

# Pet Fire Safety

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## Take Safe Measures Before Your Home Is Threatened



It's a fact: a fire could destroy your home at any time, particularly by misuse of space heaters in the winter, or by a natural fire in the summer. Most families have evacuation plans that include their pets. If you haven't created a plan, consider making one today.

To start, check the batteries in your smoke alarms to be sure they're working. Then designate one human family member who would be responsible for each pet. Other steps to keep your pets safe in case of fire include:

### **Alert Firefighters To Indoor Pets**

Place a Pet Rescue Fire Safety Sticker in your window. These stickers, which are available free from most pet stores and non-profit humane organizations, stick to your front window and tell firefighters to "Please rescue my pets!" They let fire crews know that you have pets inside the house, how many, and what kind.

Since owners are often not home when fires occur, these stickers have saved many pet lives. You can search online non-profit humane organizations to request a free pet emergency sticker.

## Keep Outdoor Pets Away From Danger



Keep pet houses or pens away from brushy areas. Fire departments will warn you to clear dry brush away from your home, but that also applies to your pets.

If you have a doghouse or a pen for a rabbit, pot-bellied pig or other outdoor pet, make sure it's at least 20 feet away from any brush that could possibly become fuel in a fire. That way, you'll have time to go out and rescue your pet if such a fire does threaten your property.

Always evacuate your pets on a leash or in a pet carrier. Pets will panic at the smell of smoke, and may bolt when outside, making them impossible to find.



### **Locate Your Pet's Hideaway**

Know their hiding places. Remember, during a fire, your pets will be terrified, and they'll most likely run to in the places they feel most safe. If you don't know their common hiding places, you could run out of time to save your friend.

Find all the best cubbyholes and niches, map them out on a piece of paper, and include the map in your fire escape plan.

### **Have An Emergency Kit On Hand**

Prepare an emergency kit for each pet. The kit should contain some of your pet's food, his veterinary paperwork, prescription medications, if any, and photo/description of your pet. You may have to board your pet at a kennel or other facility until you get settled after a fire, and they will require proof that your pet has current vaccinations.

### **Secure Your Pet During Danger**

Always evacuate your pets on a leash or in a pet carrier. Just as with fireworks, pets will panic at the smell of smoke, and they may bolt when outside, making them impossible to find. Put your dog on a leash; you can carry a cat in a carrier.

## **Create An Open Access**

Leave an outside door open. If you must evacuate and can't find your pet in the house, leave a door open that leads to the outside, and then call the pet's name once you get out. With luck, he'll hear you and head for your voice, although this works better for dogs than cats. Be prepared; he'll be panicked. Be sure to have a designated meeting place near your home for everyone to meet so everyone will be accounted for away from the fire.

With a little planning, you can ensure that everyone on two and four legs will be safe in case there is a fire in your home. For more information about pet fire safety, visit [The Humane Society](#).