

**ADDITIONAL ADVICE ON REMEDIATION
(e.g., after a hurricane has passed)
FOR PEOPLE WITH HOUSEHOLD PETS**



From the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management

Planning and preparation will help you endure the disaster, but your home may be a very different place afterward, whether you have taken shelter at home or elsewhere.

If your pet is with you,

- Don't let pets roam loose. Familiar landmarks and smells might be gone, and your pet will probably be disoriented. Pets can easily get lost in such situations.
- For a few days, keep dogs on leashes and keep cats in carriers inside the house. If your house is damaged, they could escape and become lost.
- Be patient with your pets after a disaster. Try to get them back into their normal routines as soon as possible, and be ready for behavioral problems that may result from the stress of the situation. If behavioral problems persist, or if your pet seems to be having any health problems, talk to your veterinarian.

If your pet might be lost, try to act quickly but remain calm. A systematic search is more likely to be effective than wandering the streets, calling your pet's name. Suggestions:

- Be sure your pet is lost outside rather than inside. Cats and dogs can sometimes find their way between walls and floors or get stuck in nooks and crannies, the attic, a flue, in closets or drawers, under couches, behind the fridge, or even in a washing machine. It might be effective to put out canned, wet food that has been heated up, so the smell invites them out.
- Ask around your neighborhood. Knock on doors and ask, "Have you seen my pet?" It is always possible that someone saw it get picked up, brought it to a shelter, or sheltered it themselves.
- Hand out fliers with a picture of your pet and contact information for you. (You might paste that information and a digital photo into the [Lost Pet Flyer](http://www.dem.ri.gov/topics/erp/6_8_a8.doc) template on-line at <http://www.dem.ri.gov/topics/erp/6_8_a8.doc>). Ideally, offer a reward and a phone number to call that offers an answering machine or voice mail for you when you are out. Start distributing fliers in your neighborhood and in the area where neighbors walk their dogs. Ask if you can post fliers in local businesses (e.g., convenience stores, taverns, grocers), as well as local animal rescue organizations, veterinarians, groomers, trainers, and pet stores.
- Start checking animal shelters or municipal pounds within about 20 miles of your home. Since the pet may look a little different to an animal control officer than it does to you, it would be best to visit and see for yourself. If possible, bring along

or post on-line a digital photo. Your pet may take several days to be captured or to pass from one rescuer to another; so, don't get discouraged. A return visit every other day may be wise.

For on-line information on how to contact local animal shelters, see:

[Pounds and Shelters Licensed in Rhode Island](http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/pdf/pndshltr.pdf) (RI DEM)

<<http://www.dem.ri.gov/programs/bnatres/agricult/pdf/pndshltr.pdf>>

[Rhode Island and Southeastern Massachusetts
Animal Shelters and Dog Breed Rescue Programs](http://www.volunteerservicesforanimals.org/) (RIVMA)

<<http://www.volunteerservicesforanimals.org/>>

- Put an ad in local papers. In fact, some people – including people who shelter strays – scan papers specifically to find an owner. An ad also helps establish that you did not mean to give it up to whoever found it. Searches are also available on-line, on sites such as [Petfinder](http://www.petfinder.com/) <<http://www.petfinder.com/>>.