

## **Establishing Communications**

Dependable communication is fundamental to identify immediate sources of help and where help will be needed most. One goal may be to establish a “buddy system” in which neighbors and friends determine ahead of time who will be responsible for checking on whom and which resources will be shared. An added benefit of a buddy system is that it often improves community spirit and knowledge (crime prevention). An effective method of communication in a disaster is a telephone tree, which involves a person in an affected area calling two or three people to see if they need help. These in turn phone two to three others and so on. Veterinary practices, horse sports groups, farming cooperatives, local breed associations, and neighborhood groups should take the lead in establishing these. Telephone trees should be tested periodically and revised if necessary. A meaningful time to do this is after every severe storm or during floods and droughts.