

**PHOENIX REGIONAL
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

HANDLING PETS AND OTHER ANIMALS

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OBJECTIVE

The objective of this procedure is to provide field personnel with guidance in handling pets and other animals that are encountered as a result of an EMS, fire or other response. These pets or animals may require medical attention and the RP is unknown or unable to care for the animal, or the animal presents a danger to the general public. The pets or animals we encounter might also be trapped or injured.

The pets that we encounter are often times considered by the owners a part of the family. While our primary mission is for the protection and care of people, we should attempt to provide some level of care to animals in distress whenever feasible and safe to do so as a part of our commitment to customer service. We should display an open, caring concern for pets and animals when we deal with the public in these types of situations.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Caution should be used in approaching any animal, especially one that is injured. At no time is the safety of our members or that of the public to be compromised by attempting to capture an animal. If there is any doubt, contact one of the agencies listed in this procedure and request that they respond. When dealing with pet or animal rescues, they should be handled similar to "property" when evaluating the risk/gain profile of the incident.

HANDLING PETS

Rescue Efforts (fires, trapped or injured pets)

Rescuing pets or animals during an incident should take the same priority as any loss control activity. An evaluation should be made in terms of the risk or exposure that our personnel would face, versus the likelihood of a positive outcome.

Treatment of Injuries

Animal injuries can be treated in a similar manner as BLS injuries to a human. For example, bleeding can be controlled by direct pressure, elevation and bandaging. Burns can be cooled with water. Oxygen can be administered for breathing difficulties. Broken limbs can be stabilized using splints. At no time, however, should any attempt be made to provide fluids intravenously.

Caring Attitude/Empathy

We should realize that to many people, an animal or pet is considered a family member. We should attempt to treat their concerns with empathy and demonstrate a caring attitude towards their concern. In addition, if the incident has resulted in the death of an animal, we should attempt to assist them in the disposal of the animal by contacting the proper agency, such as the Humane Society or the ASPCA for guidance.

If there is any question regarding the handling or care of a pet, any of the agencies listed in CAD are more than willing to provide guidance and assistance. They all stated that if they are not able to help, they will put us in touch with the proper agency. A case in point may be in the situation where we have treated and transported a rider who has fallen from a horse--what do we do with the horse? The proper agency in this case is Arizona Livestock, but ASPCA stated that they may be able to provide assistance in securing the animal until further action can be taken.

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CONTACT NUMBERS

Whenever there is any question regarding handling an injured, non-injured, stray or trapped animal, both the Humane Society and the AZ Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals are willing to either provide direct assistance, or serve as a clearing house in directing us to the proper agency or veterinary service. Both have 24 hour hotlines listed in CAD. To access this information by MDT, type MDTINFO ANIMALS.

Stray animals

For stray, uninjured animals, the call should be referred to the Maricopa County Animal Control (for the telephone number, see "MDTINFO ANIMALS" in the CAD system).

Injured animals

The two primary agencies that can be contacted to respond to injured animal calls (where the animal is not a threat to human safety) are:

Humane Society
AZ Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
(both numbers are in CAD under "MDTINFO ANIMALS")

Both agencies have personnel available 24 hours a day and will respond valley-wide when requested. In the event that they are not able to handle the particular animal involved (for example, an exotic animal) they will provide you with the proper agency to contact for assistance.

If it is necessary to move an injured animal out of a roadway, the recommended procedure is to wrap the animal in a blanket and immobilize it before moving it. Muzzling the animal with material such as kling or a PackStrap would be suggested. This will help to minimize the danger to the rescuers.

ANIMAL RESCUE (NON-EMERGENCY)

In the event that you should encounter an animal that is in distress, but is not injured (cat-in-tree type of call, contact the following agencies (the telephone numbers are in CAD under "MDTINFO ANIMALS")):

Humane Society
AZ Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

If they are unable to provide timely assistance, they will direct you to an agency that can help.

DANGEROUS ANIMALS

When there is a danger to human safety, Animal Control will respond. (Also request that PD respond.) Their telephone number can be accessed on the CAD via "MDTINFO ANIMALS." Responders should take actions to ensure that the safety of the public and Department members is not compromised while waiting for the arrival of Animal Control.

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IMMEDIATE ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN IF THE ANIMALS LIFE IS IN DANGER

If an animal is injured to such an extent that its life is in danger, at the discretion of the ranking fire department officer, the animal may be transported to a veterinarian for emergency care.

There is a list of emergency animal clinics listed in the CAD under "MDTINFO ANIMALS." The cost for this treatment will either be passed on to the owner, or if the owner cannot be identified, then ASPCA will pay for the treatment. No cost will be incurred by the Fire Department or a member for bringing in an injured animal encountered as part of a fire or EMS response.

The animal should be transported only to those clinics listed. They are equipped with full emergency care facilities and have agreed to accept animals transported by the Fire Department to their facilities.

It is very important to remember that an injured animal may present a danger to rescuers. At no time should a member's safety be compromised in handling an injured animal. If an animal is considered dangerous, the call should be referred to Maricopa County Animal Control.

OTHER AGENCIES

There are other agencies that can respond and deal with injured animals. They are listed under "MDTINFO ANIMALS" in the CAD system. The first call, however, should be either the Humane Society or ASPCA since they have personnel available 24 hours. If they are not able to handle the problem, they will refer you to the appropriate agency.