



## **After a flood, what the public should know about...**

### **Animals and Insects**

Are pets allowed in human evacuation shelters?

Emergency management plans address the evacuation and sheltering of pets, but human shelter facilities are not required to allow pets to stay with their owners and may instead have an animal shelter set up adjacent to, or near, the human shelter. Precautions should be instituted at animal sheltering facilities to prevent animals from being the source of animal bites, disease transmission, allergies and nuisances to both evacuees and other pets.

I have noticed stray dogs and cats in my neighborhood, what should I do?

Animal control officers (ACOs) are authorized to capture stray and free-roaming animals, arrange for them to receive medical care if needed, shelter them and reunite them with their owners. Complaints or requests for assistance regarding stray animals should be directed to municipal animal control or the municipal offices or police to dispatch an ACO. Animal control is an important public safety component of emergency response plans.

What do I do if I'm bitten by an animal?

Wash the wound and gather as much information as you can about the biting animals (such as owners name and contact information, if it is a pet); then contact the local health department with jurisdiction over the location of the incident. The local health department will have staff to evaluate the risk of rabies and the need for animal confinement or rabies preventative treatment.

My pet was exposed to flood water and may have gotten sick as a result of the flooding and aftermath of the storm, what should I do?

Wash your pet utilizing pet shampoo, baby shampoo or Dawn dish detergent and rinse the fur completely with clean water and watch for signs of illness, such as diarrhea, vomiting, inflamed skin, and weakness. Contact your veterinarian or a veterinary hospital in your vicinity for medical treatment if your pet becomes ill. Regional veterinary emergency hospitals provide medical services on nights, weekends and holidays.

Who can assist with a disease outbreak at an animal shelter?

Contact the local health department with jurisdiction over the animal shelter for assistance. Local health department staff can investigate the situation and collaborate with the animal shelter management and the veterinarian responsible for disease control at the shelter to identify the cause of illness and institute corrective action. The local health department will also investigate reports of sick animals potentially spreading disease to people and may consult with the State Department of Health, Veterinary Public Health Unit. In addition, counties have established County Animal Response Teams (CART) to provide assistance in animal-related situations.

How can I protect myself against mosquitoes after the flood?

Due to the large amount of rain and flooding (some of which preceded Hurricane Irene), we will likely anticipate increased mosquito numbers over the next few weeks. County mosquito control units are working hard to decrease mosquito populations, but residents should also make sure to employ personal protection measures such as limiting time outdoors during peak mosquito activity times (dusk and dawn), wearing long sleeved shirts and long pants, and using mosquito repellents. Residents should also empty any containers that collect standing water and clean up and refill bird baths every few days.

**For more information**

- Your local health department <http://ni.gov/health/lh/directory/lhdselectcountv.shtml>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <http://emergencv.cdc.aov/disasters/>
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) [www.fema.aov](http://www.fema.aov) (800) 621.3362
- New Jersey Office of Emergency Management <http://www.readv.ni.aov>