

## **Recovering Costs**

Official involvement with local emergency management is essential for reimbursement of costs and coverage of liability of responders. This applies to animal shelters and veterinary practices alike.

There are two issues regarding costs of responding to disasters:

- How can costs be reimbursed to the person or organization that had to bear them, and
- How can the efforts of the responders be used by the community to enhance its response and recovery capabilities?

Whether reimbursement is possible or whether efforts are used to acquire community assistance funding depends on the nature and cost of the disaster, the available financial resources in the community, the community's priorities of response and recovery, and the degree to which plans have been developed before the disaster. For both types of claims it is best for communities to have worked through the details of costs and whether these will be reimbursed or used to claim community assistance funding.

## **Who Will Pay?**

The first issue is the more commonly cited: who will pay for the cost of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, shelter staff, and other personnel and resources that were used in the response and recovery phases of a disaster? All services and materials can be paid for if the services and resources were requested as part of an official disaster assistance claim from the community. This can be filed only through the office of emergency management. Therefore as part of the development of community plans, veterinary practices and animal shelters should be included so that when a disaster strikes, the shelters will be reimbursed for their efforts. However, this is probably a more minor issue than most people wish to think it is. Most responders to disasters volunteer their time and expertise, and materials used can often be itemized as losses or charitable donations on tax returns.

The low priority of financial reimbursement for responding to disasters has also been substantiated in two surveys. In Indiana we conducted a statewide survey of veterinarians on their concerns about becoming involved in disasters. The greatest priority was to understand the structure of emergency management and response to disasters. Less than 5% of veterinarians even mentioned the cost to their practices as a concern. In Maryland a statewide survey of registered boarding and grooming facilities was conducted on their willingness to offer free boarding to pets affected by disasters. Again less than 5% were concerned about the cost to themselves. This should not give the impression that everybody should offer their time and resources for free, but it does indicate that issues other than cost may be of greater importance.

## **Value of Animal Care to the Community**

The second issue regarding cost is the value of the time and resources provided to the community to respond to a disaster. It is important to remember that disasters are community events and that everybody is affected. Therefore everybody's help is in support of the community. The value to being integrated into the official emergency management system of a community is that when a disaster is declared, the services and resources provided by local businesses (including animal shelters) can be used by the community as matching funds against state and federal disaster assistance (public assistance programs).

For example, if a federal disaster is declared in a county, the federal assistance will be 75% of

the cost of response and recovery. However, to receive this amount the state has to pay the remaining 25%. Most states achieve this by contributing 12.5% and having the affected county contribute the other 12.5%. This is generally possible if the damages are not so extreme that they exhaust the tax-based reserves of the county

However, in many counties that are affected by natural disasters the tax base is not sufficient to contribute the county's share of the costs. Counties with extensive floodplains are the prime example of this.

If a county with a limited tax base loses a highway bridge that will cost \$500,000 to repair in a federally declared disaster, the federal government would pay \$375,000, the state \$62,500, and the county would be expected to pay the other \$62,500. However, finding \$62,500 may be not be possible in many counties, meaning that the bridge would not be replaced. As a result the county would start on a downward spiral of economic deprivation resulting from poor access to commerce and trade because the bridge was gone.

One way for a county to increase the amount of money it receives from other sources is to enlist volunteers to respond to disasters. The time that the volunteers provide can then be used as in kind financing to match federal and state funds. The response of volunteers for the care of animals and their owners is one such contribution. For example, if in the county cited above that loses the bridge, 12 volunteers each spend 8 hours rescuing, capturing, and returning home animals that were affected by the flood, and if their time is valued at \$11 per hour, the total value of this effort to the community is 12 x 8 x 11 = \$1056. In addition, if 20 cages are lent to the community for 5 days at an in kind cost of \$10 per cage per day, the loan of cages amounts to 20 x 5 x \$10 = \$1000. Then in terms of matching (in kind) funds this \$2056 (1056 + 1000) is worth the same amount of cash from the state and \$12,336 from the federal government. This is a valuable contribution to the community as a whole and should not be underestimated as an argument to support development of community disaster preparedness plans for the care of animals and their owners.

### **Filing a Federal Disaster Assistance Claim**

To a limited extent claims can be made for programs that do not have prior integration with the community plan. However, for claims like these to be made several criteria have to be met. Prior planning is nearly always the best approach. In disasters emergency management workers have to deal with many unexpected issues. Officials are likely to shy away from any new ideas in a disaster, even if the ideas are of financial benefit to them, simply because the impact and implementation of such ideas take too much time to comprehend. Therefore development of community plans before a disaster is the best way to include provision for the care of animals and their owners. Discussions on the value of such programs to the community as a whole are an essential part of the plan development.

If prior discussion has not occurred, services eligible for disaster assistance claims should fall into one of the following categories of support: education, utility, emergency, medical, custodial. The care of animals may fall under emergency if a substantial economic impact results or medical if human health impacts result. The care of animal owners falls under medical.

If not-for-profit businesses are to be reimbursed, they should be registered (501c3) charities and have an accounting mechanism to keep track of volunteer hours at the time a disaster strikes. Specifically, organizations that meet these criteria and are listed in the Stafford Disaster Relief Act are museums, zoos, community centers, libraries, homeless shelters, senior citizen centers, rehabilitation centers, and sheltered workshops. Although animal shelters are not mentioned, it is

anticipated that they will be in years to come. The specific mention of animal shelters would make claims easier to complete for the care of animals and their owners. State veterinary medical associations and similar state umbrella groups for animal shelters are best suited to become recognized by their state Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters (VOAD) organization.

Record keeping is an important part of the claims process. Examples of the records that should be kept are listed in Table 15-2 and Fig. 15-3.

**Table 15-2** Examples of costs that can be refunded during declared disasters and documentation that is needed to claim these

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**Work accomplished**

Federal Damage Summary Report (DSR) number  
Work carried out  
Where work took place  
Number of hours work took

**Personnel**

Who they were  
Job classification and description  
Work location  
Rate of pay  
Overtime hours (number and rate)

**Equipment logs**

Equipment used  
Hourly/daily rate for use  
Dates used  
Duration of use  
Where equipment was used  
Purpose of equipment

**Material logs**

Records of supply  
Purpose of materials  
Where materials were used

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CHECKLIST FOR PRIVATE NON PROFIT FACILITIES  
REQUESTING FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Please answer all of the following questions and return this questionnaire with proof of private non profit (PNP) status to the FEMA/State Disaster Field Office. Your application for Federal disaster assistance will not be considered if these documents are not submitted by the prescribed deadline. If your organization has more than one facility that incurred damage, list each facility separately and provide the required information for each facility. Use separate sheets of paper if necessary.

Name of PNP Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Title 44CFR, Part 206.221 (e) defines a Private Non Profit facility as: "...any private nonprofit educational, utility, emergency, medical, or custodial care facility, including a facility for the aged or disabled, and other facility providing essential governmental type services to the general public, and such facilities on Indian reservations. "Other essential governmental service facility" means museums, zoos, community centers, libraries, homeless shelters, senior citizen centers, rehabilitation facilities, shelter workshops and facilities which provide health and safety services of a governmental nature. All such facilities must be open to the general public.

Of the above, what best describes your organization? \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide copies of the following:

Tax Exemption Certificate \_\_\_\_\_

Organization Charter or By Laws \_\_\_\_\_

Current Literature describing your Organization \_\_\_\_\_

If your organization is a school or educational facility, please provide information on:

Accreditation or Certification \_\_\_\_\_

Curriculum \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the damaged facility and location: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the primary purpose of the damaged facility? \_\_\_\_\_

Who may use the facility? \_\_\_\_\_

What fee, if any, is charged for the use of the facility? \_\_\_\_\_

Was the facility in use at the time of the disaster?  Yes  No

Did the facility sustain damage as a direct result of the disaster?  Yes  No

What type of assistance is being requested? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you own the facility?  Yes  No

If "Yes", please provide proof of ownership, check here if attached

If "No", do you lease/rent the facility?  Yes  No

If yes, please furnish a copy of the lease or rental agreement for the damaged facility; check here if attached

Are the repairs of this facility the legal responsibility of your organization?  Yes  No

Is the facility insured?  Yes  No

If "Yes", please provide information on existing insurance coverage and a copy of the policy:

Additional information or comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and phone number of contact person for your organization regarding this claim: \_\_\_\_\_

FIG. 15-2 Federal Emergency Management Agency Form 90-49: checklist for private nonprofit facilities requesting federal disaster assistance.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY NOTICE OF INTEREST IN APPLYING FOR FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE		O.M. & NO. 3067-0033 Expires May 31, 1996
<b>PAPERWORK BURDEN DISCLOSURE NOTICE</b>		
Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 30 minutes per response. This includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, completing, reviewing, and submitting the form. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this requirement, including suggestions for reducing this burden to: Information Collections Management, Federal Emergency Management Agency, 500 C Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20472; and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3067-0033), Washington, D.C. 20503.		
*NOTE: Complete form and turn into the Governor's Authorized Representative at the Applicants Briefing for this major disaster, but not later than 30 days after your County is designated eligible for Public Assistance*.		
DECLARATION NUMBER  FEMA-                      -DR	PROJECT APPLICATION NUMBER <small>(For Agency Use Only - FFS #)</small> _____	NOI DATE  _____
The purpose of this form is to list damages to property and facilities so that inspections may be appropriately assigned for formal survey.		
<b>REQUIREMENTS FOR FEDERAL DAMAGE SURVEYS</b>		
<b>A. DEBRIS CLEARANCE</b> <input type="checkbox"/> On public Roads and Streets including ROW <input type="checkbox"/> Other Public Property <input type="checkbox"/> Private Property <i>(When undertaken buy local govt. forces)</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Structure Demolition		<b>B. PROTECTIVE MEASURES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Life and Safety <input type="checkbox"/> Property <input type="checkbox"/> Health <input type="checkbox"/> Stream/Drainage Channels
<b>C. ROAD SYSTEM</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Roads <input type="checkbox"/> Street <input type="checkbox"/> Control Traffic <input type="checkbox"/> Bridges <input type="checkbox"/> Culverts <input type="checkbox"/> * _____		<b>D. WATER CONTROL FACILITIES</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Dikes <input type="checkbox"/> Dams <input type="checkbox"/> Drainage Channels <input type="checkbox"/> Irrigation Works <input type="checkbox"/> Levees <input type="checkbox"/> * _____
<b>E. BUILDINGS AND EQUIPMENT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings and Equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Supplies or Inventory <input type="checkbox"/> Vehicles or other equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Systems <input type="checkbox"/> * _____		<b>F. PUBLIC UTILITY SYSTEMS</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Water <input type="checkbox"/> Sanitary Sewerage <input type="checkbox"/> Storm Drainage <input type="checkbox"/> Light/Power <input type="checkbox"/> * _____
<b>G. OTHER</b> (Not in the above categories) <input type="checkbox"/> Park Facilities <input type="checkbox"/> Recreational Facilities * Indicate type of facility		
NAME OF POLITICAL SUBDIVISION OR ELIGIBLE APPLICANT (NOTE: if private Non-profit, provide name of facility and/or Non-Profit Owner)		PRIVATE NON-PROFIT <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO
REPRESENTATIVE 1.		COUNTY
REPRESENTATIVE 2.		
BUSINESS ADDRESS (Include Zip Code)		BUSINESS ADDRESS (Include Zip Code)
BUSINESS TELEPHONE (Include Area Code and Extension)		BUSINESS TELEPHONE (Include Area Code and Extension)

FIG. 15-3 Federal Emergency Management Agency form: notice of interest in applying for federal disaster assistance.

### Sources of Information

A wealth of information on developing disaster preparedness plans is available from federal and state EMAs. Materials from FEMA should be used as much as possible because many of the other publications have not been prepared by professionals. The *Animals in Disasters*

independent study courses are the primary source of information on the subject. They are available from the Emergency Management Institute, 16825 South Seton Avenue, Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998.

FEMA also has provided guidance to local emergency operations planners for developing EOPs under its Integrated Emergency Management System (IEMS). This guide, Civil Preparedness Guide 1-8, describes a recommended form, content, and development process of an EOP. It sets forth FEMA's policy concerning plans produced with federal assistance. The *State and Local Guide for All Hazard Emergency Operations Planning*, SLG (101), details plan development, responsibilities, and tasking, including the responsibilities for the care of animals. The American Red Cross, EMAs, and other groups also have many educational materials on how to develop personal and family disaster preparedness plans. Familiarity with these materials is essential before plans for a community are developed. The best results have come about when interested groups have coordinated their efforts with the appropriate level of EMA from the outset. The development of plans for the care of animals should proceed as for any other section of an EOP. Animal owners should simply be viewed as another group with special needs. The animal care industry is available to help identify needs and resources, and its contribution should be coordinated through the EMA.

### Public Awareness

Animal care workers can become involved in community activities in several ways. For effective intervention after disasters public awareness should be developed together with the local EMA. Examples include holding drills that involve clients and the local media and advising producers and farmers on disaster preparedness and what they can do to be better prepared. Practice drills can be advertised, and veterinarians can work with farmers to set up appointments with the local fire departments for inspection and recommendations on how to protect their farms from fire. Buddy systems can be developed from among practices, horse clubs, and breed clubs. An example of how Maryland recognizes veterinary practices, animal shelters, and boarding facilities in disasters is illustrated in Fig. 15-4.



**FIG. 15-4** Recognition certificate of animal shelter and boarding facility in disasters.