



Safety and Health of Pets When Returning Home After a Flood

The following can be used as guidance for ensuring the safety and health of your pets when you return to home after a flood

- Survey the area inside and outside your home to identify sharp objects, dangerous materials, dangerous wildlife, contaminated water, downed power lines, or other hazards.
- Make sure all debris and waste is collected and properly disposed off your property prior to releasing pets to the inside and outside of your home.
- In some locations pets can be taken to local or licensed boarding facilities or animal shelters and be cared for prior to you ensuring your home and property are safe. A list of some animal shelters is available on the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship website at: <http://www.iowaagriculture.gov/press/pdfs/PetShelterInfo2008.pdf>
- Pets can be allowed outside on ground that was previously covered by flood water after 24 to 48 hours of drying.
- Examine your animals closely, and contact your veterinarian immediately if you observe injuries or signs of illness.
- Be aware that familiar scents and landmarks may have changed, and this can confuse your animals.
- Initially release cats, dogs, and other small animals indoors only. They could encounter dangerous wildlife and debris if they are allowed outside unsupervised and unrestrained.
- Birds and reptiles can be released only if necessary and only when they are calm and in an enclosed room.
- 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.