

# Emergency preparedness for Farm animals

---

## Overview

From barn fires to natural disasters, emergency situations often call for special measures to shelter, care for and/or transport pets, livestock and poultry.

Safeguard your animals, your property and your business by taking precautions now.

## Know the risks

Knowing the risks specific to your area, community and region can help you better prepare.

Some of the more common risks to farm animals include:

- Overland flooding of creeks, rivers or canals
- Wildfire in forested areas or out of control grass fires in the prairies
- Spills or releases of dangerous goods, chemicals or hazardous materials

## Make a plan

Your plan should help you respond to the risks that you feel are the most important and could cause damage to your property or injury to your animals.

When developing your plan, there are three main options to consider for how you can respond to emergency events: shelter-in-place, evacuate family and animals, and evacuate family but not the animals.

## Shelter-in-place

Remain on your property with your animals until the emergency passes or gets resolved. Decide whether to confine the animals in an available shelter or leave them outdoors.

In case of flooding, ensure that your animals can be moved to high ground and have access to feed and clean water.

An outdoor sheltering location should:

- Avoid places that have overhead power lines or poles.
- Have no debris or sources of blowing debris.
- Have access to at least 3 days of food and clean water for your animals.
- Have adequate and safe fences that will maintain control of the animals.

## Stay informed:

- Download the [Alberta Emergency Alert app](#).
- Visit [Register with the animal on premises identification program](#).
- Contact your municipality's Director of Emergency Management.
- Contact the Alberta Emergency Management Agency at 780-422-9000, or dial 310-0000 for toll-free access outside Edmonton.

## Evacuating animals

Plan ahead and work with your community to determine what safe shelters are available for farm animals. Keep in mind your animals may be evacuated to a centralized location and will co-mingle with other animals.

Always ensure the following:

- You have sufficient feed and medical supplies available or can be delivered.
- Your animals have sufficient identification.
- Minimize contact among animals from different premises.
- Feed and water is protected from contact with wild animals and birds.
- Health and vaccination status of animals has been verified.
- You can handle death in a manner that minimizes the possible spread of contagious diseases.
- You have arranged for special provisions (milking, for example).

## Protect yourself and your family first!

There may be circumstances where the risk to life is great, but there is not enough time to evacuate your animals.

After ensuring the safety of yourself and your family, if it is safe to do so and time permits:

- Open gates between pens and pastures to give the animals more room to escape the hazard.
- Put extra feed and water out where the animals can get to it, as it may be a few days before you are allowed to return home.
- Consider turning off power and natural gas to reduce the chance of these utilities causing additional problems while you are gone.

## Build a farm emergency kit

In addition to your personal [emergency kit](#), make a farm emergency kit so you have supplies in one location.

Check and update contents regularly and include the following items:

- Current list of animals, including their location, records of feeding, vaccinations and tests.
- Supplies for temporary identification of your animals.
- Handling equipment such as halters, cages, blankets, and appropriate tools for each kind of animal. Include bolt-cutters to quickly free animals in an emergency.
- Water, feed and buckets. Tools and supplies needed for sanitation.
- Emergency equipment such as a cell phone, flashlights, portable radios (with weather radio band) and/or Weatheradio, and batteries.
- First-aid kits for people and animals.

### Tips:

- Maintain a contact list of emergency phone numbers that includes family, out-of-town contact person, community emergency personnel, employees, animal shelters and veterinarians.
- Review, test and update your emergency plan, supplies, and information regularly.