grab your valuables or your car and get away.

Laurel Police Department House Check Program

While you're on vacation give yourself some piece of mind by participating in the Laurel Police Department House Check Program. An officer will physically check the exterior of your home and note any unusual conditions on a daily basis. To request this service, please contact Laurel Police Department Communications at 301-498-0092. When the request for this service is made, an officer will be dispatched to your home to meet with you and obtain the pertinent information required for the House Check Form to include travel dates, times, etc. Note: Please contact the Department 48 hours prior to your departure to allow time for processing of the request.

Fire Marshal David Cope

Fourth of July is fast approaching. I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday and to ask that all citizens of Laurel leave fireworks to the professionals. Please stay at least 500 feet away from professional fireworks displays. **It is**

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illegal to sell, possess or use ANY type of fireworks within the City limits of Laurel and Prince George's County. I will be canvassing all areas of the City during the Fourth of July Celebration to ensure that there are no fireworks being used and to ensure the safety of all of our citizens. If you happen to find fireworks please direct authorities to them. Do not touch them! If you see someone selling or using fireworks please contact the Fire Marshal's Office at 301-725-5300 Ext. 2238 or after 5:00 P.M. and on weekends contact the Laurel Police Department at 301-498-0092.

Fire Safety Tips

Gas and Charcoal Grill Safety

Fire in the grill, under hot dogs and burgers, is a welcome sight at the family cookout. But fire anywhere else can make your summer kick-off barbecue memorable for all the wrong reasons. Propane and charcoal BBQ grills must only be used outdoors. If used indoors, or in any enclosed spaces, such as tents, they pose both a fire hazard and the risk of exposing occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation. Position the grill well away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches. Place the grill a safe distance from lawn games, play areas and foot traffic. Keep children and pets away from the grill area: declare a three-foot "safe zone" around the grill. Put out several long-handled grilling tools to give the chef plenty of clearance from heat and flames when flipping burgers. Periodically remove grease or fat buildup in trays below grill so it cannot be ignited by a hot grill.

Charcoal grills - Purchase the proper starter fluid and store the can out of reach of children, and away from heat sources. Never add charcoal starter fluid when coals or kindling have already been ignited, and never use any flammable or combustible liquid other than charcoal starter fluid to get the fire going.

Propane grills - Check the gas cylinder hose for leaks before using it for the first time each year. A light soap and water solution applied to the hose will quickly reveal escaping propane by releasing bubbles. If you determine your grill has a gas leak, by smell or the soapy bubble test, and there is no flame, turn off the gas tank and grill. If the leak stops, get the grill serviced by a professional before using it again. If the leak does not stop, call the fire department. If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not attempt to move the grill. Use only equipment with the label of a recognized testing laboratory. Follow the manufacturers' instructions on how to set up the grill and maintain it.

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Hotel/Motel Safety

Summer is finally here! Time for traveling to the beach, amusement parks and other vacation hot spots. Many of you will travel this summer season and enjoy the comforts and luxuries of hotels. Often times, we are so excited and relaxed while on vacation that we do not think about fire safety while staying a hotel. United States fire departments responded to an estimated average of 3,970 structure fires in hotels and motels in 2003-2007. These fires caused an annual average of 11 civilian deaths, 151 civilian fire injuries and \$63.3 million in direct property damage.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has put together some hotel fire safety tips to ensure that you and your family have an enjoyable and safe summer vacation:

- ✓ Choose a hotel that is protected by both smoke alarms and a fire sprinkler system.
- ✓ When you check in, ask the front desk what the fire alarm sounds like.
- ✓ When you enter your room, review the escape plan posted in your room.
- ✓ Take the time to find the exits and count the number of doors between your room and the exit. Make sure the exits are unlocked. If they are locked, report it to management right away.
- ✓ Keep your room key by your bed and take it with you if there is a fire.
- ✓ If the alarm sounds, leave right away, closing all doors behind you. Use the stairs- never use elevators during a fire.
- ✓ If you must escape through smoke, get low and go under the smoke to your exit.

If you can't escape:

- ✓ Shut off fans and air conditioners.
- ✓ Stuff wets towels in the crack around the doors.
- ✓ Call the fire department and let them know your location.
- ✓ Wait at the window and signal with a flashlight or light colored cloth.

Also, consider taking a battery operated smoke alarm with you and place it in your hotel room.

The City of Laurel Government to the People Program provides extended business hours to the citizens and businesses of Laurel. The Departments of Budget and Personnel Services, Community Planning and Business Services, and Parks and Recreation will be open from 5:00 – 7:00 P.M. every Tuesday.