An Evacuation Kit for Your Herp

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Food and Water

- Food: Two weeks supply of dry or pelleted food in airtight containers, if appropriate (rotate every 3 months)
- For herbivores: Frozen fruits and veggies, ice packs, and a small cooler; canned fruits and vegetables (without added salt); or baby food
- Carnivores: Small cage, food, and water for prey items
- Usual treats, if any (rotate every 3 months)
- Water: Two weeks supply of water (NOT distilled) for drinking, soaking, and misting (store in dark place, rotate every 2 months). Include dechlorination tablets, if needed
- Vitamins and/or nutritional supplements
- Food and water dishes
- Can opener and spoons, if needed

Restraint and Identification

- Towels
- Thick leather gloves if your herp is large or becomes injured or very afraid
- Escape-proof small aquarium, kennel, or pillowcase (for snakes) for transport. Do NOT transport your herp in his cage if it has branches, dishes, hide boxes, or other items that could cause injury if the cage is jarred. Securely
- Dish soap
- Disinfectant (e.g., Nolvasan) and spray bottle
- Garbage bags

Care and Comfort

- Separate evacuation cage (or use the transport cage). Solid-walled cages will be more insulating.
- Blanket and/or sheet to cover cage
- Hide box or log and branches for basking
- Hot water bottles to keep cage warm (empty plastic milk containers work well)
- Flashlight and batteries
- Spray bottle for misting, if needed
- Styrofoam cooler to help insulate your herp
- Full spectrum lights, heat lamps, and extension cords (outdoor-approved)
- Cage thermometer(s)

Records and Medications (store in a waterproof container)

- List of phone numbers:
    - Your veterinarian
    - List of secondary veterinarians
    - "Pet-friendly" motels
    - Boarding facilities for herps (Red Cross shelters do not allow animals)
    - Emergency clinic(s)

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if the cage is jarred. Securely attach the following information indelibly printed: your name; phone number; address; description of your herp (special markings, age, species (indicate if poisonous), sex, etc.); any microchip ID; pet insurance policy number; any medical or nutritional needs, and handling instructions (someone rescuing your herp may not know what he eats or how to handle him); and the address and phone number where you and/or a contact person can be reached.

- Recent photos with the same information that is on the portable cage printed on the back (keep in a waterproof container, e.g., inside ziplock bags). Include yourself in some of the photos to help you reclaim your herp, should he become lost.
- Wire, pliers, and duct tape (for repairs)

Sanitation

- Newspapers for lining the cage and additional substrate, if needed
- Paper towels

  - Database centers if your herp has a microchip
  - Animal poison control center(s)
  - Animal shelters in your area (in case you get separated from your herp)
- Pet insurance policy number
- Copies of proof of ownership papers (registration information, adoption papers, proofs of purchase, and microchip/tattoo information to store in the evacuation kit). List each animal and the species or breed, age, sex, color, and distinguishing characteristics.
- Medical records/list of medical needs, if your herp has a medical condition
- 2 weeks supply of medication/supplements in waterproof container (rotate every 2 months); have chemical ice packs and a small cooler if meds need refrigeration
- First aid kit

A large plastic tub or garbage can with a lid can be used to store these disaster preparedness items for your herp. Tape a copy of this list to the inside of the cover for future reference. Include a calendar indicating when certain items should be/were replaced.

In addition to the items listed above, include anything you use for your herp on a weekly or monthly basis. A good idea is to collect all the materials for your disaster preparedness kit, and then experiment by using only those items to care for your herp the next two weeks. That way, you will easily find out if you need to include other items, or a larger quantity of certain things.

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