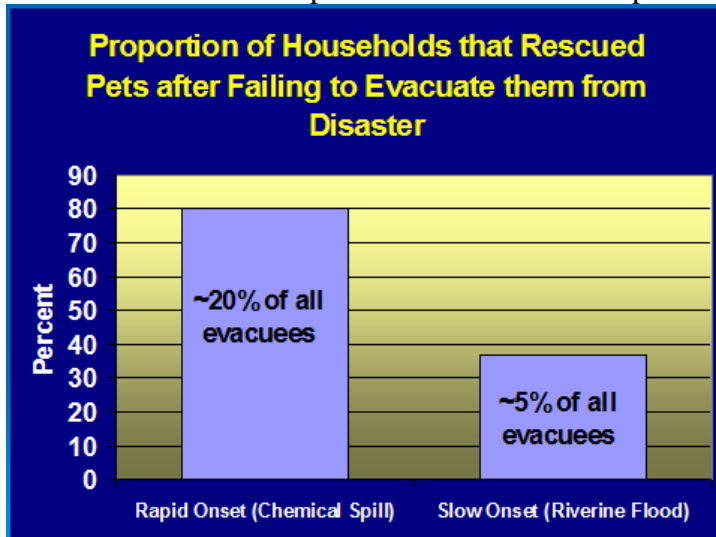


Rescuing Pets that were not Evacuated

One of the consequences of people leaving their pets behind is later attempts by owners to rescue their animals after they have evacuated. This is a rare, albeit very dangerous and often high profile behavior.

Proportion of all evacuated households that attempted to rescue pets after the owners evacuated without their pets from a slow and a rapid onset disaster.



In most cases the desire to rescue a pet is the result of peer pressure and from media stories about abandoned pets that are at risk of hazardous exposure. Less common are owners who were not at home when evacuation orders were given and, despite trying, are not given access to their homes. In either case the risk to human life should be evaluated and if deemed insignificant, animal rescues are best conducted jointly under the direct supervision of trained emergency response and animal care personnel who can determine if an animal is amenable to evacuation without delay or risk of injury to response personnel, owner or animal.

Pet evacuation failure and subsequent attempts at pet rescue also provide a unique opportunity for public education that role-models appropriate evacuation behavior. Based on the data from the study cited above for every pet not evacuated there are at least as many that are evacuated. Officials can capitalize on this fact by making a point of rewarding appropriate behavior through public statements and media briefings that laud and illustrate responsible owners' evacuation behavior.