

Preface- County Animal Response Team Plan Template

Guide to the user:

The County Animal Response Team (CART) Plan is the result of the CART assessing and identifying the resources available within their county that may be called upon to assist County Emergency Management Officials during an emergency or disaster event. The resources available through the activation of the CART provide the County with valuable assets that will assist in meeting the needs of companion animals, livestock and their owners during periods declared emergencies. The goal of the Plan is to reduce morbidity and mortality of animals in the county by working closely with its partners to assist the affected community while only using the necessary resources.

The lead County official is ultimately responsible for all county activities including those activities as it relates to a declared emergency. In order to manage the CARTS response to an emergency, it will operate under the Incident Command System (ICS) Model as implemented by county officials. This CART plan envisions that the county CART Coordinator will act as the liaison to CART Volunteers who will be activated based on training and/or expertise to assist the county. The Coordinator will assist, as may be required, the tasking of team members.

The purpose of this plan is to provide guidance to users in order to establish, operate and evaluate the CARTS response when activated. This Plan is intended to be an annex to the County's "all hazard" emergency plan. The Plan serves as the most efficient and coordinated approach for the CART to coordinate its partners responding to declared emergencies.

This content of this document has been created only as an example after a review of CART plans created in other states, as well as county Emergency Operations Plans. The format presented is one that is offered as a template for Pennsylvania. And has been reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors of PASART, with guidance from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. All counties are requested to use this template in order to allow volunteers and officials who are called upon to cross county lines to be able to understand local plans and to provide assistance as efficiently and effectively as possible.

DRAFT TEMPLATE FOR CART PLANS

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The public and private sectors throughout the country now recognize a pro-active need for disaster planning throughout all agencies, organizations, integrated companies, and individual citizens. This disaster planning was developed primarily with the safety of people in mind. It is only recently that disaster planners across the country have realized how the failure to plan for the animal population will drastically affect the viability of their disaster plans for people. For instance, if the disaster warrants an evacuation, many people will not evacuate without their animals, or will delay their own evacuation in an attempt to make preparations for their animals left behind (livestock and companion animals) to their own detriment. These refusals or delays begin a chain reaction which can seriously jeopardize or cause a total breakdown of the overall disaster plan.

In addition, failure to plan for animals creates serious public health concerns with injured or dead animals. Failure to plan for animals causes considerable public safety problems as animals roam unattended, causing automobile accidents and other injuries to people. And finally, failure to plan for animals will create a public relations nightmare for those agencies which the public perceives as “animal responsible” if animal issues are not properly addressed in the wake of the disaster.

1.1 PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this plan is to develop the capacity to protect wild and domesticated animal resources, the public health, the public food supply, the environment, and to ensure the humane care and treatment of animals in case of a large-scale emergency, including hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, drought, fire, explosion, building collapse, commercial transportation accidents, chemical spills, nuclear power plant accidents, or other situations that may cause animal suffering.

1.2 SCOPE

This plan is intended for use by local government and its public and private partners to take immediate action in providing a means of care and control to minimize animal suffering in the event of a large-scale emergency. This action will be aimed at all animals that may need help whether such animals are owned, stray, domestic or wild.

_____County officials or an authorized representative may place into effect established plans and procedures, and direct both the emergency and recovery aspects

of the incident. The official/representative may deviate from these procedures when, in their judgment, immediate and direct action is necessary to protect public safety.

2.0 AFFECTED AGENCIES/RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 PRIMARY AGENCIES (Include all that apply for your county)NOTE: IDENTIFY THE LEAD AGENCY

County Health Department/Animal Control (If applicable)

Provide guidance and support to ensure the safety of all citizens.

Coordinate support agencies to manage animal protection in large-scale emergencies.

County Emergency Management

Activate the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), if necessary.

Responsible for the overall direction of the emergency incident.

County Cooperative Extension

Coordinate support agencies to manage animal protection in large-scale emergencies.

Provide and coordinate personnel, equipment and shelter as required to aid in the protection of livestock during an emergency situation.

County Soil and Water Conservation (if applicable)

Provide personnel and support in locating displaced animals.

Provide support for mortality disposal.

2.2 SUPPORT AGENCIES(Include all that apply for your county)

State Animal Response Team (SART)

Provide volunteers, assistance, information, supplies and expertise in caring for animals.

PA Department of Agriculture

Responsible for the enforcement of state regulations concerning livestock health and the movement of animals affected by those regulations. PADA

will also assist in providing information and direction whenever possible with regard to the general health of livestock in these areas.

2.3 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (Include all that are appropriate for your county)

Humane Society

Provide personnel, resources, and equipment

Livestock Association

Provide personnel, resources, and equipment

Integrated Poultry and Livestock Companies

Provide personnel and equipment to protect, move and relocate animals.

Equine Veterinary Service

Provide veterinary care to equine

Private Farms

Provide shelter and supplies to care for displaced animals.

Private Kennels, Stables, etc.

Provide personnel, equipment and shelter as required to shelter and care for pets from evacuated citizens and in cases when established animal shelters are filled or destroyed.

Private Veterinary Clinics

Provide veterinary care to animals.

Game Commission

Provide personnel and equipment as required to protect wildlife.

Forest Service (State or Federal)

Provide personnel and equipment as needed to protect and care for animals.

County or Regional Veterinary Medical Association

Provide personnel to aid in the medical treatment of animals. Activate regional Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT).

Farm Service Agency

Provide personnel and services to relocate and care for animals.

2.4 COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Equine

Committee members and contacts - Appendix.

Companion Animals(cats, dogs, etc.)

Committee members and contacts - Appendix.

Livestock

Committee members and contacts - Appendix.

Mortality Disposal

Committee members and contacts - Appendix.

Communications/Public Relations

Committee members and contacts - Appendix

3.0 PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an upcoming emergency, will take reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their care and/or control. Natural, technological or manmade disasters could affect the well being of domesticated or non-domesticated animals.

The County should plan both large and small scale emergency situations, and should plan to carry out response and recovery operations utilizing local resources. Outside animal care and rescue assistance would likely be available in most large-scale emergencies affecting the County.

Animal protection planning should ensure the proper care and recovery of animals impacted during an emergency. These plans may include measures to identify housing and shelter for animals, communicate information to the public and develop proper animal release forms and procedures to insure return of animals to their rightful owner(s).

Provision should be made for calls from the public being made during a disaster offering assistance. A method for managing this should be included, as some offers will fill gaps not yet addressed by the CART.

Public information statements will be issued through the various media outlets. This information will include locations where domestic and non-domestic animals (including livestock and wild animals) may be accepted during emergency situations. A large-scale emergency may warrant immediate response from state and local personnel, agencies and organizations. However, depending on the nature of the emergency, some situations may require activation of additional specialized agencies through mutual aid.

Through effective animal protection planning and organization, disaster relief efforts will be more expedient.

4.0 CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

4.1 GENERAL

The primary and support agencies will manage and coordinate local animal protection activities. These agencies will use established animal protection and support organizations, processes and procedures. Responsibility for situation assessment and determination of resource needs in the event of a large-scale emergency lies primarily with appropriate county officials in cooperation with local incident managers.

Requests for animal protection assistance and resources such as food, medicine, shelter material, specialized personnel and additional veterinary medical professionals, will be transmitted through county Emergency Management officials to the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency, which will arrange for both State and Federal assistance as may be needed.

Animal protection operations will be managed under the County Emergency Operations Plan. Public health concerns will be managed in accordance with appropriate County plans and procedures.

Animals included under the plan:

The sheltering and protection of domestic and non-domestic animals (including livestock) are the responsibility of their owners.

Domestic and non-domestic animals that are lost, strayed, incapable of being cared for by their owners, or a danger to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of County Animal Response Team. These animals will be sheltered, fed and if possible returned to their owners. If the animals cannot be returned to their owners, they will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures. **NOTE: [There are established holding periods and procedures for stray dogs. There are not established procedures for disposal of animals “incapable of being cared for by their owners”. This will need to be clarified and dealt with by the CART.]**

Wild animals should be left to their own survival instincts. Wild animals out of their natural habitats that are a danger either to themselves or the public will be the responsibility of Game Commission personnel in cooperation with local animal control officials and will be returned to their natural habitat, if possible.

4.2 NOTIFICATION

This plan will be activated in the event of a large-scale emergency causing a significant need for animal protection. The appropriate County official will determine when the plan will be activated and notify the appropriate primary, support, and mutual aid agencies. A call down notification system will be maintained by the appropriate County official.

4.3 COMMUNICATIONS

Communications between the primary and support agencies will occur primarily through telephone, facsimile and cellular telephone transmission. Amateur radio will be used as a backup system if other communication is impossible due to the nature of the emergency situation.

4.4 PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER (P.I.O.)

A spokesperson from _____ County will be responsible for the coordination of all media activities and press releases associated with the protection of animals. The P.I.O.'s responsibilities may include:

Providing information to the public BEFORE disasters occur on responsibilities of owners of animals.

Notifying the public of appropriate shelters to drop lost/stray animals, animals that they cannot care for, or animals that need immediate medical assistance.

Delivering instructions to the public to prepare their pets for an impending emergency.

Delivering relevant information regarding livestock.

4.5 RESPONSE

The owners of pets or livestock, when notified of an emergency, will take all reasonable steps to shelter and provide for animals under their control. **Where owners are unable to provide shelter and the CART has been unable to locate adequate resources within the county, Mutual Aid Agreements with neighboring Counties should be developed.**

Equine

Search and Rescue:

Equine loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of

the Equine Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

Identify key people to assist rescue efforts who have animal handling training. See Appendix.

Identify transportation equipment and enclosures. See Appendix.

Identify sources for animal restraint equipment, lead lines and halters. See Appendix.

Evacuated Equine

Private Resources:

Equine from evacuated citizens will be sheltered at private facilities, at the owner's expense. Fill in Name will maintain and update a list of participating shelters and veterinary clinics. See Appendix. A representative of the Equine Committee will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated livestock to either the shelter

facility or veterinary hospital and ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered Equine with their rightful owners. Transportation is to be provided by individuals who do local transport of equine. The equine owner is responsible to reimburse transport individual. Other private horse owners will also be available to assist with transport.

Equine Evacuation Shelter:

If the need arises, the CART may open an Equine shelter. Equine will be evacuated and sheltered by the owner or the owner may request assistance from the Livestock Committee. A shelter or non-occupied equine facility is difficult to find and maintain for an emergency only basis.

_____ County has no equine show facility. Evacuated equine would need to have shelter at private boarding barns or with private individuals. This list of people will be kept by the Equine Committee but may change according to available space. Feed, hay, bedding, etc. can be obtained through resources list in Appendix. Additional supplies, including corrals and panels may be requested from SART. Equine Committee volunteers, SART personnel and private individuals will be trained in equine management and will help maintain facilities.

Stray/Lost Equine

Due to the size of most equine and the inability to transport large numbers of equine, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals. Private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for equine. In the event of an emergency situation, the Equine Committee will contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in the sheltering operation. See Appendix. The owner will be responsible to reimburse the private farms for all expenses incurred during sheltering of equine. If necessary SART may be contacted for boarding assistance of equine at possible locations such as: veterinary hospitals or other sites with the capacity to house horses. (Farm Show Complex, racetracks, etc.)

Recovery of Equine

County Animal Control will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures.

Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold, will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

Companion Animals (cats, dogs)

Companion animals in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death or evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the Domestic Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance.

Key people to assist rescue efforts in the field who have animal handling training - See Appendix.

Transportation equipment and enclosures - See Appendix.

Restraint equipment, muzzles, leather gloves, rabies poles, leashes - See Appendix.

Evacuated Domestic Pets

Private Resources

Domestic pets from evacuated citizens, who have made no other arrangement may/will be sheltered at private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals or other facilities as close to the evacuation shelters as possible, at the owner's expense.

Upon the activation of evacuation shelters for citizens, a representative from the County Domestic Animal Committee will be contacted by the shelter manager and requested to initiate the opening of prearranged private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals as boarding facilities. List of shelters and vet clinics - See Appendix

Each of the citizens' evacuation shelters will have an available caretaker volunteer on the premises to evaluate the pets of evacuated citizens. Pets with significant injuries or illnesses will be transported to an animal hospital designated for the medical treatment of animals. For a list of shelters and vet clinics - See Appendix

A representative of the Domestic Animal Committee will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated pets to either the shelter facility or hospital and in ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered pets with their rightful owners. Transportation will be provided by the county Animal Control Office and local breeders of private kennels or qualified volunteers.

Animal Evacuation Shelter

If the need arises, the CART may open an evacuation pet shelter. Pets of evacuated citizens will be transported to this shelter as citizens arrive with their pets at the citizen's evacuation shelters.

The shelter location will be designated as the need arises. Cages will be requested from SART.

Cat and dog food may be obtained through the Animal Control Office. Animal Control will be responsible for maintaining tracking records for billing purposes after the shelter is closed.

Provisions for donated pet food should be included here.

Volunteers for maintaining the shelter will be trained by SART members. See Appendix.

Evacuated Citizens with Special Needs

Citizens with special needs (individuals with mental or physical handicaps who require evacuation assistance) may require assistance in evacuating their pets. If special needs individuals are unwilling or unable to make special arrangements for the sheltering of their pets, then the individuals and their pets will be transported to the evacuation shelter. Upon arrival at the shelter, pets not trained specifically to assist the individual (e.g. Service Animals) will be transported to a private boarding facility or other appropriate facility. Boarding will be provided at owner's expense.

Stray/Lost Domestic Pets

All stray/lost domestic pets recovered by County Animal Control will be sheltered at the County Animal Shelter or temporary shelters set up for this purpose. **NOTE: [very few places in PA have County Animal Control or County animal shelters. There is some municipal animal control and there are State Dog Wardens. This language will have to be revised by the CART to reflect that]** Any pets whose owners cannot care for their pets or domestic pets found by citizens will also be sheltered at these locations. Private boarding kennels and veterinarian clinics will serve as overflow shelters and will be requested to open through the Domestic Committee representative as necessary. Unclaimed animals will be disposed of according to county procedures.

Recovery of Domestic Pets

County Animal Control (**NOTE-SEE ABOVE NOTE**) will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures. Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

Livestock

Search and Rescue

Livestock loose or in need of assistance due to the emergency or to the death of evacuation of their owners will be the responsibility of the Livestock Committee in so much as all reasonable steps will be taken to provide assistance. Key people to assist rescue efforts in the field who have animal handling training - See Appendix
Transportation equipment and enclosures - Appendix
Sources for animal restraint equipment halters, leather gloves, panels, chutes - See Appendix

Evacuated Livestock

Private Resources

Livestock from evacuated citizens will be sheltered at private facilities, at the owner's expense. See Appendix.
A representative of the Livestock Committee or authorized volunteer will provide assistance in the transportation of the evacuated livestock to either the shelter facility or veterinary hospital and ensuring that a tracking system is in place to unite sheltered livestock with their rightful owners. (See Appendix).

Livestock Evacuation Shelter:

If the need arises, the CART may open a livestock shelter. Livestock will be evacuated and sheltered by the owner or the owner may request assistance from the Livestock Committee. A shelter or non-occupied livestock facility is difficult to find and maintain for an emergency only basis. The county has no livestock show facility. Evacuated livestock will need to have shelter at private boarding barns or with private individuals. This list of people will be kept but will change according to available space. See Appendix C (not completed). Feed, hay, bedding, etc. can be obtained through resources listed in Appendix. Additional supplies, including corrals and panels may be requested from SART. Livestock Committee volunteers, SART personnel and private individuals will be trained in livestock management and will help maintain facilities.

Stay/Lost Livestock

Due to the size of most livestock and the inability to transport large numbers of farm animals, owners are expected to develop shelter and/or evacuation plans for their own animals. Private farms located throughout the county may be used as shelter facilities for livestock. In the event of an emergency situation, the Livestock Committee will contact prearranged farms and request their assistance in the sheltering operation. The owner will be expected to reimburse the private farms for all expenses incurred during sheltering of livestock. A list of volunteering farms, their capacity and health requirements - See Appendix. If necessary SART may be contacted for boarding assistance of livestock at possible locations such as: veterinary hospitals, Farm Show Complex, racetracks, etc.

Recovery of Livestock:

County Animal Control (**SEE NOTE ABOVE**) will support efforts to identify owners of stray/lost animals. If owners cannot be found, representatives will attempt to adopt or sell the animals according to their established procedures. Animals for which no owners can be found and which cannot be placed in adoptive care or sold will be disposed of in accordance with established animal control procedures.

Wildlife

Wild animals out of their natural habitat that are endangering either themselves or the human population will be handled in accordance with Game Commission guidelines.

Zoos and Exotic Animals

Your county may have a local zoo or exotic animal exhibition. You should work with these organizations to provide assistance during a disaster and also access their expertise as may be needed across the county. Include specific information here.

Recovery/Stranded Wildlife

If possible, wild animals outside of their natural habitat will be transported back to their natural habitat. If the responsible agency is unable to transport the animal back to its natural habitat due to the nature of the emergency or to injuries that the animal may have sustained, the situation will be handled by the Game Commission.

Incapacitation of Shelters

In the event that established shelters are destroyed or incapable of functioning due to the nature of the emergency situation, assistance from private boarding kennels, veterinarian hospitals, stables, adjacent facilities, may be requested to open as boarding and/or medical facilities. In rare cases, during large-scale emergencies, animals may be moved outside the County for care and protection.

Shelter Staff and Supplies

Staff

Private boarding kennels and veterinarian hospitals will be responsible for the staffing of their own boarding facilities and will be compensated by the citizens who use the animal shelter according to the established policies of the animal shelter. Remaining animal shelters and hospitals will be staffed with available personnel from CART, assistance from SART and associated agencies. Each individual animal shelter will be responsible for developing the work schedules for employees and volunteers.

Supplies

Each animal shelter will identify resources for potable water, food, medical, cleaning and shelter supplies in advance of an emergency situation. Prearranged domestic and non-domestic animal food companies, medical suppliers, water suppliers, and cleaning product suppliers will be contacted and requested to begin the shipment of supplies to an established delivery point. The delivery point will serve as a storage center and a distribution center for the various shelters and hospitals. If the need arises, resource agencies (e.g. kennel clubs) may be requested to donate cages and other various shelter supplies.

Medical Assistance:

Hospitals

The Domestic Committee will coordinate the resources for a medical facility for domestic animals and equine which cannot be accommodated by the various shelters due to the animal's injuries. The local Veterinary Association County will identify private veterinarian hospitals and other locations that may serve as alternative medical facilities and medical shelters as space permits.

Staff

Volunteers from the University of Pennsylvania's School of Veterinary Medicine and others will assist in providing the medical care in these medical shelters. Depending on the extent of the emergency situation, volunteers or Veterinary Medical Assistance Teams (VMAT) from the American Veterinary Medical Association may be requested to assist in the medical treatment of domestic and non-domestic animals.

Bites/Disease Control

The local County Health Department or the State Health Department (**NOTE: YOU WILL NEED TO CONTACT HEALTH DEPT. AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS**) will make vaccinations available to rescue and shelter personnel and will insure that treatment of bites and injuries is available to affected persons. Outbreaks of rabies and other infectious disease are a serious threat during an emergency situation. Consultation with local public health officials should be planned.

4.6 RECOVERY

Disposal of Animal Carcasses

Disposal of deceased animals will be coordinated by the Mortality Disposal Committee. They will arrange for disposal of euthanized animals and animals killed in the emergency situation.

Farm Plan

Each producer should have a disaster plan that consists of the following:

Identify evacuation route and equipment to move animals.

Provision of emergency power generators, fuel and other items needed.

Identify on site designated land for burial

Site needs to be adequate size and depth to accommodate population.

Site should have accessible in trucks (i.e. culverts over ditch)

Spray fields can be used but spraying can not resume until foliage has covered burial site.

Determine a contact person to report damages and requests assistance. See Appendix.

County Plan

Listing of all premises containing large populations of animals. See Appendix

Contact person for administering dead animal emergencies. See Appendix.

Identify commercial clean out crews (people to remove dead animals and wet/destroyed bedding material). They typically have supplies such as bobcats, loaders and spreader and dump trucks. See Appendix.

Priority on how to handle dead animals

1st consider rendering - Must be done rapidly (24-48 hours) following a disaster.

2nd consider burial - See Attachment (Include state DEP directives)

3rd consider composting - Primarily for poultry. High maintenance, Possible used for cover until burial arrangements could be made.

4th consider incineration - Worked poorly in the past. Consider last option due to past track record of improper fuel, costly, create logjam, air quality problem, inefficient, poorly trained personnel and ash disposal. Plan for rapid restoration of power to rendering facilities, feed mills and processing plans.

5.0 REVIEW AND UPDATE

On an annual basis, this procedure will be reviewed and updated as appropriate by appropriate local government officials and the partner organization. This procedure will be periodically tested by an appropriate exercise method.

6.0 APPROVAL

Suggest a local approval process be established by the CART.