

## **MITIGATION OF THE IMPACT OF DISASTERS ON PET OWNERS**

From the studies discussed earlier it would appear that the best care for pets is provided by those owners who also provide the best care in nondisaster times. The best means of disaster mitigation for pet owners is to promote responsible pet ownership at all times. Part of responsible pet ownership is to have appropriate pet identification and, where local laws require, to have pets licensed.

The text for a public information brochure for the care of pets in disasters is provided in Appendix N. Such brochures can be distributed through pet stores, veterinarians, and other outlets.

One mitigation approach has been to heighten public awareness by providing courses on animal cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Although courses on pet CPR probably have little or no impact on the ability to save lives in a disaster, pet CPR programs may attract owners' attention to the value of knowing CPR for humans. This may be achieved if pet CPR programs are accompanied by advice on developing preparedness plans for personal and family disasters and are followed by lessons in CPR for humans. It is unacceptable to have people trained in pet CPR but not in human CPR.

A potential mitigation for both public health and environmental threats from dangerous pets is to establish a community registry of the number and location of these pets and to train their owners in disaster preparedness.