

Wake County Animal Protection Plan

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Wake County Department of Public Safety wishes to acknowledge the members of the *Animal Protection Committee* for their full participation and coordinated efforts which have made this procedure viable. Membership of this multi-jurisdictional task force consisted of the following persons and agencies:

Steering Committee Membership

Martin Chriscoe, Major Response/Logistics Services Division Director

Nan Cheek, Major Response/Logistics Services Division

Dicke Sloop, Wake County Animal Control Division

Joe Blomquist, Raleigh Animal Control

Shelly Davis, Cary Animal Control

Jim Hamilton, DVM, Southern Pines Equine Association

Dr. Tom Hamm, NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine

Janet Herzberg, SPCA of Wake County

Sgt. Kent Hobbs, Cary Police Department

Meg Houseworth, Wake County Department of Human Services

Sheila Jordan, Wake County Cooperative Extension

John Santilli, DVM, Wake County Veterinarian Association

Mike Scruggs, N. C. Wildlife Commission

Glenn Studinger, American Red Cross

Jimmy Tickel, DVM, N. C. Department of Agriculture

Prepared by:

C. Douglas Bass and Michael Greco March, 1998

Wake County Department of Public Safety First Edition

Major Response/Logistics Services Division

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose Statement:

To protect wild and domesticated animal resources, the public health, the public food supply, the environment, and to ensure the humane care and treatment of animals in case of a large-scale emergency, including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, wind driven water, drought, fire, explosion, building collapse, commercial transportation accidents, chemical spills, nuclear power plant accidents, or other situations that cause animal suffering.

1.2 Scope:

This Plan is intended for use by local government to take immediate action in providing a means of care and control to minimize animal suffering in the event of a large-scale emergency. This action will be aimed at all animals that may need help whether such animals are owned, stray, domestic, or wild.

Within Wake County, the Director of Public Safety or his authorized representative(s) may place into effect established plans and procedures and direct both the emergency and recovery aspects of the incident. He may deviate from these procedures when, in his judgment, immediate and direct action is necessary to protect the public safety.

2.0 Affected Agencies/Responsibilities

2.1 Primary Agencies:

A. Wake County Department of Environmental Services, Animal Control Division:

1. Coordinate support agencies to manage animal protection in large-scale emergencies.
2. Provide and coordinate personnel, equipment, and shelter as required to protect domestic and sick and/or injured nondomestic animals.

B. Wake County Department of Public Safety:

Activate the Emergency Operations Center, if necessary. Responsible for overall direction and control of the emergency incident.

2.2 Support Agencies:

A. Wake County Veterinarian Association:

Provide a list of available volunteers to aid in the protection of animals. When possible, provide personnel, equipment, and shelter as required to shelter and care for pets of evacuated citizens and in cases when established shelters are filled or destroyed.

B. NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine:

Provide a list of available volunteers to aid in the protection of animals. When possible, provide personnel, equipment, and shelter as required to shelter and care for livestock, wild animals, and injured domestic and nondomestic animals.

C. SPCA of Wake County:

Coordinate personnel, equipment, and shelter as required to shelter and care for domestic pets.

D. N. C. Department of Agriculture:

The N. C. Department of Agriculture (NCDA) will be responsible for the enforcement of state regulations concerning livestock health and the movements of animals affected by those regulations. NCDA will also assist in providing information and direction whenever possible with regard to the general health of livestock in these areas.

E. American Red Cross:

Provide volunteers to assist in the protection of animals during an emergency shelter situation. Work with Environmental Services personnel in the coordination of animal shelters in Wake County.

F. Municipal Animal Control:

Provide personnel and equipment as required within the respective corporate limits to protect domestic and sick and/or injured nondomestic animals.

G. Wake County Cooperative Extension:

Aid in the protection of livestock during an emergency situation.

H. Wake County Department of Environmental Services:

Coordinate the disposal of deceased animals that may impact the public health. Provide services to control injuries / bites / diseases related to the protection of animals.

2.3 Additional Resources:

A. North Carolina Veterinary Medical Association:

Provide personnel to aid in the medical treatment of animals. Activate regional Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT).

B. Humane Society of the United States:

Provide personnel and equipment as required to rescue and care for domestic and nondomestic animals.

C. American Humane Association:

Provide personnel and equipment as required to rescue and care for domestic and nondomestic animals.

D. N. C. Wildlife Resource Commission:

Provide personnel and equipment as required to protect wildlife.

E. Private Boarding Kennels, Stables, Dog Clubs, and Horse Clubs:

Provide personnel, equipment, and shelter as required to shelter and care for pets from evacuated citizens and in cases when established animal shelters are filled or destroyed.

F. Private Farms:

Provide shelter and supplies to care for displaced livestock.

G. Hunt Horse Complex:

Provide shelter and supplies to care for displaced livestock.

H. Pinehurst Harness Track / Moore County Equine Emerg. Response Unit:

Provide shelter, supplies and a Horse Rescue Ambulance to care for and rescue displaced livestock.

3.0 Planning Assumptions

- A. The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an upcoming emergency, will take reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their care and/or control.
- B. Natural, technological, or manmade disasters could affect the well-being of domesticated or nondomesticated animals.
- C. The County should plan both for emergency situations and to carry out

response and recovery operations utilizing local resources. Outside animal care and rescue assistance would likely be available in most large-scale emergencies affecting the County.

- D. Animal protection planning should ensure the proper care and recovery of animals impacted during an emergency. These plans may include measures to identify housing and shelter for animals, communicate information to the public, and proper animal release.
- E. Public information statements will be issued through the various media outlets. This information will include locations where domestic and nondomestic animals (including livestock and wild animals) may be accepted during emergency situations.
- F. A large-scale emergency in Wake County may warrant immediate response from State and local personnel, agencies, and organizations. However, emergency situations may become compounded due to the nature of the emergency and also require activation of additional specialized agencies through mutual aid.
- G. Through effective animal protection planning and organization, disaster relief efforts would be more expedient.

4.0 Concept of Operations

4.1 General:

- A. The primary and support agencies identified in this Standard Operating Procedure will manage and coordinate local animal protection activities. These agencies will use established animal protection and support organizations, processes, and procedures. Responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs in the event of a large-scale emergency lies primarily with the Wake County Department of Public Safety in cooperation with the Wake County Department of Environmental Services and local incident coordinators.
- B. Requests for animal protection assistance and resources such as food, medicine, shelter material, specialized personnel, and additional veterinary medical professionals, will be transmitted from the local Emergency Management office to the State Emergency Management office. Should the need for Federal or State resources exist, the State Emergency Operations Center will coordinate the requests for assistance.
- C. Animal protection operations will be managed under the Wake County Incident Command Master Plan (ICS). Public Health concerns will be managed in accordance with appropriate Wake County plans and procedures.
- D. Animals Included Under the Plan:

1. The sheltering and protection of domestic and nondomestic animals (including livestock) are the responsibility of their owners.
2. Domestic and nondomestic animals that are lost, strayed, incapable of being cared for by their owners, or in danger to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of municipal or Wake County animal control officials, the SPCA of Wake County, or other identified agencies. These animals will be sheltered, fed, and, if possible, returned to their owners. If the animals cannot be returned to their owners, they will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.
3. Wild animals should be left to their own survival instincts. Wild animals out of their natural habitats that are in danger either to themselves or the public will be the responsibility N. C. Wildlife Resource Commission personnel, in cooperation with local animal control officials, and returned to their natural habitat if possible.

4.2 Notification:

This plan and implementing procedures will be activated in the event of a large-scale emergency causing a significant need for animal protection. The Wake County Animal Control Director in cooperation with the Wake County Department of Public Safety will determine when these procedures will be implemented and notify the appropriate primary, support, and mutual aid agencies. A call down notification system will be maintained by the Wake County Animal Control Director.

4.3 Communications:

Communications between the primary and support agencies will occur primarily through telephone, facsimile and cellular telephone transmission. Amateur radio will be used as a backup system if other communication is impossible due to the nature of the emergency situation.

4.4 Public Information (PI):

A spokesperson from Wake County will be responsible for the coordination of all media activities and press releases associated with the protection of animals.

PI responsibilities may include:

1. Notifying the public of appropriate shelters to drop lost/stray animals, animals that they cannot care for, or animals that need immediate medical assistance.
2. Delivering instructions to the public to prepare their pets for an impending emergency (See attached Annex A) and/or instructions for minor "at home" medical responses for pets injured in an emergency situation (Annex to be developed).

3. Initiating a system to direct inquiries on lost pets to the appropriate animal

shelters.

4. Other information as appropriate to the situation.

4.5 Response:

The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an emergency, will take all reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their control.

A. Search and Rescue

1. Domestic Pets:

Domestic pets loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of municipal or Wake County animal control officials.

2. Livestock:

Livestock loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of municipal or Wake County animal control officials.

3. Wild Animals:

Wild Animals out of their natural habitat that are endangering either themselves or the human population will be the responsibility of N. C. Wildlife Resource Commission personnel in cooperation with municipal or Wake County animal control officials.

4. Stranded Animals:

In the event that animals cannot be rescued due to the emergency situation, food and medical assistance may be delivered to the animals by the appropriate agency when possible.

5. Additional Aid:

In the event that municipal and Wake County animal control resources are unable to meet the need for search and rescue personnel, a representative from Wake County Animal Control Division will request search and rescue assistance from the American Humane Association and/or the Humane Society of the United States and/or other available rescue groups.

B. Shelters

1. Evacuated Domestic Pets:

a. Private Resources:

Domestic pets from evacuated citizens will be sheltered at private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals as close to the evacuation shelters as possible.

Upon the activation of evacuation shelters for citizens, a representative from the Wake County Veterinarian's Association will be contacted by the shelter manager and requested to initiate the opening of prearranged private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals as boarding facilities.

Each of the citizens' evacuation shelters will have an available veterinarian volunteer on the premises to evaluate the pets of evacuated citizens. Pets with significant injuries or illnesses will be transported to an animal hospital designated for the medical treatment of animals.

A representative of Wake County Animal Control Division will be responsible for ensuring the transportation of the evacuated pets to either the shelter facility or hospital and in ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered pets with their rightful owners.

b. Animal Evacuation Shelter:

If the need arises, the county may open an evacuated pet shelter. Pets of evacuated citizens will be transported to this shelter as citizens arrive with their pets at the citizen's evacuation shelters.

c. Evacuated Citizens with Special Needs:

Citizens with special needs (individuals with mental or physical handicaps who require evacuation assistance) may require assistance in evacuating their pets.

If special needs individuals are unwilling or unable to make special arrangements for the sheltering of their pets, then the individuals and their pets will be transported to the evacuation shelter. Upon arrival at the shelter, pets not trained specifically to assist the individual (e.g. seeing eye dogs) will be transported to a private boarding facility or other appropriate facility. In the event that the individual and the pet cannot be separated due to the individual's infirmity, the pet will be sheltered in the same facility in a separate room or area.

2. Stray/Lost Domestic Pets:

All stray/lost domestic pets recovered by Wake County Animal Control will be sheltered at the Wake County Animal Shelter or the SPCA of

Wake County shelter. Any pets whose owners cannot care for their pets or domestic pets found by citizens will also be sheltered at these locations. Private boarding kennels and veterinarian shelters will serve as overflow shelters and will be requested to open through the Wake County Veterinarian Association representative as necessary. Unclaimed animals will be disposed of according to county procedures.

3. Evacuated and Stray/Lost Livestock:

Due to the size of most livestock and the inability to transport large numbers of farm animals, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals.

When possible, livestock may be sheltered at the veterinary hospital at the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine, private stables, the Hunt Horse Complex and the Pinehurst Harness Track.

Also, private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for livestock. In the event of an emergency situation, Wake County Cooperative Extension will contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in the sheltering operation.

4. Wild Animals:

If possible, wild animals outside of their natural habitat endangering the public, will be transported back to their natural habitat. If the responsible agencies are unable to transport the animal back to its natural habitat due to the nature of the emergency or to injuries that the animal may have sustained, the animals will either be transported to the Wake County Animal Control or the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine for shelter or medical treatment or disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

5. Incapacitation of Shelters:

In the event that established shelters are destroyed or incapable of functioning due to the nature of the emergency situation, private boarding kennels, veterinarian hospitals, stables, the Hunt Horse Complex, and the Pinehurst Harness Track may be requested, to open as boarding and/or medical facilities. In rare cases, during large-scale emergencies, animals may be moved outside Wake County for care and protection.

6. Staff/Supplies:

a. Staff:

Private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals will be responsible for the staffing of their own boarding facilities and will be compensated by the citizens who use the animal shelter according to the established policies of the animal shelter. Remaining animal shelters and hospitals will be staffed with available personnel from Wake County Animal Control/SPCA of Wake County and with volunteer veterinarians and veterinarian assistants. These shelters, in cooperation with the Wake County Veterinarian Association and the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine, will develop and routinely update lists of available veterinarian and veterinarian assistant volunteers. Each individual animal shelter will be responsible for developing the work schedules for employees and volunteers.

b. Supplies:

Each animal shelter will identify resources for potable water, food, medical, cleaning and shelter supplies in advance of an emergency situation.

Prearranged domestic and nondomestic animal food companies, medical suppliers, water suppliers and cleaning product suppliers will be contacted and requested to begin the shipment of supplies to an established delivery point. The delivery point will serve as a storage center and a distribution center for the various shelters and hospitals.

If the need arises, resource agencies (e.g. kennel clubs) may be requested to donate cages and other various shelter supplies.

C. Medical:

1. Hospitals:

The Wake County Animal Control will coordinate the resources for a medical facility for domestic animals which cannot be accommodated by the various shelters due to the animals' injuries. The veterinary hospital at the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine and private veterinarian hospitals may serve as alternative medical facilities and medical shelters as space permits.

2. Staff:

Volunteers from the NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine and from the Wake County Veterinarian Association and others will assist in providing the medical care in these medical shelters.

Depending on the extent of the emergency situation, volunteers or Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams from the American Veterinary

Medical Association may be requested to assist in the medical treatment of domestic and nondomestic animals.

D. Bites/Disease Control:

The Wake County Department of Environmental Services will make no-cost vaccinations available to rescue and shelter personnel and will insure that treatment of bites and injuries is available to affected persons.

Outbreaks of rabies is a serious threat during an emergency situation. Appropriate steps to control that threat will be implemented by the Wake County Department of Environmental Services.

4.6 Recovery:

A. Release/Destruction:

1. Domestic Pets/Livestock:

Wake County Animal Control will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, Wake County Animal Control and SPCA of Wake County representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures.

Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

2. Wild Animals:

Wake County Animal Control in cooperation with the N. C. Wildlife Commission will support efforts to reintroduce wild animals back to their natural habitats.

B. Disposal of Animal Carcasses:

Disposal of deceased animals will be the responsibility of the Wake County Department of Environmental Services. They will arrange for disposal of:

1. Euthanized animals
2. Animals killed in the emergency situation

5.0 Review and Update

On a regular basis, this procedure will be reviewed and updated as appropriate by Wake County Animal Control Division, the Wake County Department of Public Safety, and other affected agencies.

This procedure will be periodically tested by an appropriate exercise method.

Effective Date: March 1, 1998

6.0 Approval

6.1 Primary Agencies:

Wake County Department of Wake County Dept. of Public Safety
Environmental Services,
Animal Control Division

6.2 Support Agencies:

Veterinarian Association SPCA of Wake County Wake County

NCSU College of Veterinary Medicine American Red Cross

Wake County Human Services Wake County Cooperative Extension

N. C. Department of Agriculture Cary Animal Control

Annex A

Wake County Disaster Planning Tips For Pets, Livestock, and Wildlife Domestic Pets

- If you evacuate your home, **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND**. Pets most likely cannot survive on their own, and if by chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return.
- For public health reasons, many emergency shelters cannot accept pets. Find out which motels and hotels in your area allow pets. Include your local animal shelter's number in your list of emergency numbers—they will be able to provide information concerning pets during a disaster.
- Make sure identification tags are up to date and securely fastened to your pet's collar. If possible, attach the address and/or phone number of your evacuation site. Make sure you have a current photo of your pet for identification purposes.
- Make sure you have a secure pet carrier, leash or harness for your pet so that if the animal panics, it cannot escape.
- Take pet food, bottled water, medications, veterinary records, cat litter/pan, can opener, food dishes, first aid kit and other supplies with you in case they are not available later.
- Make sure you have a copy of your pets medical records. If you are unable to return to your home right away, you may need to board your pet. Most boarding kennels, veterinarians, and animal shelters require that your pets vaccinations are current.
- If it is impossible to take your pet with you to temporary shelter, contact friends, family, veterinarians, or boarding kennels to arrange for care. Make sure medical and feeding information, food, medicine and other supplies accompany your pet to its foster home.

Livestock

- Evacuate livestock whenever possible. The evacuation sites should have or be able to readily obtain food, water, veterinary care, handling equipment and facilities.
- If evacuation is not possible, a decision must be made whether to move large animals to available

shelter or turn them outside. This decision should be determined based on the type of disaster and the soundness and location of the shelter.

- All animals should have some form of identification that will help facilitate their return.

Wildlife

- Wild animals often seek higher ground which, during floods, eventually become submerged (i.e., island) and the animals become stranded. If the island is large enough and provides suitable shelter, you can leave food appropriate to the species. Animals have a flight response and will flee from anyone approaching too closely. If the animal threatens to rush into the water, back away from the island.
- Wildlife often seek refuge from flood water on upper levels of a home and may remain inside even after the water recedes. If you meet a rat or snake face to face, be careful but don't panic. Open a window or other escape route and the animal will probably leave on its own. Never attempt to capture a wild animal unless you have the training, protective clothing, restraint equipment and caging necessary to perform the job.
- Beware of an increased number of snakes and other predators who will try to feed on the carcasses of reptiles, amphibians and small mammals who have been drowned or crushed in their burrows or under rocks.
- Often, during natural disasters, mosquitoes and dead animal carcasses may present disease problems. Outbreaks of anthrax, encephalitis and other diseases may occur. Contact your local emergency management office for help.

Further Assistance

- If you see any injured or stranded animal in need of assistance, or if you have any other questions or concerns about animal protection during an emergency situation, contact the Wake County Public Information Officer at 856-7036 or 856-7044.