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Cornell University
Cooperative Extension
Orange County

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Cornell University Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities.
Please contact our office if you have any special needs.

If Your Pet Is Missing

- Don't panic. Most dogs and cats will stay close to their homes or will try to return soon.
- Your pet may be hiding or trapped in the home, even if it is severely damaged.
- Call your pet's name often.
- Bring a carrier or a slip leash when going searching for your pet. A scared pet will try to escape if you try to carry it home.
- Leave food and water near the home site to entice them to return, and accept that you may attract other animals.
- Contact local animal shelters and humane societies with descriptions of your pet, or visit.
- It may take weeks or months for you and your pet to reunite. Discuss your feelings and allow children to feel worried and sad about the missing family member.

Crisis and Your Pet's Behavior

- Don't expect normal behavior from your pet. Your pet is extremely upset.
- Your cat or dog may try to run back into an unsafe home after you have rescued it. Do not chase the pet.
- If possible, wear thick clothing and gloves when handling your pet. Biting and scratching is normal behavior for an extremely scared pet.
- Your pet may not be hungry for a few days due to shock.

When Your Pet Is Found

- Use a blanket to cover and wrap the pet. This will be a comfort and a protection.
- Check for injuries. Injured pets need immediate professional attention.
- Give your pet access to plenty of clean, potable water.
- Your pet may have been exposed to contaminants. Give the pet a gentle bath.
- If your pet has been missing for several days and is on routine medications, take the pet to a veterinarian.

Injured and Sick Pets

- Carefully wrap the pet in a blanket and pick it up by the ends of the blanket. This is the best way to avoid worsening the injury.
- An injured pet is especially likely to bite or scratch. Protect yourself.
- Get the animal to a veterinarian immediately.
- If your cat or dog has diarrhea and you can't go to the vet promptly, try Kaopectate at a dose of one teaspoon per 10 pounds body weight up to three times a day. Do not use other human anti-diarrhea medicines besides Kaopectate. Many of them contain ingredients harmful to pets.

Wildlife Animals

- Wildlife animals in the area are affected by the crisis too. Raccoons, squirrels and other animals may take shelter in the debris of your home. Get a professional to help remove the animals.
- Do not attempt to rescue injured wildlife. They may bite or scratch and may be diseased. Call the Department of Natural Resources or other wildlife organization in your area.