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BUTTE COUNTY TO CONDUCT ANIMAL DISASTER SHELTER DRILL OCTOBER 18

BUTTE COUNTY, Calif. — Butte County Public Health Department and Butte County Office of Emergency Management will be conducting an Animal Disaster Shelter Drill on October 18th in Oroville. The purpose of the drill is to exercise emergency response plans, policies and procedures as they pertain to animal sheltering. The drill will also allow county planners the opportunity to test the functionality and capabilities of a new shelter site on Del Oro Avenue for the first time.

“Those of us with pets know that our animals are a part of the family and their safety is very important to us,” said Phyllis Murdock, Butte County Public Health Director. “If a disaster occurs, our goal is to provide a safe and comfortable environment for animals in need of shelter and care. This drill will definitely assist us in meeting that objective.”

The animal shelter drill is a collaborative project that involves many entities. The Northwest SPCA and the North Valley Animal Disaster Group will assist with the intake of live animals, while representatives from a variety of Butte County Departments will assist with the set-up, communications and traffic control operations for the shelter. “As we witnessed during the 2008 Butte County wildfires, a successful animal shelter operation requires a group effort,” stated John Gulserian, Butte County Emergency Services Officer. “We are extremely grateful to all of our partners for their dedication of time and resources to make this drill a success.”

Every member of your family should be prepared in the event of an emergency, which includes having a plan and a disaster preparedness kit for your pets. An animal disaster kit should be ready to go in a moment’s notice and should include:

- Medications and medical records stored in a waterproof container as well as a pet first aid kit and first aid book. Your pets’ shots should be kept up to date at all times.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and carriers to transport pets safely and to ensure your pets can’t escape. Carriers should be large enough that your animals can stand

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comfortably, turn around, and lie down as your pet may have to stay in the carrier for hours at a time.

- Current photos and descriptions of your pet to help others identify them in case you become separated.
- Food and water, with bowls and a manual can opener, for at least three days. If your pet is a cat, be sure to include cat litter and a cat box.
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems and the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to board your pets or place them in foster care.
- Pet beds and toys, if you can easily take them, to reduce stress.
- Other useful items include newspapers, paper towels, plastic trash bags, grooming items, and household bleach.

The single most important thing you can do to protect your pet is to take them with you if you have to evacuate. If it is not safe for you to stay in your home, it is not safe for your animals either. Prior to an emergency, contact hotels and motels around your area, several will allow animals. Check with your friends and family. Ask if they would be able to shelter you and your animals or just your animals if necessary. Make a list of boarding facilities and veterinary offices that may be able to shelter your animals. Have contact names and numbers of friends or family members who can be contacted in the event you are separated from your animals.

In an emergency if keeping your animals with you is not an option, know that Butte County has an Animal Disaster Plan in place. The upcoming disaster drill on October 18 will allow participants to practice implementing the plan.

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For further information, contact Linda Haller, Animal Control Program Manager
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Butte County Public Health Department

Our Mission: To protect the public through promoting individual, community and environmental health.