



Camelid Emergency Preparedness

Compiled by Karen Conyngham

WHY CAMELID OWNERS NEED TO BE PREPARED

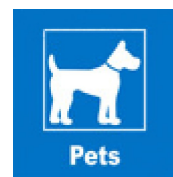
Transporting animals to safety when disaster strikes can be difficult. Disaster preparedness is important for all animals, but it is particularly important for livestock because of the animals' size and the requirements needed to shelter and transport them. Even if you think you are in an area relatively safe from natural disasters, remember that disasters can happen anywhere and include barn fires, hazardous material spills, propane line explosions, and train derailments, all of which may necessitate evacuation. It is imperative that you be prepared to protect your alpacas and llamas, whether by evacuating or by sheltering in place.



Some state legislatures are considering legislation that would require first responders to take animals into account when evacuating areas threatened by flooding waters, earthquakes, wildfires and other life-threatening disasters. Monitor your state legislature or state veterinary medical association's web site to determine if such a bill is under consideration for your area.

MAKE A PLAN AHEAD OF TIME

- Make a disaster plan to protect your property, your facilities, and your animals. Where will you go, how will you get there, what supplies will you take, how long will it take to gather and load the animals?





- Create a list of emergency telephone numbers, including those of your employees, employer, neighbors, your veterinarian, state veterinarian's office, county extension service, and a contact phone number for yourself other than your cell phone (e.g. close friend or family who are outside the impacted area). Have a copy of this list ready to give to each person helping in your evacuation.
- Have a designated person who can implement your plan in case you are not home when an emergency happens. If you update your plan, be sure this person also has a copy of the latest version.
- Keep a current copy of your association's membership directory in your vehicle.
- Have several alternative destinations depending on type and extent of disaster (within a 15 – 40 mile radius recommended). Keep a current state roadmap in your vehicle. Possible evacuation sites: pre-arranged farm/ranch of a friend who is not in the affected area; show/fair grounds, sale barns, equestrian centers, veterinary colleges, racetracks.
- Make sure every animal has identification. Microchip IDs are fine but also have halter or neck tags with your name and phone number ready in case all animals are not chipped.



- Have a halter and lead for each animal; keep ID tags on each halter. Organize halters and lead ropes on a peg board in barn hallway. Dog collars can serve as an emergency substitute for halters; be sure the collar fits snugly enough that the llama or alpaca cannot slip it off over its head. Train all animals to lead and load into a trailer.
 - Include a picket line, bungee stakeout lines and stakes in case there is no pen or enclosure at the receiving area.
- Maintain permanent health and I.D. records for your animals in a safe place. Take them with you if you evacuate. Backup software programs at least monthly. Store a backup of the data file either on disc and keep it in your safe deposit box/home safe or email the backup file to a friend or relative.





- Print a list of all of your animals and make copies. Photograph your herd and keep it with your master list. Organize your herd into groups (geldings, studs, moms and babies).
- Identify an alley, lane or pen that can easily be used to confine animals and is readily adjacent to where a trailer or truck can access them.
- Know who can transport animals if necessary and where animals can be relocated, or be prepared to leave them behind if you must.
- Find out if anyone nearby has equipment which may be shared, such as trailers, generators, water tanks or portable pens.
- If you own too many animals to evacuate in one trip, decide ahead of time what the priority evacuation list will be. Some may have to be left behind.
- Truck and Trailer - Check your truck and trailer regularly to make certain they are ready to transport camelids. Check the floor, tires, brakes, lights and hitch to be sure they are in working order. Make sure you have a full tank of gas. Do not carry full gas cans in your trailer. Always back your vehicle into your driveway facing the exit, in front of your trailer if possible. Keep your trailer in an easily accessible place.





Supplies to take with you if possible:

- Water buckets
- Feed pans
- Hay/feed for at least 3 days
- Medicines for any animals currently under treatment; syringes if needed (3-day minimum)
- Animal and people first-aid kits (see “First Aid Kits for Camelids”, below)
- Clippers to treat broken toenails
- Tweezers to remove thorns
- Scissors
- Brush for grooming
- Microchip reader





IF YOU NEED TO SHELTER IN PLACE

- Install a hand pump and obtain enough large containers to water your animals and family for at least a week (municipal water supplies and wells are often contaminated during a disaster.)
- Identify alternate water and power sources. A generator (4 hp minimum) with a safely stored supply of fuel may be essential, especially if you have electrical equipment necessary to the well-being of your animals.
- Have 48-72 hours of water and feed on hand for animals. Use child's plastic swimming pool, boats, trash cans, bath tubs to store water.
- Turn off power and gas lines in advance.
- Keep the following emergency supplies on hand:
 1. Plastic trash barrel with lid
 2. Tarpaulins
 3. Water buckets
 4. First aid items for animals and people
 5. Portable radio, flashlight and extra batteries
 6. Fire-resistant non-nylon leads and halters
 7. Sharp knife and wire cutters
 8. Leg wraps (disposable baby diapers make good emergency wraps or bandages)
 9. Duct tape, magic markers
 10. Lime and bleach (disinfectants)
 11. Portable pens/fencing or crates if appropriate





(supplies continued)

- Film - Obtain film for your camera and camcorder to document storm damage. If time permits, take pictures of your structures prior to the storm. Review your insurance policy to determine storm coverage then document damage accordingly.
- Water purification – Iodine or chlorine treatments and an actual physical filter (paper towels, clean cloth, coffee filters for filtering brackish water) may be needed if water sources are contaminated. Iodine dosage: using ordinary 2 percent tincture of iodine from the medicine chest, 3 drops per quart of CLEAR water, or 6 drops to each quart of cloudy water, and stir thoroughly, allow water to stand for at least 30 minutes before using or filtering for additional protection. Chlorine dosage: 8 drops (1/8 tsp. or .5ml) for 1 gallon of CLEAR water; 18 drops (1/4 tsp/1.25 ml) for CLOUDY water. When storing water in 55 gallon drums or inflatable bags, use 55 ml or a stingy, 1/4 cup per 55 gallons of capacity. Average potable water needs are 1 gallon per person per day; llamas/alpacas may need 2 gallons or more each per day.

WHEN SHOULD YOU EVACUATE? BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE! !



Flooding



Hurricane



Tornado



Tsunami



Winter Storm



AFTER THE DISASTER

- Watch for unstable roads and highways.
- Looters and vandals could be in the area.
- Survey the area around your barn and pastures to identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, contaminated water, downed power lines and dangerous wildlife such as snakes.
- Walk fence lines.
- Handle livestock quietly, calmly and in a manner they are familiar with.
- Release animals into safe and enclosed areas only.
- Reintroduce food in small servings, gradually working up to full portions if animals have been without food for a prolonged period of time.
- Allow uninterrupted rest/sleep for all animals to recover from the trauma and stress.

Practice your plan at least once a year!!

(Ed Note: As Karen points out, it is very important to practice your plan. But during your planning and practice, remember that most emergencies and disasters happen at night.

Can you halter, handle and move your herd in the dark? Most of us usually work with our animals during day light hours to prevent injury to ourselves by running into and over unseen objects. Trying to handle your animals when you're anxious, in a hurry AND in the dark is a recipe for disaster.

Spend at least one or two nights a week working with your animals in the dark. Halter them, load them into your trailer or van and get them used to being handled at night. Heck, you might take a trailer load to a local park so they get the idea that getting out in a strange place, at night is not so bad! Then when the Sherriff's deputies come pounding on your door at 2:00 am, you and your herd will be able to respond quickly, orderly and without all the drama.)





FIRST AID KITS FOR CAMELIDS

By Dr. Kristy Brown

(originally published in LANA News, Fall 2004)

I have several first aid kits made up and I'd like to share ideas with you to create your own. I have a standard size toolbox (about 8" high and deep and 18" long) in the back of the truck with emergency supplies while we're "on the road". I like to keep the emergency kit in the truck, not the tack box, so that it is available every time the trailer is hooked up, not just when we're headed for a show. (This box would work for the barn as well.) I have a friend that uses the small, flip top coolers as an emergency kit - anything small enough to store and carry easily; yet large enough to hold a few essentials will work. Bubble wrap sheets work great to wrap around medicine bottles to prevent breakage and are readily available at most office supply stores. Or better yet, reuse the wrap from packages you receive. Ziplock bags work great to protect and organize items in the tack box.

GENERAL SUPPLIES:

1. **Vetwrap** – to wrap wounds or support joints.
2. **Diapers** - these work great to place over wounds, they are very absorbent and won't stick to wounds.
3. **2" PVC pipe** - cut length wise to use as a splint-cut the pipe as long as will fit in your emergency kit. If you don't have PVC pipe available or can't cut it, the same length of 1" dowel rod will also work-keep 2 pieces of dowel rod in your kit to wrap one on each side of the injured area for support.
4. **Duct tape** - the "miracle bandage." Duct tape can be used to waterproof a bandage, hold a splint, pull the fiber away from a wound, secure a bandage, and any other creative use you can come up with. This will annoy my husband because he is an HVAC contractor and thinks duct tape is only for one specific use for his sheet metal projects, not an all purpose item.
5. **Contact lens (sterile saline) solution** - this can be used to rinse out an inflamed eye or a wound. Saline is "tissue friendly" and will flush a wound well without leaving a residue that could prevent your veterinarian from stitching the wound. Buy the cheap generic bottles and discard them after they are opened.
6. **Eye salves** - keep a couple of tubes of nonsteroidal antibiotic salves in your kit. Again, they are safe for a scratch on the eye or to place on superficial wounds. Do not put cream into deep wounds if you can get to a veterinarian within a couple of hours.
7. **Antibiotic injectable** - consult with your veterinarian for their favorite drug for your use. I keep both Penicillin (good for wounds) and LA200 (good for respiratory infections) in my travel kit.



8. Banamine - Banamine is good for colic, inflammation and pain. Consult your veterinarian for the appropriate dosage and to dispense an appropriate volume of drug for your use.

9. Gastroguard - this product is used to treat ulcers. It is not something to use without your veterinarian's approval, but may be appropriate to use on an animal that is stressed while on the road.

10. Antihistamine injectable - antihistamines can be used for insect bites, snake bites, allergic conditions and respiratory conditions.

11. Injectable steroid - this should be used only for snake bites, shock or severe allergic reactions. Consult your veterinarian.

12. Epinephrine - antidote for drug reactions and insect/snake bites-again, consult your veterinarian.

13. Vegetable oil - a pint of vegetable oil is useful for constipation or colic on the road. Vegetable oil has flavor and can be syringed into the animal's mouth and they will swallow it. Mineral oil has no flavor and is easily aspirated. Again, consult with your veterinarian for an appropriate dosage.

14. Syringes and needles - a variety pack. I keep an extra Ziplock for garbage (used needles/syringes). When I empty the used items, I know exactly what I need to restock the kit with.

15. Hand towels - can be used to support an injured leg or to clean a wound.

16. Bottled water - to give animal to drink or to flush a wound or rehydrate yourself.

17. Betadine or Nolvasan surgical scrub - a small shampoo container of either of these fits nicely into a kit and can be used to clean a wound. Your veterinarian can possibly still suture a wound if cleansed with these products because tissue residue is not a concern.

This kit fits easily in a vehicle or a llama pack for use on the trail. You may prefer a backpack or cooler or other container; anything that is easy to grab and run with in an emergency and anything you can easily take on the trail.



SOURCES:

American Veterinary Medical Association

<http://www.avma.org/disaster/default.asp>

Clemson University

http://www.clemson.edu/ep/A_E_instructions.htm

Colorado State University Extension

Caring for Livestock: Before, During and After Disasters

<http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/livestk/publive.html>

Emergency Water Purification Techniques

<http://www.aquatechnology.net/emergencywaterpurification.html>

and

<http://www.epa.gov/safewater/faq/emerg.html>

Llama Association of North America

<http://www.llamainfo.org/>

Rocky Mtn. Llama & Alpaca Assoc.

http://www.rmla.com/Fire_Flood.htm

Univ. of Florida, Small Ruminant Emergency Preparedness:

<http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/PDFS/CHAP07/DPR-0724-web.pdf>

Although the following is written for equine owners, all of the recommendations and procedures will apply to llama and alpaca emergency preparedness as well:

What Do I Do With My Horse in Fire, Flood, and/or Earthquake?

<http://www.etinational.com/docs/Red%20Book%20Revision%209-2004.pdf>