

The Importance PODs – Neighbors helping Neighbors

In an emergency, time is critical.

- When* an evacuation is ordered, the absolute best opportunity people and pets will have for survival is to be evacuated during that initial window of opportunity the same goes for keepsakes and valuables
- If you are home when the evacuation is ordered, being organized to properly evacuate people, pets, and possessions is essential.
- If you are not home when the evacuation is ordered, you will not be able to get back into your neighborhood – the authorities will not allow it.
- Neither firefighters nor other emergency personnel will likely be deployed for pet rescue.
- Coordinating with neighbors *in advance of an emergency* is the only way to provide for timely evacuation of people, pets, and possessions.

Neighborhood PODs

WHY FORM A POD

IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY, IT IS CRUCIAL TO GET YOURSELVES AND YOUR PETS OUT OF THE AFFECTED AREA AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. The more prepared and organized you are the better. But what if you're not home? Who will save your pets? Will it be possible to save some of your most precious keepsakes?

In reality, firefighters and emergency service personnel may simply not have time or staff available to retrieve and/or rescue your pets. And, once a mandatory evacuation order is in place, only emergency services personnel will be able to cross the traffic control lines, so, even residents will not be able to enter the evacuation area.

Recent studies reveal that pet owner/guardians will sometimes cross evacuation lines, even illegally, and risk their own lives to rescue stranded pets – this actually causes more problems, increases the danger situation, and can put the effectiveness and safety of our firefighters at risk. Government agencies studying emergency situations recommend that “neighborhood watch” organizations can aid in evacuation efforts.

In other words, if you are not home, a prepared neighborhood group (“POD”), to which you belong, may be able to evacuate your pets.

WHAT DOES A POD LOOK LIKE

A “POD” is made up of a group of neighborhood households, preferably in close proximity to each other. The suggested size of a POD would be approximately six (6) to eight (8) households. These households are part of a small group that is organized to help each other in the event of an evacuation.

HOW TO FORM A POD

Initially, BMFPD will encourage individuals to coordinate with nearby neighbors to form PODs. This will be accomplished through a variety of communication events. As a part of this effort, Third Arm Pet Evacuation Team (P.E.T.) members will host a number of informational meetings to explain the process for forming and organizing PODs. Individual BMFPD residents interested in forming PODs should attend one of these meetings. Information will be provided at these meetings that will enable neighbors to work together to form and organize PODs. Individuals who are unable to attend one of these meetings and are interested in forming a POD should contact the Third Arm P.E.T. Coordinator.

The Third Arm P.E.T. Coordinator will be available to assist individual PODs in their formation and organization efforts.

Subsequent to this initial period of forming and organizing PODs, any individual interested in joining an existing POD, or forming a new POD, should contact the Third Arm P.E.T. Coordinator for information and assistance.

POD LEADERS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

It is recommended that each neighborhood POD choose a POD leader. A POD leader's responsibilities include:

1. Coordinate gathering and sharing contact and other information among POD members.
2. Be a liaison between the Third Arm emergency preparedness and the POD members.
3. Distribute: the P.E.T. Evacuation Pet and Owner Information and Bag Contents Forms; front door evacuation notices; evacuation confirmation tapes, and other information to POD members.
4. Establish communication methods for all members of the POD.
5. Learn the POD evacuation procedures (especially evacuation routes) and be able to instruct the other POD members in these procedures.
6. Designate alternate POD leader(s), as needed.

This Guidebook provides additional information to help you organize and implement a personal evacuation plan and to help you work with your neighbors to organize mutual support and cooperation in an evacuation and/or other emergency situation.

TITLE: **Personal Preparation for Evacuation**

SUMMARY: What to take with you
 Responsibilities
 Activate Evacuation Plans

What to take

Create a list of what goes with you in an evacuation ahead of time, and keep this in a handy and readily accessible place.

- > Medications and prescriptions
- > Prescription eye ware
- > Changes of clothing
- > Computers
- > Cell phones (with chargers)
- > Family photos
- > Keepsakes & heirlooms
- > Insurance policies & Agent information
- > Passports and other ID
- > Banking & Financial information
- > Contract information for friends, family, etc.
- > Doctor and medical information

Family Plan

Have a plan for evacuating your home in an emergency that every member of your family knows. If various family members are likely to be in different locations for significant parts of the day (school, work, etc.), make sure that you have a plan about where and how to meet if you are apart when an evacuation is ordered.

Every member of the family who is home when an evacuation is ordered can help with the execution of your evacuation plan. Make sure that everyone knows his or her part.

Make sure that you know the primary and alternate routes out of your neighborhood to safety.

There are a number of websites that provide other suggestions. See the list of informative websites contained in this Guidebook.

Ensure that you will receive the Evacuation Notice

Boulder County has had its share of difficulties with the automatic call system to provide notice of evacuation to everyone in the area that the Incident Commander wants evacuated. Suffice to say that there are some additional issues if you do not have a “land line” telephone (i.e. phone services provided over an actual hard wire connection). If you have VOIP phone service or just rely entirely on mobile phone connection you may not automatically receive notice of evacuation.

Here is the best way to do everything that you can to ensure that you get the evacuation notice when it is issued – go to the following website:

https://ww2.everbridge.net/citizen/EverbridgeGateway.action?body=home&gis_alias_id=160781

You may also want to check out the Office of Emergency Management website at:
www.boulderoem.com/emergency-status

See also:

www.BoCo911Alert.com and www.bouldercounty.org/safety/emergency/pages/default.aspx

TITLE: POD Evacuation Overview

SUMMARY: Notification
Responsibilities
Activate Evacuation Plans

Notification

In the event of a mandatory or voluntary evacuation, residents in the affected area may receive notification via an emergency call back system (commonly referred to as “Reverse 911”) advising evacuation. The evacuation order is issued by the Incident Commander and the call is processed by Boulder County Communications. *Given fire behavior, and the predominately dry and windy conditions in our area, residents should take these notifications very seriously and evacuate immediately.*

Your First Responsibility:

Prepare for evacuating people, pets & possessions:

Whether you, or someone else, evacuates your family, pets, and possessions there are certain things you should do **now** (*much in advance of any emergency*) to prepare for that event.

- How would you organize in advance for evacuating if you were at home at the time of an evacuation? What would you want to have ready to make evacuating fast, easy, and complete?
- How would you organize in advance for evacuating if you were not at home when the emergency happens? What would you want in place to enable someone else to successfully evacuate your family, pets and possessions?

Your Second Responsibility:

Have a back-up plan. Work with your neighbors, in advance of any emergency, so that everyone knows what to do when it happens.

Provide for the evacuation of your family, pets, and possessions if you happen to be away from home when an evacuation order occurs.

- Form a “POD.” A specific group of neighbors who agree to provide mutual evacuation assistance in emergency situations.
- Ensure that everyone in your POD is familiar with your pets and knows exactly what to do in an emergency situation.

First: Activate Your Personal Evacuation Plan

Use the *procedures and tools described in this Guidebook* to safely gather your family, pets, and possessions and get to a safe location as quickly as you can.

Second: Activate POD Member Evacuation Plan (ONLY IF SAFE AND TIME ALLOWS)

IF AND ONLY IF you have enough time – safely gather and evacuate other POD member pets, etc. In order to do this effectively and expeditiously, POD Members will need to be familiar with each others’ Evacuation Logistics such as:

- How many pets
- What kind of pets
- Where pets are likely to be located
- Where the pet crates are kept
- What other possessions should be included in the evacuation
- List of POD member’s phone numbers
- How to gain entrance to POD Member’s residence
- Where to take pets after evacuation
- Where the pet “go bag” is located

TITLE: **POD Organization**

SUMMARY: Things to consider in organizing
 POD Checklist

Things to consider in organizing your POD

Work with neighbors with whom you have a good relationship and who live relatively close-by. Having six to eight families in the POD seems to be the correct size for a POD. [Four families just does not seem to be enough – with travel and today’s busy life-style a number of families could be away at the same time. Here are a few things you should consider with your neighbors as you organize your POD:

- How will other POD members get access to your home if you are not home and there is an evacuation?
 - Exchange keys?
 - Location of hidden key?
 - Other?
- Items to include in evacuation plans – in addition to pets,
- Identification of items to include in evacuation
- Protocol for marking homes to indicate that pets have been evacuated
 - Pet evacuation notice affix to front door
 - Other?
- Arrangements for conveying information about the emergency situation and the evacuation actions to POD members away from the district at the time of the emergency
- Arrangements for re-uniting owners with pets and more . . .
- Plans for getting familiar with each others’ pets . . .

Checklist for PODs

If you have formed a POD with other neighbors, here are a few things your POD should do:

- Exchange complete contact information:
 - Home phone
 - Mobile phone
 - Work phone
- Visit homes of other POD members to become very familiar with pets and their home environments
- Make other arrangements for evacuation in accord with the wishes and best interests of POD members
- Work out logistical arrangements to enable mutual support in evacuation events (e.g. where to meet after leaving evacuation area, etc.)
- Make a trial run (mock evacuation)

TITLE: Pet Evacuation Preparedness

SUMMARY: Pet Identification Forms:
Pet Information 1. Pet/owner Information Form
“Gather and Go” kit 2. Pet “Overnight Bag”; “Gather & Go” kit Contents
Pet “Over-night Bag”

Pet Identification

It is strongly recommended that your pet have proper identification, such as collars with tags and/or a micro-chip. As an alternative to wearing ID, identification collars and tags should be placed inside the pet’s crate, “Over-night Bag,” and/or “Gather and Go” kit.

Three different forms for providing the information below are available from Third Arm P.E.T. Coordinators and POD leaders. [See forms attached.] We recommend these **forms be kept together** in a large **zip-lock bag** and taped onto or in the pet’s crate, “Overnight Bag,” and/or “Gather and Go” kit.

Pet Information

Each pet owner/guardian should have a **Pet Information** form filled out with the following information:

- Pet Name
- Pet Breed
- Pet Gender
- Dietary needs
- Written consent, or denial, for medical treatment (e.g. if pet is injured as a result of the emergency situation)
- Alternate caretaker contact information
- Pet owner/guardian’s address and contact information
- Medical conditions and/or Rx needs
- Vet Name and Phone Number
- Need-to-know personality traits

“Gather and Go” Kit Contents

Each pet owner/guardian should have the following tools, equipment, items in order to enable neighboring POD members to evacuate your pets in your absence. It is suggested that these supplies be assembled in advance and placed in, or near, your pet crate(s).

- Heavy work gloves
- Masking tape
- Sharpie pen
- Old pillowcase, towel, small blanket (to capture and transport small animals)
- Pet Evacuation Notice (blank copy, ready to be completed and placed on the front door upon evacuation) – *notice to firefighters and emergency personnel*
- Evacuation confirmation ribbon – *notice to POD members*
- Leash and/or harness
- Muzzle
- Bitter apple

You may want a duplicate “gather and go” kit to use in collecting and transporting the pets of others.

Pet “Over-night Bag” Contents

Each pet owner/guardian should have the following equipment/items in order to: (1) quickly evacuate your own pets, or, (2) enable neighboring POD members to evacuate your pets in your absence. It is suggested that these supplies be assembled in advance, placed into a bag, and kept in or near your pet crate(s).

- Pet treats
- Water for your pet
- Toys
- Food & water bowls
- Other: ___
- Pet food
- Medications (or at least note re: location of meds)
- Litter box and litter
- Bed & blanket

Temporary Animal Shelter Options

In the event of an evacuation, a temporary evacuation shelter for domestic pets **MAY** be established in a nearby location.

Local temporary animal shelter locations and/or resources include:

- Humane Society of Boulder Valley, (303) 442-4030
- Longmont Humane Society, (303) 772-1232
- Boulder County Sheriff's Office - Animal Control Dispatch, (303) 441-4444
- City of Boulder Animal Control, (303) 441-3374
- Pet Friendly Hotels in Boulder include:
 - Best Western Boulder Inn, 770 28th Street, (303) 449-3800
 - Boulder Broker Inn, 555 30th Street, (303) 444-3330
 - Boulder Creek Quality Inn & Suites, 2020 Arapahoe Ave, (303) 449-7550
 - Boulder Mountain Lodge, 91 Four Mile Canyon Drive, (303) 444-0882
 - Boulder Outlook Hotel & Suites, 800 28th Street, (303) 443-3322
 - Camp Bow Wow, 3631 Pearl Street, (303) 364-2267
 - Foot of the Mountain Motel, 200 Arapahoe Ave, (303) 442-5688
 - Homewood Suites by Hilton, 4950 Baseline Road, (303) 499-9922
 - New West Inns, 970 28th Street, (303) 443-7800
 - Residence Inn by Marriott, 3030 Center Green Drive, (303) 449-5545
- In fire and other emergencies, other lodging facilities occasionally modify their policies to allow pets; announcements are sometimes carried by the news media during such emergencies.

TITLE: Resource Information

LOCAL: BMFPD – www.bouldermountainfire.org , (303) 440-0235
Boulder County – www.bouldercounty.org/safety/emergency/pages/default.aspx
On-line Radio – www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?ctid=247
BCSO - Animal Control Dispatch, (303) 441-4444
City of Boulder Animal Control, (303) 441-3374
BMFPD Third Arm, Chairman, Bob Loveman, (303) 926-0204
Third Arm POD organizer, Marla Saville, (303) 442-1682, marla@saville.us

STATE: Animal Preparedness –
www.petaidcolorado.org/displaycommon.cfm?an=1&subarticlenbr=102
Colorado Division of Emergency Management –
<http://dola.colorado.gov/dem/index/html>
Ready Colorado – www.readycolorado.com
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension –
<http://coloradodisasterhelp.colostate.edu/>
Red Cross – www.preparecolorado.org

NATIONAL: Department of Homeland Security – www.ready.gov, www.disasterhelp.gov
Federal Emergency Management Agency – www.fema.gov
American Red Cross – www.redcross.org
Citizen Corps and CERT – www.citizencorps.gov
American Veterinary Medical Association –
www.avma.org/disaster/default.asp

**LOCAL: Emergency Information Hot Line (303) 413-7730
(emergency information during an incident)**

ABOUT THE BOULDER MOUNTAIN FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT (BMFPD) THIRD ARM ORGANIZATION

The Third Arm is a volunteer organization formed in 2006 under the direction of the BMFPD. Its activities and contributions are designed to assist the BMFPD Fire and Medical Responders in the event of an emergency. The Third Arm is devoted to four major areas of activity:

- Scene Support
 - > Traffic Management
 - > Evacuation Assistance
 - > Evacuation Assistance
 - > Incident Support Center
- Mobilization (phone tree, etc.)
- Emergency Preparedness (incl. POD organization, data management, special needs)
- Other Services (typically non-emergency)

Currently, the Chairman of the Third Arm organization is Bob Loveman. The Third Arm ultimately takes direction from the BMFPD Fire Chief, John Benson. Additional information regarding the BMFPD and the Third Arm can be found by visiting:

www.bouldermountainfire.org.

If conditions allow and approved by the Incident Commander, The Third Arm may be able to provide evacuation assistance for companion animals through its Pet Evacuation Team. During an evacuation if you need assistance in evacuating home-alone pets, call the BMFPD main number (303-440-0235).

TITLE: Purpose of Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District (BMFPD)
Pet Evacuation Team (P.E.T.)

PURPOSE: To provide preparedness guidelines, assistance, and information regarding the evacuation of pets (companion animals, see Note below) from BMFPD in the event of an emergency.

Note: If you have large animals such as horses, llamas, alpacas, etc., we suggest that you coordinate, ahead of time, with agencies such as BCSO-AC (see Resource Information). It is our hope that the Temporary Evacuation Help Center will be equipped to communicate with these types of emergency services agencies at the time of an evacuation, however, pre-planning on the part of large animal owners is essential.

Resident safety should always come first. Pet evacuation efforts should be undertaken only if it is safe and time allows.

LEADERS: Currently, the BMFPD Third Arm P.E.T. Coordinator is:

- Marla Saville