



How do we decide it is time to standup an animal shelter? Who decides when and where sheltering will happen?

This chart portrays the flow of decisions. After an event, the Incident Command System (ICS) goes into effect. It is important that a representative of the Animal Response Team be situated in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) or Incident Command Post (ICP) so that any animal issues can be addressed in a timely manner. The decision to standup an animal shelter is made using all the information coming into the EOC, plus subject matter experts, to determine the needs of the human and animal populations.

When all factors have been considered, a decision is made to open an animal shelter. Details about shelter availability—address, hours, etc.—should be shared with the public through the public information officer (PIO).

Local personnel may be prepared to run the shelter with locally available resources. When necessary, outside resources may be requested to facilitate the organization.

Responsibilities: Local

All emergencies are local events!

Locally responsible parties

- Animal control agencies
- Animal shelters-private
- Law enforcement

Support

- Veterinary professionals
- Public health
- Purdue Extension
- Animal welfare groups
- Livestock associations



Remember who is legally in charge.

“ALL DISASTERS ARE LOCAL!” is a popular mantra in emergency management.

Remember that local authorities are the law, even in a disaster. They are ultimately responsible for all sheltering activity and law enforcement issues. Governmental shelters have the legal authority, private nonprofit shelters may have a contract with local government or be the animal authority for a county. The county Purdue Extension Educator may be able to provide connections to local producer groups or individual farmers for livestock issues.

Which agency has animal enforcement power? In Indiana, not all counties or communities have animal control services. Where animal control is available, the service may be provided by a city/county agency or by a private entity under a contract.

The public agency with authority needs to lead the response or a memorandum of understanding (MOU) needs to be executed if a private organization is going to perform sheltering functions during the disaster.

Cooperation with local human sheltering partners is critical to successful animal sheltering.

Support comes from your community. Veterinary clinics and staff, county health departments, animal welfare groups, and livestock associations within a county are potential sources of support. 4-H and FFA groups may help with supplies and maintenance. Remember liability issues and that volunteers are NOT to be under 16 years of age.

Response Priorities

1. **Protect people (Life Safety)**
 - Physical safety, zoonotic disease risks
 - Owners, general public, staff, volunteers
2. **Protect animals**
 - Physical safety, security, diseases
3. **Protect other property and the environment**
 - Shelter site, owner equipment, waterways, etc.

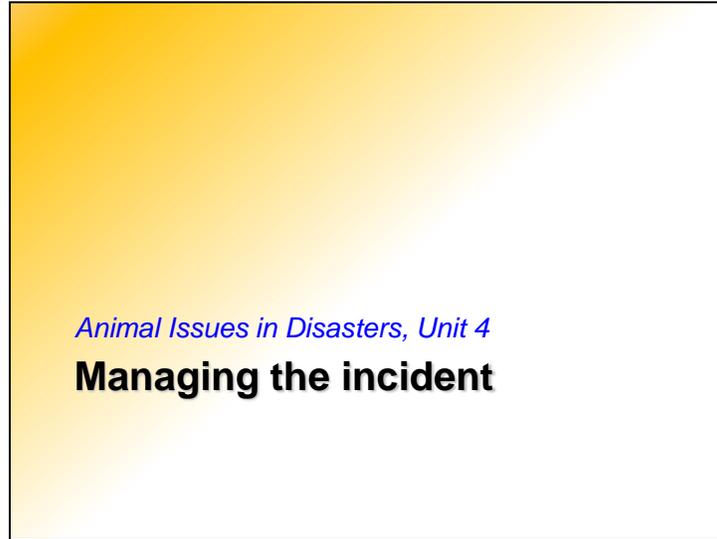


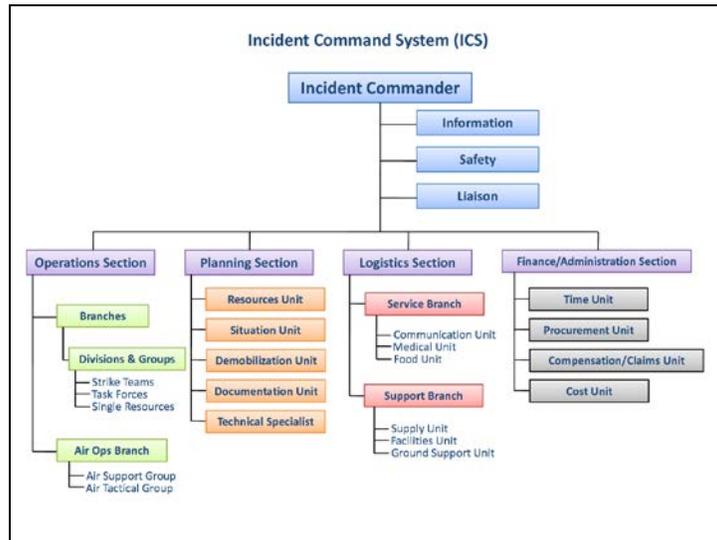
Response Priorities

Priorities in emergency response help focus the mission.

The #1 priority is PEOPLE. Life safety for people comes first. Protection of property is #2 and animals are considered property. Responders need to look out for people first and animals second. Protecting other property and the environment come third.

The animal response team's priority is the physical safety of mission volunteers and the general public who bring their animals. Next, the goal is to protect the animals from disease and distress. Finally, efforts must be made to preserve the local environment and return the community to a productive and habitable status.





Several times this course has referred to the Incident Command System or ICS. This diagram outlines a very basic ICS chain of command. This illustrates the national standard for organizing and running the response effort.

Animal sheltering and rescue activities need to fit within this framework to ensure the animal response component does not conflict with the larger mission and resources are accessible.

Command Staff Functions In ICS Management Models

Liaison Officer

- Point of contact for collaborating agencies
 - American Red Cross
 - Others animal agencies

Safety Officer

- Ensures safe conditions
- Can trump IC/shelter manager on safety issues
- Contact with incident Safety Officer

Public Information Officer (PIO)

- Distributes info to public, media



For the animal operation, the response team needs to communicate with the Incident Command Post and/or the Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

The **Liaison Officer (LO)** is the point of contact for collaborating agencies. This individual serves as the coordinator between the response team and important groups, organizations, or individuals (such as legislators).

The **Safety Officer (SO)** is a critical position that must be filled at all times. The Safety Officer keeps all personnel secure. A safety officer at all locations will help identify hazardous activities to avoid an accident; animal bites and other incidents will happen in a shelter environment. The SO should evaluate the location for hazards and set policies to promote safety.

The **Public Information Officer (PIO)** is critical to the accurate and proper distribution of information to the public through the media and other outlets. They can inform victims of the disaster and where animals can be taken or found, along with the availability of supplies for animals and families in need.

Planning

- Projecting needs
 - Personnel
 - Equipment/supplies
- Documentation
- Technical specialists
- Demobilization
- Monitor Incident Action Plan (IAP) from ICP
- Prepare IAP if needed
- *Communicate planning info up the ICS pipeline*



Planning is one of four sections under which tasks are organized. The Planning Chief monitors the Incident Action Plan (IAP) to project needs including personnel, equipment, and supplies. They contribute to the IAP. Planning staff will document all needs and materials. They assist with demobilization of human and physical resources.

Planning

Risk Assessment

- What scenarios are most common in your area?
 - Tornados, floods, severe weather
- What other hazards does your county have?
 - Transportation, chemical plants, other industry
- What kinds of animal populations?
 - Urban: primarily pet population, some exotics
 - Rural: livestock issues
 - Unusual populations: zoo, sanctuary



Planning: Risk Assessment

When planning for populations in need, consult with the local emergency manager (EM) to assist with a risk assessment.

The EM should be able to provide information on the major risks that are in the community or county, as well as individual animal facilities. Understanding the greatest risks can help with mitigation as well as response planning.

What are the most common disaster scenarios in the area? Tornados, floods, and severe weather are the most common in Indiana. Many rivers and creeks cutting across the state present a risk of flooding in almost every county. Tornados and severe weather are fairly common to Indiana.

Technological hazards, such as chemicals and other industry, are unique to each county and cannot be overlooked. Transportation issues can include overturned railroad cars, airplane crashes, airport layovers, and truck and livestock trailer accidents. Any of these situations can present problems to local responders and affect animal owners. People may need to be evacuated because of these accidents and their animals will come with them.

Facility Selection

- **Predetermined**
 - Permission and MOUs in place
- **Proximity away from risk(s)**
 - Flood plains, railroads, etc.
- **Suitable for local animal populations**
- **Access to utilities**
 - Water, electricity, restrooms, heat, a/c
 - Able to support volunteer needs
- **Proximity to human shelters**



Facility Selection

Facility selection is critical to successful sheltering in disasters and emergencies. Ideally, each county will pre-identify three different locations to establish animal sheltering, or—at a minimum—identify at least one location and a backup. Remember: The selected site could be non-accessible because of the disaster. *Example:* Trees fall on roads that access a primary site. Often county fairgrounds or exhibition space are considered the primary site, but these sites are frequently situated in flood plains or near hazards.

When a site(s) is selected, a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the oversight board, owner, or caretaker is needed to ensure its availability when needed.

Facility selection should also consider what kinds of animals are in the area. Urban/suburban counties will have more companion animals and fewer livestock, which are less likely to require sheltering. In contrast, rural counties may have more need for support to livestock owners such as feed or fencing. Mixed-population counties may need to provide sheltering for large and small animals. Horses are the most common livestock that may need sheltering in a disaster.

Shelters need to have access to power, potable water, and other necessities to function. Work with the local EMA to ensure availability of utilities at all planned sites. Some functions can be adapted during an incident, such as use of a generator for power or delivery of a water tank.

Shelters with planned owner access (cohabited or collocated) must be coordinated with human sheltering partners.

Animal Shelter Options

- Existing shelter
 - Transfer animals for use by disaster victims
- Rented or donated facility
 - Warehouse, empty storefront
- Community facility
 - School (people), gym
- Fairgrounds
 - Space suitable for companion animals



Animal Shelter Options

Sheltering companion animals is much like housing large animals, except the volume of individuals will likely be greater and space per animal will be smaller.

Well-known locations are ideal to help people know where to go to deposit or claim animals. Proximity to human shelters needs to be considered in cohabited or collocated sites. Again, advance planning and an MOU will make this process seamless during an event.

Consider what is available in the area:

- **Existing shelters:** If adoptable animals are moved to neighboring shelters, cage space can be used for victims of the disaster
- **Rented or donated facilities:** Business partners in the community may have empty warehouse or store front space
- **Community facilities:** A garage or meeting/community room can be converted, as can warehouses or empty storefronts. City/county agencies may have space. Schools are often identified as potential human shelters because they have space, kitchen facilities, parking and availability. One advantage is people can live in the cafeteria while animals are housed in the gym.
- **Fairgrounds:** These sites offer a variety of options, some buildings may be most suitable for small animals. Having all animal populations and supplies in one location facilitates public access, information, and accessibility.

Take steps to protect non-animal facilities, such as gym floors and interiors.



Animal Response Trailers

If a local jurisdiction does not have adequate resources, or if an incident expands beyond available resources, a mobile sheltering unit may be useful.

Indiana is well-resourced when it comes to mobile animal sheltering equipment. The state owns a trailer, managed by the Indiana State Board of Animal Health, that is located in Indianapolis. Several districts or counties have also invested in trailers.

Each trailer contains the basic equipment needed to establish a shelter for small animals in a site with water and electricity.

To access a trailer, the animal response team should request it from the local EMA. The EMA logistics team will make a resource request to the state or another jurisdiction to mobilize that resource.

The local team will be responsible for set up, staffing, and demobilization of these assets. Equipment can vary somewhat between trailers. If available, a trailer can be the easiest way to obtain a full suite of equipment in a single request.

Logistics

Acquiring equipment and supplies

- Cages/kennels
- Food/water
- Sanitation, litter
- Animal handling gear
- Record keeping
- Bowls, blankets, leashes



Logistics

The ICS system includes a Resource Unit Leader as part of the logistics section. You should be able to process supply requests to obtain needed supplies.

During the planning process, consideration for the physical resources needed to shelter large and small animals is important. Make a list of what will be needed, keeping in mind how long the shelter is planned to be open, so the request has the proper quantities.

Purchasing and stockpiling is one expensive—and ambitious—option. A more suitable and economical plan is to identify local businesses that will agree to a contract or MOU for reduced price or free supplies. National chain warehouses in the community may allow access to their stock during emergencies.

Cages/Kennels

Airline kennels

- Match to animal size
- Not comfortable, clean often

Wire cages

- Better ventilation, less durability
- Easier to clean pans
- Wire very difficult to clean and disinfect

Kennels/kennel panels

Cats: Better in enclosed room

- Need room for litter pan

Cages/Kennels

Containment equipment may be the most important, basic need.

Cages come in all shapes and sizes with many different types to choose from. Frequently, several different types will be needed to accommodate different animals; the only option may be to use whatever is available. Wire cages offer more ventilation. Airline kennels can offer more protection from viewing other animals which can minimize noise.

Temporary stalls can be used for giant breeds of dogs in addition to livestock.

Cats do not tolerate hot or cold weather extremes, so identifying an enclosed temperature-controlled room is ideal for felines.

If supplies on the trailer are not sufficient, local sources for additional items need to be identified. Ideally, researching and identifying sources will be done ahead of time to expedite procurement in an emergency.

Livestock Holding Facilities

- Stalls
- Temporary panels
- Corrals/paddocks
 - For communal herd
- DO NOT mix horses that are not already “buddies”
- Isolate sick animals
- Separate stallions/bulls into secure pens



Livestock Holding Facilities

Appropriate panels, temporary fencing and equipment are needed to handle these livestock, including horses. Use local experts, Extension, producer groups, FFA, 4-H groups and leaders, to understand how to set up and care for livestock. Species need to be separated and most males have to be kept apart to avoid fighting.

If livestock is a likely affected population, additional equipment will be needed in the plan.

Logistics

Communication

- External
 - Phone, fax, Internet, radio, satellite phone
- Internal
 - Walkie-talkies, bulletin board
 - Meetings, shift change
- Media monitoring

Site Access/Traffic Control

- People, supplies
- Animals (entry/exit)



More Logistics

The animal response team must be on the ICP or EOC communication network—at least the Shelter Manager. If the shelter is located away from command locations, extra effort must be made to track changing conditions and activities related to the Incident Action Plan.

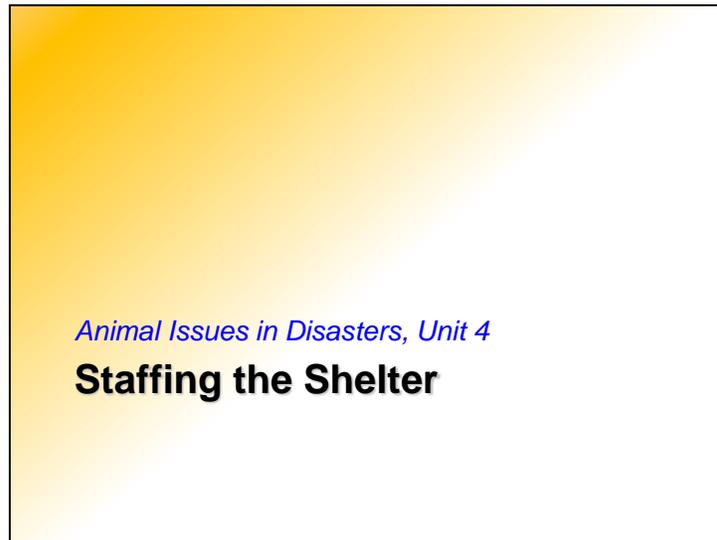
Communication

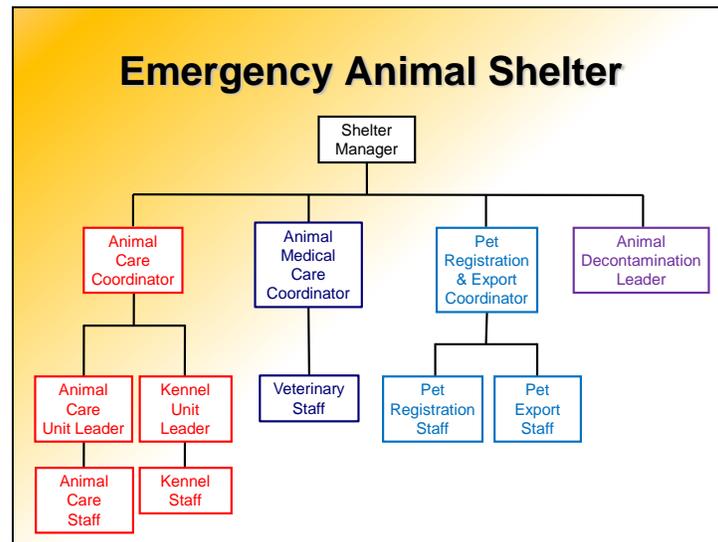
The internal communication system that may include radios may be able to provide regular, scheduled meetings and briefings throughout each day to keep staff updated. This is especially important at a shift change.

A media plan is important as animals in disasters attract reporters. Identify a spokesperson or PIO. Make sure the incident PIO (county or state) is aware of sheltering and rescue activity. The incident PIO can be helpful in communicating to the public via regular media updates, social media, and news briefings. They can convey shelter operations times and locations, populations, and rules.

Site Access/Traffic Control

Supplies and people will be moving in and out of the shelter via vehicles. Traffic flow for the movement of people and supplies should not interrupt the flow of pedestrian traffic in and around the shelter. Ideally, a separate back entrance would be used for staff and supply vehicles, instead of the public entrance.

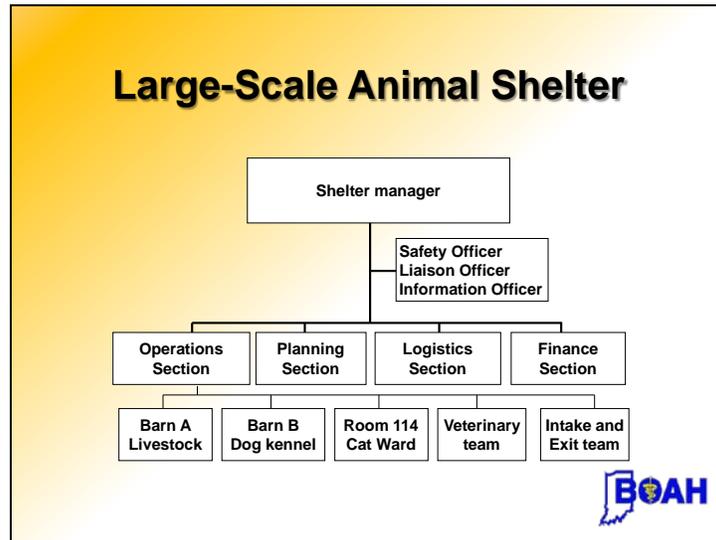




This chart is an example of an animal response plan. Organizational chart for staffing an individual shelter. Remember: This can expand and contract as needed to accommodate the scope and scale of the response.

Example: “Animal decontamination” may not be needed after a tornado, so that section may be eliminated.

During a large event, with multiple shelters, this chart would be replicated for each shelter, then be incorporated into the larger structure for animal response for the incident.



This ICS chart shows all the sections to accommodate both large and small animals in a large-scale event. The staffing chart on the previous slide would be represented within one of the shelters on this chart. *Example:* “Barn B Dog Kennel” would be staffed according to the previous slide.

Shelter Manager

- Not Incident Commander
- Responsible for entire shelter
- *DELEGATOR*
- Reports to (example):
 - Sheltering group leader (if multiple shelters)
or
 - Animal branch leader (part of Operations)



Shelter Manager

Shelter Manager is a critical position who oversees the operation of the shelter and how animal intake, care, and release happens.

The Shelter Manager is not the Incident Commander and should report up the command structure to the designated branch or group leader, likely part of Operations.

The Shelter Manager needs to delegate jobs to various people and provide the resources to complete their tasks. The Shelter Manager also must keep information flowing up to the ICP and EOC, along with requesting any resource needs to maintain operations.

The Shelter Manager needs a replacement/backup individual (a deputy) who can assume that role during a shift change or other time when the primary cannot be present.

Filing an Incident Action Plan (IAP) for each location will keep the Incident Commander up-to-date on activities taking place and planned activities for the next day. Planning meetings for the next day (or “operational period”) allows new issues to be identified.

Staffing

- Identify manager, team leaders
- Rostering/credentialing
- Set standards for shelter staff
- Require training/orientation or onboarding
- Volunteer management (with EOC)
- Shifts and schedules



Staffing

Use an organizational chart to identify the leadership team for the shelter and designate who will be Shelter Manager for each shift. Identification badges or vests can help workers and the public recognize key staff members.

All workers, whether professional or volunteer, should be rostered. Credentialing is a process of verifying education, training, and experience applicable to a position. This is important for positions that require specific skills, such as large animal handling or medical assessments. If this can be completed ahead of time through recruiting team members, the activation process should be smoother.

Set standards for shelter staff. In assigning positions, each should have a job description with a list of qualifications. **FEMA has defined these positions.**

Require training. Ideally, rostered volunteers should have basic training about ICS and operating a shelter. However, a just-in-time training plan will likely be a more realistic approach. Training orientation may happen during response, amid many other distractions and responsibilities. A plan for “onboarding” will help understand policies and responsibilities.

The Shelter Manager’s job is to assign everyone to positions and make a schedule. No one should work more than 12 hours per shift. Schedule shift meetings at the beginning/end of shifts. A scheduled short overlap of shifts can help with communicating the work plan and status of activities. Line up the veterinary medical care staff and make sure there are specifically trained volunteers on a rotational basis.

Volunteer Management

Ideal Volunteer

- Established relationship with organization
- Trained
- Screened, as needed
- Pre-credentialed

The logo for BOAH (Breeders of Animal Health) features the letters 'BOAH' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font. To the left of the letters is a blue outline of the state of Indiana, with a small yellow and red emblem inside the state's border.

Volunteer Management

Management of volunteers is essential to a successful animal response team. The opportunity to work with animals will attract passionate people who want to help.

We want the perfect volunteer: Someone who has worked in an animal rescue, shelter, or veterinary clinic; who understands the ICS system and is trained in the response system; who has been through the screening process and has credentials. He or she is our SUPER VOLUNTEER to the rescue. However, that is not always who is available.

Unaffiliated Volunteer Management

- Spontaneous Unaffiliated Volunteers
- Spontaneous Untrained Volunteers
- Spontaneous Unwanted Volunteers
- Scary Unstable Volunteers
- Sincere & Unselfish Volunteer



“SUVs”

A number of different groups of volunteers may present themselves. They may look harmless and seem sincere, but at times they can be scary. Be cautious of some of those overzealous volunteers. They sometimes show up on referral from the incident volunteer center, but usually they just SHOW UP. We cannot tell on the outside what is happening on the inside so the team leaders need to do a little work to evaluate these individuals and determine who is qualified and useful in the current situation.

SUV Management

If needed

- Supervise with TRAINED volunteer/staff
- “Just In Time” training
- “Safe” jobs

If not needed

- Refer to volunteer center
- Take contact info
- Provide info on organization and opportunities for future training
- THANK THEM
- But don't be afraid to say NO



Managing Spontaneous Volunteers

The first decision is: Do you need them?

You are not obligated to use every volunteer, so have a plan.

If you need them, you need to train them. Put them with a qualified volunteer, who is trained. Give “SUVs” SAFE jobs, such as helping owners fill out forms, stacking supplies, or filling bottles. One of the most important things is to remember is: If you CANNOT use the SUV or his/her skill set does not match SEND him/her back to the volunteer center. During a disaster, another place can likely utilize a volunteer!

Always THANK them for volunteering.

Do not be afraid to say “No, sorry, we appreciate your effort, but we think you will fit in better somewhere else.”

Just-in-Time Training?

ROSTER all volunteers
Condensed version of training (before)

- *Animal Issues in Disaster* (1 day)
- *Introduction to Emergency Animal Sheltering*

On-the-job training

- Cleaning and disinfection basics
- Walking dogs
- Phone bank messaging
- Others?



Just-in-time Training

Training, like this course, is important for sheltering volunteers to complete in advance, but most volunteers will arrive on scene.

Just-in-time training can occur as long as instructors can be identified, as well as appropriate positions that can be filled. Job positions could include: Answering phones, dealing with owners, doing daily census, and keeping track of records. Not everyone is needed to “hug puppies”.

Be wary of volunteers who say they “love animals”. This does not always translate into skill with animals and can often lead to on-scene accidents and unfortunate scenarios. Encourage these volunteers to stay involved and gain extra training in the future.

Here are other sources of training include resources from Iowa State University Center for Food Security and Public Health:

www.cfsph.iastate.edu/Emergency-Response/just-in-time-training.php

www.prep4agthreats.org/Natural-Disasters/

Recruiting Volunteers

Shelter and rescue volunteer
Veterinary and clinic volunteer
Animal control personnel
Veterinarians/veterinary nurses

- VMRC
- Local Veterinary clinics
- Must have personal disaster plan for family/animals



Recruiting Volunteers

The kind of volunteer every Shelter Manager loves to have are those with animal handling skills for one or more species.

People who have previously fostered kittens, work at a local shelter or humane group, are 4-H livestock exhibitors (remember age requirements), or are employed by a veterinary hospital are some of the best workers. They can be good trainers for just-in-time training. In advance, seek out these skilled people and obtain their willingness to help in emergency situations.

Maintain a roster with an active phone and email list. One challenge in the Midwest is the irregular need for these volunteers. Reach out to everyone on the roster at least once a year to verify participation and availability. Keeping in touch is always a challenge for teams that may only need to respond once every several years.

It is very important that anyone rostered to volunteer in a disaster have their OWN PERSONAL disaster plan in place. They cannot help others if they are worried about their own family and animals. Individuals directly impacted by the disaster should say no to the request to respond. In some states (like Florida) every responder must have a written personal disaster plan to be rostered as a disaster responder.