

Ministry for Primary Industries
Manatū Ahu Matua

Animals affected by flood

Advice for livestock, lifestyle block, horse and pet owners

Your animals are your responsibility. You need to include them in your planning in the event of an emergency. The following information will help you prepare to ensure the welfare of your animals in a flood.

Evacuation plan

Look after yourself, your family, any workers, and your neighbours. Ask for help if you need it.

If you have to evacuate, take your pets with you – if you can do so safely – or take them to a safe shelter place.

If you have to leave your animals behind, make sure they're in a secure and sheltered place either inside or outside your home.

If you have livestock or horses in paddocks near waterways that have the potential to flood (streams, rivers etc.), move them to higher ground.

High value stock or vulnerable stock (e.g. stock close to giving birth, young stock) should be moved to areas which will be easily accessible in case they need assistance, supplementary feed or veterinary treatment.

Federated Farmers **0800 327 646 (0800 FARMING)** or your local Civil Defence Centre may be able to provide advice if you need assistance with evacuating your animals and finding a safe shelter place to contain them.

Containing livestock

If you stay on your property, check all stock are contained and that fences have not been damaged by land slips, flooding or power cuts (in the case of electric fences).

Consider opening gates within your property to allow stock easy access to dry ground. Do not open gates onto roadways or cut roadside fences.

If you need to move your stock consider moving them to higher ground on your own property, moving them to a neighbour's property if they're able to contain them, or evacuation to another area. Large scale evacuations are usually coordinated by organisations such as Federated Farmers and dairy companies.

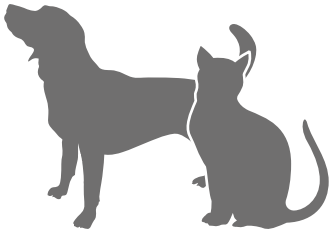
Make sure your stock have access to clean feed and water in their new contained space until they can be returned to their paddocks.

If you need assistance finding a safe place to contain your stock, contact Federated Farmers on **0800 327 646 (0800 FARMING)** or your local Civil Defence Centre.

If you need help to reinstate fencing, contact your local Emergency Centre, the Rural Support Trust **0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP)** or Federated Farmers on **0800 327 646 (0800 FARMING)**.



See full First Aid Kit checklist here.



Animal injuries

In a flood, animals may panic and flee to escape the situation, taking out any obstacles in their way. Check your animals for wounds - they may just look like a small hole or a tear.

Unlike people, animals tend to hide their pain making it difficult to detect. If you think your animals have sustained internal or external injuries, contact your veterinarian.

Animals in stress

Following an emergency event, animals can show signs of stress in different ways. Find out more about pets in the Behavioural Advice section below.

Contaminated water

Keep animals away from flood water. It may be contaminated with biological waste and chemicals.

If you come into contact with an animal that has been in flood water, change your clothing and wash your hands thoroughly. If you can, wear protective gear such as overalls, gloves and a mask.

Move animals out of flooded paddocks as soon as you safely can.

If animals are left in contaminated water for long periods, they are at risk of bacterial infections, chemical burns and sloughing of their skin. If they are affected, you can cleanse their skin/coat by hosing them down with non-contaminated water.

Feed and water

If the water is not safe for you to drink, it is not safe for your animals.

Do not let animals drink flood water if possible since it may be contaminated. Make sure they have access to clean water.

Give your pets bottled or boiled water.

Get water and feed to your animals as soon as possible.

Pasture and stored feed may be contaminated by flood water. Feed out stored feed or supplementary feed.

Prioritise feeding to high priority animals – high value stock or vulnerable stock (e.g. stock close to giving birth, young stock).

If you need assistance sourcing water and supplementary food for your pets, contact your local Civil Defence Centre.

If you need assistance sourcing water and supplementary feed for your livestock, contact Federated Farmers on **0800 327 646 (0800 FARMING).**

Support and assistance

For general advice and assistance, contact your local Civil Defence Centre.

For animal welfare advice or assistance contact Ministry for Primary Industries (Animal Welfare) on phone **0800 00 83 33.**

For general information about road access and telecommunications, contact your local Council's civil defence team.

For farmer support, contact the Rural Support Trust on **0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP).**

Reporting lost animals

Identification may be difficult if an animal's ID tag has been torn off in their attempt to flee the flood.

If you find a farm animal and are not sure about ownership, contact your local Council Animal Management or SPCA.

If you find a pet animal that needs immediate medical attention, please take it to your local veterinarian or SPCA.

If you need help with animal rescue, contact your local SPCA, Council or Civil Defence Centre.

If you find injured native wildlife contact Department of Conservation. For non-native species contact your local veterinarian or SPCA.

If you have lost or found a pet post the details on **www.lostpet.co.nz**, the New Zealand Companion Animal Register **0508 LOSTPET (0508 567873)** or a local veterinarian.

Useful contacts

National Emergency Management Agency – **www.civildefence.govt.nz**

Local CDEM – **http://www.civildefence.govt.nz/find-your-civil-defence-group**

Fire and Emergency Service – **Dial 111**

Police – **Dial 111**

Rural Support Trust – Phone **0800 787 254 (0800 RURAL HELP)**

Ministry for Primary Industries (Animal Welfare) – Phone **0800 00 83 33**

Federated Farmers – Phone **0800 FARMING (0800 327 646)**

Local Animal Control – contact your local Council

Behaviour of pets in emergencies

Animals react in different ways to emergency events such as flooding, earthquakes and fire. Your pet may be anxious, fearful, aggressive, clingy, or they may not show signs of stress at all. The following advice will help if your pet is stressed.

Animals reactions may be different to normal. Signs to look out for that can indicate an animal is anxious or stressed include:

Dogs

- licking lips;
- yawning;
- obvious gaze;
- constantly standing and looking around;
- tail tucked, ears back, head down and shaking;
- clingy;
- reactive to noise, people and other animals;
- fear aggression towards people and other animals – watch for signs, do not punish or confront, give them space, back away;
- agitated.

Cats

- often passive signs such as hiding, shut down/sleeping;
- over grooming.

Some dogs and cats develop fears/phobias and anxiety to water, objects, unfamiliar people, familiar and unfamiliar animals, sounds, rain and may suffer from separation anxiety if left alone. If they must be left alone, put them in a safe place that they cannot escape from (garage, kennel, crate, cage), provide toys/distractions and put some music on. Where phobias are severe and the animal is likely to hurt itself or damage property. Avoid leaving the animal alone and see your veterinarian regarding advice and treatment options.

Ways to decrease anxiety: developing a routine is helpful. Try to keep meal times consistent. Try to be calm around your pets; they will pick up on your anxiety also. Comfort each other if this is not distressing to your pet.

Exercise your pet if it is safe to do so.

Providing your cat or dog's usual bedding, and/or a piece of your clothing that smells like you, may assist their anxiety level. Pheromone products are available for cats and dogs and can also help reduce anxiety. They come in spray bottles or as plug-in dispensers (which need electricity) and are available from veterinary clinics.

For more information about preparing and planning for your animals in an emergency, visit www.mpi.govt.nz/animals-in-emergencies

