



Branch News Attachment

for the monthly Newsletter of the Western and Southern Cape
branches of the SAVA

Except from: **Veterinary Disaster Response** edited by Wingfield and Palmer

Link to the book: <http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0813810140.html>

Chapter 3.1 by Joan C Casey on Family versus business during a disaster

For minor emergencies that do not threaten the entire community, a list of staff who will respond and designated managers who will be responsible for requesting staff response, can be effective, provided everyone understands their responsibilities. Responding however effectively when a disaster affects the entire community has several challenges.

Unless a responder is confident his/her family and loved ones are safe, the responder is ineffective. A prearranged family emergency contact plan will provide that assurance more quickly.



Photo: Sandy from gpb.com

If your hospital or clinic would need help from external responders during the disaster, those arrangements and agreements should be made proactively with neighbouring clinics or hospitals, animal welfare organisations and official disaster management structures of local authorities. Memoranda of understanding (MOU) to provide assistance if needed and if able during a disaster should be developed between these parties. Other helpful links to explore is businesses to supply pet food and extra equipment such as animal airline crates, leashes and other supplies.

A MOU with human rescue organisations, such as the Red Cross, to establish a pet shelter next to their human shelter is very advantageous. Not only does it provide evacuees with a single destination location, it also helps them emotionally to have their pets where they can visit. Keep a roster of pretrained and prescreened volunteers to provide for intake, record keeping, triage, treatment and care of animals.

Comment: Triage refers to the process of sorting injured animals into groups based on their need for or likely benefit from immediate medical treatment during a disaster.

If communication lines are down and the clinic is unable to open its doors due to damage or vets volunteering at a care center for animals affected by the disaster, post a notice, possibly on the hospital door, which contains information on where to get help (alternative clinic or animal hospital, animal care center, emergency pet shelter and livestock and horse holding grounds).

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