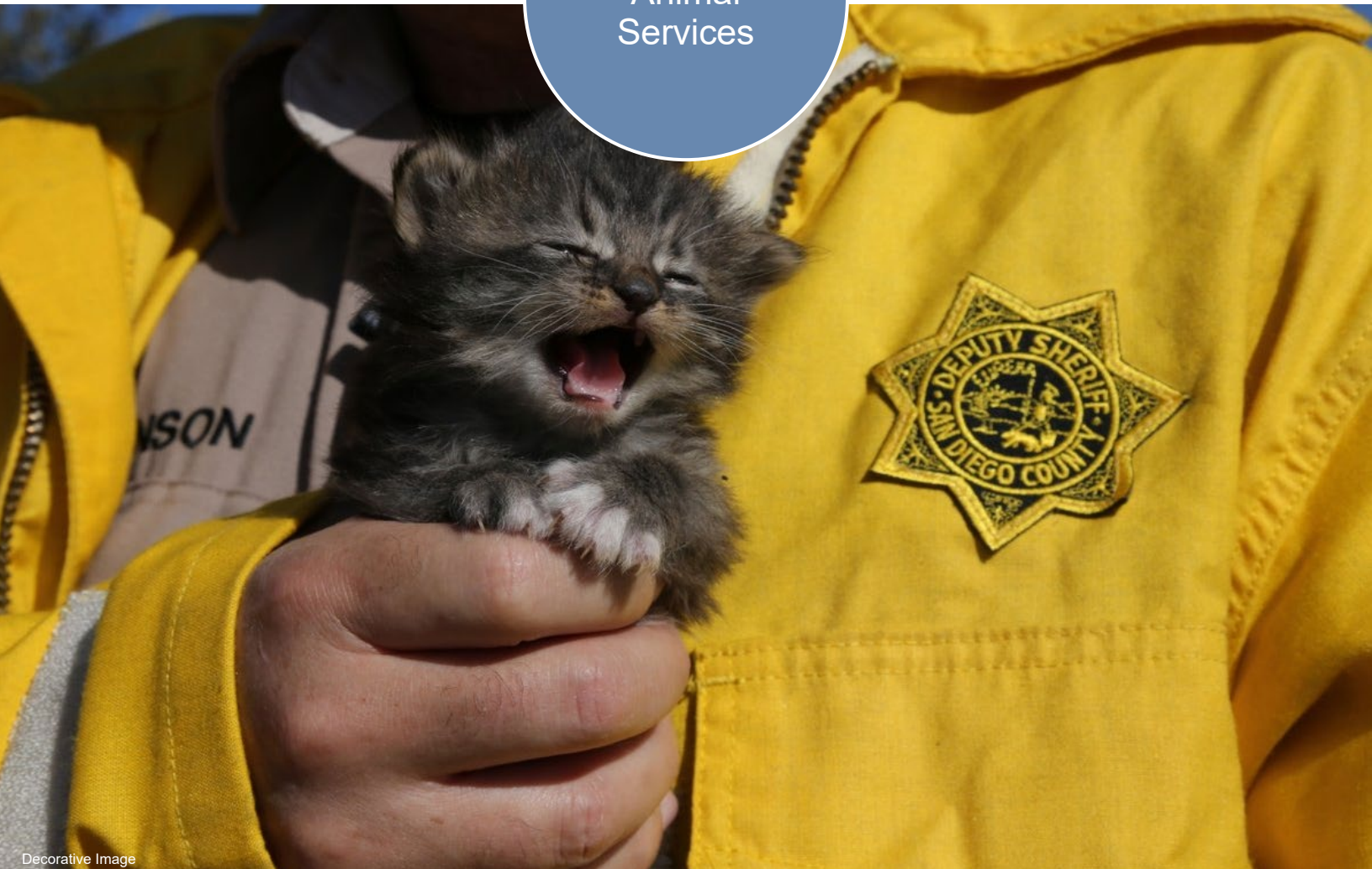


ANNEX O

Animal Services



Decorative Image

Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan SEPTEMBER 2026

Unified San Diego County Emergency Services Organization And County Of San Diego

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This annex describes the role of the San Diego County Department of Animal Services and the other animal control and animal care agencies in the Operational Area. This annex is supported by a Mutual Aid Agreement.

GENERAL

INTRODUCTION

The San Diego Operational Area Emergency Operations Plan (OA EOP) Animal Services Annex describes the basic concepts, policies, and procedures for providing a coordinated animal control response to any disaster. This annex serves as the unifying document for emergency plans of the County, Cities, and animal care and control agencies. The Animal Control Mutual Aid Agreement, among and between the County of San Diego and the Cities in the County, provides for an Operational Area-wide animal control program.

PURPOSE

To establish organizational responsibilities and general policies and procedures for the care and control of animals during natural and human-caused disasters.

SCOPE

This annex provides for the management and coordination of animal control activities, including the planning, evacuation, sheltering and reunification of animals and owners in San Diego County during any natural and/or human-caused disaster.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goals of animal control operations are:

- Protect the health and safety of the community.
- Provide for the immediate care, control, and safety of animals.
- Minimize animal suffering, loss of life, and potential disability by ensuring a timely and coordinated assistance.
- Provide for the care of animals brought to shelters or housed at staging areas and evacuation sites.

Provide a system for returning animals to their owners after the event.

The objectives of this annex are:

- Describe the animal control response system to implement this annex, concept of operations, and organization.
- Establish procedures for activating and deactivating this annex.
- Provide for the management of animal control services, facilities, activities, and resources.

-
- Provide a framework on which the County, Cities, and other supporting agencies can develop support plans and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Whole Community Approach

The San Diego Operational Area is committed to achieving and fostering an emergency management system that uses a Whole Community Approach and is fully inclusive of individual needs and circumstances. For further details on the Whole Community Approach to emergency management and the integration of inclusive emergency management practices, refer to the Basic Plan.

CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

OVERVIEW

- A successful response to any disaster is inherent upon the training of first responders, public education, equipment and resource management and communication and collaboration between the responding agencies.
- As the lead agency in any animal-related disaster, the County of San Diego Department of Animal Services (DAS) has personnel trained in the Incident Command System (ICS) thus providing the necessary liaison capabilities in the OA EOC and Incident Command, and is thus National Incident Management System (NIMS) compliant.
- DAS coordinates with the San Diego Sheriff's Department and lead fire agency regarding the areas threatened in any disaster and the status of evacuations.
- DAS will utilize trained personnel to determine the potential threats and possible evacuations. DAS has access to a list of pre-approved ranches within the county that have agreed to serve as temporary large animal shelters. DAS has access to a limited quantity of animal crates and cages for small animals.
- Through the Joint Information Center (JIC) at the OA EOC, DAS can provide input as to the location of animal sheltering sites and any recommended actions for the public. DAS also has the capability of posting information on its website, social media and the Department's integrated voice recognition system.
- All DAS officers are fully trained and equipped as a first responder. DAS has a volunteer animal rescue group (SDCART). DAS has a mutual aid agreement with all of the other animal control agencies within the county and the San Diego Humane Society and their volunteer organization (Emergency Response Team). DAS also has a Mutual Aid Agreement with the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control, Riverside County Department of Animal Services, and the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA).



- While evacuating small and large animals is the responsibility of the owner, DAS will respond to the public's requests for assistance in the evacuation of their animals as well as requests from the public regarding other animals in danger. See Annex Q – Evacuation and Repopulation for additional details regarding animal evacuations.
- DAS has the capability to provide short-term sheltering of animals in pre-determined locations. For animals that sheltered in place, DAS will provide food, water and care to those animals until the owners are permitted to return to their residences. Local Assistance Centers (LACs) are utilized.
- DAS will assist with the coordination of sheltering and care of animals in long-term cases.

For the purposes of this annex, an animal services disaster applies primarily to a major situation or potential situation, creating sufficient animal-related problems to exceed the capabilities of the local animal control agency.

TRIAGE

Triage is the process of sorting animals for emergency care, euthanasia, transportation, impoundment and removal. The DAS Veterinarian or their designee has overall responsibility of coordinating triage management.

- Primary triage is the first sorting of animals in the field to determine which animals are evacuated to secondary triage areas.
- Secondary triage is the second phase of sorting animals, and is performed in the triage treatment area. At this time, an animal's primary triage category may change. Stabilizing treatment may be initiated while awaiting transportation; however, transport should not be delayed for treatment.
- When euthanasia is deemed necessary by DAS veterinary staff or designee, the animal will be promptly euthanized.



TRANSPORTATION

The coordination of animal transportation from the scene to operational animal facilities is the responsibility of the local jurisdiction Incident Command.

The coordinator will assess the situation and determine the type and number of transportation vehicles needed based on the scale and type of animal response required. This information will be relayed by the Incident Command to the DAS Dispatch Center. Typically, service animals¹ will be transported with their owners. For other animals such as emotional support animals and/or household pets², every effort will be taken to keep them with their owners during transport.

DAS transportation resources include:

- Three Large Animal Trailers: Equipped with large animal sheltering kits, each trailer contains supplies to support up to 25 large animals.

¹ ADA-Service Animals - <http://www.dor.ca.gov/DisabilityAccessInfo/Service-Animals.html>

² The Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 (H.R. 3858)

- Two Flatbed Trailers: These trailers are designed to transport kennels and other types of animal sheltering or care supplies.
- Three Disaster Trailers: These trailers can support the transport of livestock and equipment, including pet supplies, crates, electrical components, office supplies, and first aid for minor injuries. They may also be deployed to support shelter-in-place operations.
- Thirteen Patrol Trucks: These are primarily suited for the transport of small animals.



The DAS Dispatch Center will:

- Contact the closest providers,
- Assist the on-call DAS Lieutenant or designee with arrangements for transportation, and
- Advise the field coordinator of estimated time of arrival and relay other essential information.

MEDICAL TREATMENT

Animal control agencies will coordinate the emergency treatment of animals within their care and jurisdiction and provide continued medical care through the event.

SHELTERING OF ANIMALS AT PUBLIC SHELTERS

Shelters

Within three hours after the opening of a public shelter, the Department of Animal Services (DAS) or the applicable city animal control agency will contact the American Red Cross (ARC) or designated shelter management personnel. DAS will advise and assist the shelter manager in handling and caring for animals at the shelter until transportation can be arranged. When possible, household pets will be co-sheltered with their owners or co-located at a household pet shelter nearby.³ If co-sheltering is not feasible, DAS will coordinate the transportation of animals to appropriate animal sheltering facilities and provide status updates to owners.



All animals will be picked up in the field, collected, and transported to shelters (which will be determined at the time of the incident). These animals will be tracked and cared for until

³ [California Assembly Bill 781, 2023-2024 Regular Session](#)

picked up by their owners or until other arrangements have been made. As an alternative, DAS may provide temporary enclosures for those animals whose owners are present and willing to take full responsibility for their animals while at the human mas care shelter. DAS will assist with providing food and water for the animals as needed.

Service animals, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are not pets and should remain with their owners at all times. Service animals are defined as a dog or miniature horse and are allowed inside all human shelters. DAS can assist owners with necessary supplies for their service animals.

SHELTERING OF LARGE ANIMALS

The DAS is the lead agency for coordinating large animal sheltering within the unincorporated areas of San Diego County. Many incorporated cities in the County have animal services contracts with the San Diego Humane Society.

DAS maintains access to County-operated shelters in Bonita and Carlsbad, which can serve as temporary sheltering for large animals. Additionally, DAS has verbal agreements with private property owners and facilities, including a limited number of local ranches, the Del Mar Fairgrounds, and the Lakeside Rodeo Grounds, which may serve as sheltering sites depending on the nature and location of the emergency.

DAS will coordinate site access, setup, and animal intake procedures to ensure the safe and effective sheltering of large animals. Transport and ongoing care requirements will be coordinated through DAS Dispatch in consultation with field personnel, mutual aid partners, and the OA EOC Animal Services Unit as needed.



CARE OF ANIMALS LEFT IN EVACUATED AREAS

Evacuation and sheltering of a person's household pet(s) is the responsibility of the pet owner. It is assumed that individuals with access to personal transportation will evacuate with their household pets whenever feasible.

A person with a residence in the unincorporated area subject to an evacuation order may contact the Department of Animal Services (DAS) when safe to do so and as resources are available, to arrange for the evacuation and sheltering of their pet. Animal Control Officers will work with animal service agencies and volunteers to develop an animal tracking methodology by tagging individual animals and entering the information into the Department's pre-existing shelter database.

For additional information on small and large animal evacuation and sheltering operations, refer to Annex O – Animal Services.

Incorporated cities are responsible for identifying strategies to address pet evacuations within their jurisdiction.

Any reentry into an evacuation zone is subject to incident conditions and approval by the Incident Commander/Unified Command, in coordination with the emergency management authority. Only DAS or designated mutual aid partners may conduct pet rescue operations within evacuation zones when authorized by the Incident Commander/Unified Command.

Pets rescued or originating from an area subject to an evacuation order are covered by protections intended to support owner reunification. Local animal control agencies retain custody of these animals for a minimum 30-day holding period before being made available for adoption, euthanasia, or transferred out of the custody of the local animal control agency or its in-state partner animal shelters, animal rescues, or animal fosters.

DAS will post the following information on its website to SUPPORT pet owners during evacuations:

- (1) Contact information for DAS to provide information regarding evacuating pets during an evacuation.
- (2) Resources for persons who need assistance reuniting with pets rescued from areas subject to evacuation orders.

DAS will disseminate information regarding pet rescues and resources through multiple channels, including the DAS website, social media platforms, and other communication methods.⁴

DAS and the local animal control agency will coordinate for the care and feeding of any animals left within the evacuated areas.

SICK ANIMALS IN SHELTERS

To prevent the spread of disease and maintain the health of animals and shelter staff, sick or injured animals must be managed promptly and with appropriate biosecurity measures. In coordination with public health and environmental health partners, DAS follows these procedures in shelter settings:

- **Small Animals:** If an animal is sick or injured, owners may be asked to transport their animal to the nearest County animal shelter. DAS may arrange transport for the animal to the VCA Emergency Animal Hospital & Referral Center, depending on the severity and staffing.
- **Large Animals:** For large animals such as horses, DAS contacts the East County Large Animal Practice (ECLAP) for veterinary assessment and may arrange transport to the ECLAP facility if needed.

All animal sheltering operations will incorporate biosecurity measures, including proper hygiene, sanitation of equipment, and reducing contact between different groups of animals.

⁴ [California Assembly Bill 478, 2025–2026 Regular Session](#)

DEAD ANIMALS

To reduce the risk of disease transmission and protect the public health, local jurisdictions are responsible for coordinating the collection and removal of deceased animals during an incident.

See [Attachment 3](#) for additional information on deceased animal removal procedures. See Annex H – Environmental Health Operations for additional guidance on vector control measures.

ORGANIZATION AND ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

ORGANIZATION

The operations described in this annex address all levels of disaster management from the scene to shelters. This annex provides a network of all agencies involved in animal control and care, and their respective roles, for an effective animal control system.

AT THE SCENE

At the scene, the responsibility for animal care and control belongs to the respective animal control agency for the affected area of the county. As the incident overwhelms the initial responding animal control agency, that agency would expand operational procedures and activate the annex.

EOC

City EOCs

Each City has a central facility designated as an EOC. From the EOC, disaster operations are directed or coordinated. The EOC is activated when a disaster occurs and is staffed by City employees with emergency responsibilities, as well as liaison representatives from other agencies and jurisdictions. City plans may call for an animal control representative to be present when the EOC is activated. In each city, the City Manager is designated as Director of Emergency Services, by ordinance, and directs emergency operations from the EOC.

Operational Area EOC

The OA EOC serves the same function as the City EOCs. The OA EOC serves the unincorporated area, and additionally provides coordination and support functions for the local jurisdictions.

The DAS position in the OA EOC is normally activated when the OA EOC is fully activated (Level 2 or 1). It is staffed by a representative of DAS, who will make decisions about resource allocation, priorities, and will coordinate the animal control response for the County.



Chief Administrative Officer (CAO)

Directs or coordinates the Emergency Services Organization and the Emergency Management Program. In a major emergency or disaster located entirely within the county unincorporated area, the CAO directs emergency operations (director of Emergency Services). In a disaster involving more than one jurisdiction, the CAO serves as the Coordinator of Emergency Services.

Director, DAS (or designee)

Reports to the CAO and is responsible for directing emergency animal control operations within the unincorporated area of the county and contract Cities and is responsible for coordinating emergency operations if one or more jurisdictions are involved. Additionally, the Director of DAS, or designee, maintains active liaison with fire, law enforcement, other animal control agencies, and public and private shelter representatives.



ASSIGNMENT OF RESPONSIBILITIES

All Affected Agencies

- Prepare and maintain SOPs and functional checklists for animal control response to a disaster or emergency, including a system for automatic reporting of pre-designated personnel to assigned disaster posts.
- Train personnel and alternates.
- Maintain an active liaison with DAS.

Department of Animal Services

- Maintain, update and exercise the Animal Services Annex.
- Maintain and update the Animal Services Mutual Aid Agreement.
- Maintain a system to identify and track animals received during a disaster.
- Maintain criteria establishing County-wide holding time and euthanasia standards for implementation during a disaster.⁵
- Assist with the coordination of training and plan development exercises with other animal related agencies.
- Direct disaster animal control operations within the unincorporated areas of San Diego County.
- Coordinate DAS affiliated animal-related volunteer groups.
- Coordinate the procurement and allocation of resources requested by Cities to support disaster animal control operations.
- Respond to requests for aid to other regions.
- Assign personnel to staff the animal control position at OA EOC.

⁵ AVMA Guidelines for the Euthanasia of Animals (2020). <https://www.avma.org/sites/default/files/2020-02/Guidelines-on-Euthanasia-2020.pdf>

-
- Maintain liaison with the coordinators of other emergency functions such as fire and rescue, law enforcement, health, and care and shelter.
 - Maintain liaison with the ARC, volunteer agencies, and other representatives within the county. Provide staffing to assist with animal related issues within these groups.
 - Coordinate the transportation of animals to animal care facilities within its jurisdiction and to other areas as requested.
 - Coordinate the acceptance and distribution of animal-related donations.
 - Coordinate with Public Information Officers for animal evacuations and care and shelter information.

Department of Agriculture, Weights, and Measures

- Administer the Ag Pass Program to allow eligible commercial livestock owners and agricultural operations temporary access to restricted areas for care, feeding, and evacuation of animals (with Incident Command approval).
- Support livestock coordination and agricultural resource needs in the OA EOC.
- Assist with livestock carcass removal, agricultural damage assessments, and recovery planning.
- Enforce quarantine and pest control measures to protect animal health and prevent disease spread.
- Provide outreach and guidance to producers on evacuation procedures, animal health protection, and biosecurity.

Public Animal Control Agencies

- Direct disaster operations within their jurisdictions.
- Coordinate the transportation of animals to animal care facilities within their jurisdiction.
- Request and respond to requests for mutual aid within the county.
- Maintain liaison with DAS.
- Maintain liaison with the coordinators of other emergency functions such as fire and rescue, law enforcement, health, and care and shelter.
- Maintain liaison with volunteer agencies within the county.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife and Other Wildlife Organizations

- Provide assistance with wildlife.
- Provide liaison to DAS.

California Department of Food and Agriculture, Animal Health Branch

- Serve as the lead agency for California during a foreign animal disease (FAD) outbreak, in coordination with the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA).
- The State Veterinarian can declare an animal health emergency and issue quarantines to restrict the movement of animals or animal products.
- Provide guidance to counties on how to safely shelter animals during a disease outbreak and prevent the disease from spreading to other animals or people.
- Work with local emergency managers and animal response teams to manage quarantines, control animal movement, and support sheltering operations.

-
- Share educational materials (videos, infographics) on how to recognize and respond to animal disease outbreaks.

Office of Emergency Services (OES)

- Provide liaison to DAS (as necessary).
- Assist in obtaining necessary resources.
- Assist with communications, as necessary.



SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

San Diego Humane Society (SDHS)

- Assist DAS in recovery and rescue of animals.
- Coordinate recovery and rescue of animals with Emergency Response Team (ERT).
- Provide available animal rescue and sheltering resources.
- Assist with the coordination of training and plan development exercises with other animal related agencies.
- Maintain an active liaison to DAS.

Law Enforcement Mounted Units

- Assist with coordinating mutual aid upon request of a local agency.
- Provide resources as resources become available.
- Assist in recovery and rescue of animals.
- Provide liaison to DAS.

Private Animal Care Shelters

- Provide care for animals.
- Assist in sheltering of animals.
- Provide available resources.
- Provide liaison to DAS.

Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)

- Assist in recovery, rescue and sheltering of animals when local resources are exhausted.
- Provide resources as resources become available.
- Provide liaison to DAS.

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

- Coordinate provision of emergency shelters for animals, as available.
- Coordinate private veterinary medical services to provide triage and necessary medical care for the animals rescued.
- Provide liaison to DAS.

San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

- Provide expertise and resources to handle and care for exotic animals.
- Request, and respond to requests for assistance.
- Implement emergency protocol and contingency plans for the San Diego Zoo and the San Diego Zoo Safari Park, including agreements with other organizations to care for evacuated wildlife if needed.

American Red Cross (ARC)

- Provide liaison to DAS.
- Assist DAS with coordinating and providing care and management of animals brought to ARC Shelters.

DIRECTION, CONTROL, OR COORDINATION

ACTIVATION

The activation of this annex shall be initiated by the Director of DAS, or designee, at the request of the local animal control agency having jurisdiction.

TERMINATION

Termination of this annex shall take place after the announcement to secure from the disaster situation and normal phase-down and deactivation operations have been completed, and the local animal control agency indicates no further need for this annex to be activated.

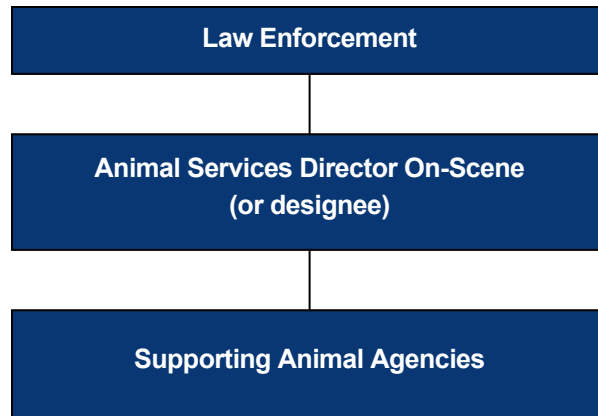
INCIDENT COMMAND

DAS shall assign a liaison to the OA EOC and Incident Command (if necessary) during any activation. Staff assigned to occupy those positions have received training in ICS and are NIMS compliant.

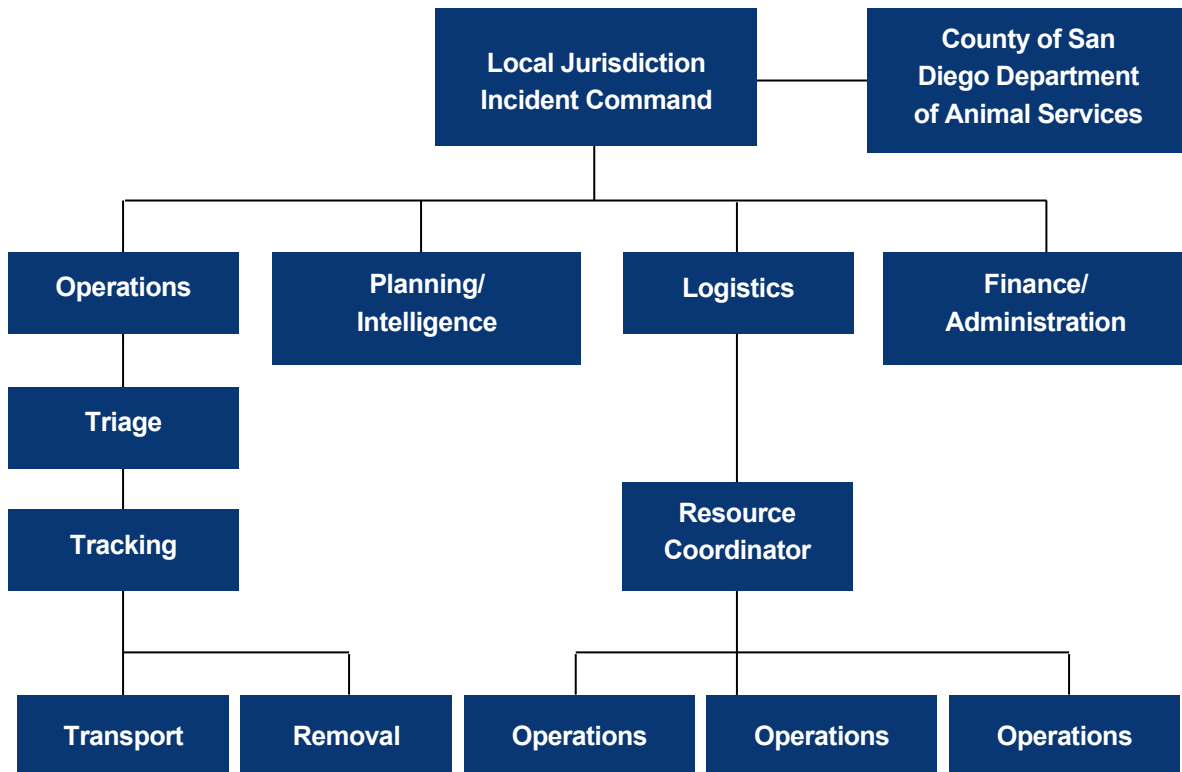
When activated, the responsibility for the evacuation, sheltering and care of animals falls under the Operations branch of the Incident Command Structure.

DAS will coordinate with the OA EOC with the planning, logistics and financial aspects of the response.

Overall Command Structure



Organizational Structure Within An Incident



INFORMATION COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION

Utilizing the AVMA Pet Ownership Statistics and U.S. Census of Agriculture Statistics, there are an estimated 1.3 million pets and an estimated 1.1 million livestock within the county. The San Diego Zoo is home to over 12,000 rare and endangered animals representing more than 680 species and subspecies, and the San Diego Zoo Safari Park is an expansive wildlife sanctuary that is home to more than 3,100 animals representing more than 340 species. Also taken into consideration are past numbers from previous evacuations, individual community assessments of animal populations, and data contained within the Department's database.

As it pertains to the actual incident, information regarding the impacted/threatened areas shall be obtained from the local law enforcement and fire departments.

COMMUNICATIONS

NOTIFICATION

Alert

Standby Mode: When a jurisdiction has information indicating that this annex may need to be activated, that jurisdiction will contact DAS. It is not necessary to make a commitment of resources at this time; however, it is the time to start planning and preparing an appropriate response.

Activate

When the need to activate this annex is confirmed, the affected jurisdiction will notify their law enforcement agency, and they will contact DAS. Pertinent information such as the nature of the emergency, the location, the type of animals involved, and the anticipated number of animals should be provided. DAS will make the following notifications:

- Notify the closest DAS unit to respond to the scene and report directly to the animal control authority on scene, or law enforcement representative, to provide direct communications between the scene and DAS.
- Notify animal shelters in the area of the incident.
- Notify all other agencies as needed, which may include:
 - San Diego Humane Society and Emergency Response Team
 - Other Public Animal Control Agencies
 - Law Enforcement Mounted Units
 - Non-Government Organizations
 - Private Animal Care Shelters
 - Veterinary Medical Association
 - Zoological Society
 - California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Office of Emergency Services
 - American Red Cross
 - American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

- California Department of Food and Agriculture (lead agency for the California Animal Response Emergency System)
- California Emergency Support Function (ESF) 11 (Food and Agriculture) Coordinator

INTERNAL/EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS

There may be common radio frequencies or talk-groups on the 800 MHz radio system for use by animal control agencies. For example, there is a radio channel for communications between DAS and the SDHS. The Regional Communications System (RCS) has several mutual aid talk-groups, which could be used if the agencies are all on the 800 MHz system.



DAS shall also utilize VHF and ham-radio systems for communication between DAS and volunteers.

DAS has the responsibility of providing communications capability to the animal control authority on scene. Once DAS has been notified of the need to activate this annex, DAS shall assign a liaison to the animal control authority on scene for communication purposes.

LOGISTICS

TRACKING

DAS shall maintain records regarding personnel, volunteers, supplies and donations and animal inventory. DAS will coordinate the collection of that information from other impacted agencies which will be forwarded to OES upon request.

ANNEX DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE

This annex is a product of the OA EOP. As such, the policies, procedures, and practices outlined in the OA EOP govern this annex. OES is subject to coordinate the maintenance and update of this annex every four years, in accordance with the maintenance schedule established for the OA EOP. Record of changes, approval, and dissemination of the OA EOP will also apply to this annex.

Updates to this annex can be made before such time for multiple reasons, including but not limited to changes in policy/procedure, improvements and recommendations based on real life events or exercises, etc. Recommended changes should be submitted to OES at oes@sdcounty.ca.gov

The Director of DAS or their designee shall be responsible for the continued development and maintenance of this annex. DAS staff tasked with the review of this document shall include a Deputy Director and animal control Lieutenants assigned to serve as the Department's disaster coordinators.

AUTHORITIES AND REFERENCES

California Government Code Section 8608 requires that the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) shall approve and adopt, and incorporate the California Animal Response Emergency System (CARES) program developed under the oversight of the Department of Food and Agriculture into the standardized emergency management system.

The Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 (H.R. 3858) amended the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Services Act to ensure that State and local emergency preparedness operation plans address the needs of individuals with household pets or service animals following a major disaster or emergency.

- California Government Code § 8593.3 (2024) – Accessibility to Emergency Information and Services
- Telecommunications Act of 1996
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2, 2023

ATTACHMENT 1: ANIMAL SERVICES ANNEX EMERGENCY ACTION CHECKLIST

RESPONSE TO A DISASTER

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Determine condition and capacity of shelters; request shelters to activate Disaster Plans.	Department of Animal Services (DAS)
Determine availability and condition of animal supplies; take appropriate action to maintain inventories or resupply.	All Agencies
If there are only a few or no public casualties, prepare to support more heavily damaged jurisdictions. If there is extensive damage and a large number of casualties in the public sector, take the following actions as appropriate.	
Assign Animal Services liaison to OA EOC, if activated.	DAS
Take action to expand shelter capacity.	All Shelters
Augment personnel.	All Agencies
Obtain emergency supplies and specialized equipment.	All Shelters
Activate plans to obtain supplementary services such as public information, records, reports, etc.	DAS
Activate plan to impound animals.	Each Animal Control Agency
Inform the Emergency Public Information Officer of current information for dissemination to the public.	All Affected Agencies
Provide information to the media (radio, television, internet) in English, Spanish, American Sign Language, and other frequently used languages, including the use of social media.	OA EOC JIC/Public Information Officers from impacted agencies
Provide Field medical care, including Triage, near or in affected areas.	All Responding Agencies

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Determine number and location of animals that require hospitalization.	Incident Command
Determine transportation needs and capabilities.	Incident Command
Have units dispatched to pick up injured animals.	Incident Command/DAS
Assign non-service animals to shelters to maximize use of our facilities.	Incident Command
Determine availability and location of Animal Control personnel.	Each Animal Control Agency
Assign personnel to shelter facilities as required.	Each Animal Control Agency
Request additional assistance from the region or Cal OES through the OA EOC.	Incident Command/DAS
Obtain State mutual aid and resources.	OES
Inventory and determine need for euthanasia and vet supplies.	Incident Command/Veterinary Staff
Periodically poll emergency shelters (including ARC shelters) for animal care needs. Provide resources to support those needs.	Each Animal Control Agency
Notify DAS when shelter capacity is reached.	Each affected animal shelter
Store food and water for shelter facilities.	Each Animal Control Agency
Determine need for and perform euthanasia.	Incident Command/Veterinary staff
Removal of animal bodies.	Incident Command/HazMat/DAS/Veterinary staff
Inform the Emergency Public Information Office of current information for public dissemination.	Incident Command
Evaluation of animals for decontamination.	Incident Command/HazMat/DAS/Veterinary staff

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY
Initiate alternate communications, if needed.	DAS/PIO
Request assistance from Cal OES.	Incident Command/ OES
Activate Animal Services Annex, as required.	Incident Command/ DAS

ATTACHMENT 2: ANIMAL DECONTAMINATION PROCEDURES

Decontamination Procedure Overview for All Animals, including Service Animals:

Animal Services will be called upon to respond to a mass decontamination event to assist with animal decontamination activities.

Animals may be decontaminated by their handler under the guidance of Animal Services staff, or directly by staff if needed. Depending on the circumstances, animals will:

- Undergo decontamination by the handler in a designated wash station. The animal is then held by Animal Services while the handler goes through the decontamination corridor, retrieving the animal post decontamination.
- Accompany the handler through the decontamination corridor. For the safety of all involved the handler and animal should be provided a private designated corridor. Assistance may be provided by a designated handler.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR DIFFERENT ANIMAL TYPES:

Decontamination procedures apply to all species, including service animals, household pets, livestock, equines, and poultry. While species-specific protocols may vary depending on the hazard, Animal Services incorporates decontamination practices into daily operations to ensure animal health and safety.

If a contagious disease is suspected within a shelter or holding environment, additional measures will include relocation of animals, temporary closure of specific wards, suspension of new intakes, and enhanced monitoring and treatment of affected animals. The duration and type of response will depend on the disease or contaminant involved.

ATTACHMENT 3: DECEASED ANIMAL REMOVAL PROCEDURES

San Diego County has been impacted by natural disasters in the past which impact not only the people within the communities but also their animals as well as wildlife. In any major fire or flood, it is extremely likely that animals will perish as a result of the disaster.

Deceased animals pose not only a hardship on the owners of the animals or on the property on which a deceased animal was found, they also constitute a health risk to the community. As such, it is in the community's best interests to remove these deceased animals in a timely manner.

In cases where the County of San Diego determines it is in the best interest of the community, due to health concerns, to contract for a dead animal removal company, the County shall initiate a search for a vendor to provide such service. In order to possibly qualify for FEMA reimbursement, the County shall solicit three bids from vendors for the costs to remove and dispose of large animals (horse and livestock), wildlife, and smaller domestic pets (dogs, cats, birds, etc.).

Once a contractor has been selected, the public shall be notified of the service to the impacted communities.

The owner or finder of a deceased animal shall contact the Department of Animal Services' (DAS) 24-hour dispatch unit at (619) 236-2341.

The owner/finder shall provide the address of the deceased animal and the Animal Services dispatcher will verify the address is within the fire zone (as determined by the map on the AlertSanDiego website (<https://tinyurl.com/yckkodom>)).

If the address is determined to be within the fire zone, the dispatcher will obtain the following information:

- The caller's name,
- The address where the deceased animal is located,
- The caller's telephone number,
- Type of animal(s),
- Number of deceased animals by animal type, and
- Location of the deceased animal(s) on the property.

This information shall be entered on the Dead Animal Removal Request document.

The information on the Dead Animal Removal Request document shall be conveyed to the contractor and, once conveyed, the document shall be marked with the date and time and the initials of the Animal Services' staff that provided the information.

A new Dead Animal Removal Request document shall then be generated.

Copies of the documents shall be provided to the Contracting Officer Representative (COR) for their records and billing purposes. If there is knowledge of the owner of the deceased animal(s) and the request is made through the DAS 24-hour dispatch unit, DAS may provide the owner with cause of death documentation or refer them to a veterinary specialist for additional documentation for insurance.

In cases where animals die from a contagious or suspected contagious disease, DAS utilizes its current vendor, TLC Animal Removal Services, for carcass pick up and removal. All deceased animals collected through this vendor are incinerated, which effectively eliminates the risk of disease transmission or environmental contamination.

DAS will make the necessary, operational adjustments to isolate affected animals prior to removal. For incidents involving large-scale exposure or high-consequence diseases, additional guidance may be sought from the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to ensure procedures align with state protocols and any relevant biosecurity measures.

ATTACHMENT 4: FOREIGN ANIMAL DISEASE PREPAREDNESS AND RESPONSE FRAMEWORK

When a Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) outbreak occurs in San Diego County, a coordinated response is necessary to protect livestock, public health, and the local economy. For example, if a case of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) or Foot-and-Mouth Disease (FMD) is detected within the county's agricultural sector, immediate containment measures must be enacted. The response begins at the local level, with the County of San Diego Public Health Services (PHS) and Department of Environmental Health and Quality (DEHQ) coordinating with the California Department of Public Health for any potential zoonotic incidents impacting public health. The Public Health Preparedness and Response (PHPR) branch, under PHS, has the ability to supply personal protective equipment if requested by field workers who are in contact with infected or potentially infected animals. Coordination will also continue at the local level with the County Department of Agriculture, Weights & Measures (AWM) working in collaboration with the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) to assess the situation, enforce quarantine orders, and implement biosecurity protocols. If the outbreak escalates, necessitating broader coordination and resources, the Medical Operations Center (MOC) and OA EOC may be activated to provide logistical and operational support.

CDFA, as the lead agency in California, operates within a Unified Command structure with the U.S Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (USDA-APHIS), ensuring that all response activities align with federal disease containment protocols. CDFA adheres to the Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan, a framework that guides disease eradication efforts nationwide. Under this structure, CDFA has the authority to declare an animal health emergency, impose quarantine zones, and restrict the movement of affected livestock under California Food and Agricultural Code (FAC) §9562. The State Veterinarian plays a crucial role in these efforts, issuing quarantine orders and enforcing necessary sanitary regulations to prevent disease spread.

The FAD response follows a structured lifecycle, beginning with detection. A suspected case may be reported by a veterinarian, laboratory, or livestock owner, prompting an investigation by a Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostician (FADD). Diagnostic samples are collected and submitted to National Animal Health Laboratory Network (NAHLN) laboratories for preliminary results. If an FAD is suspected, a quarantine is issued, and biosecurity measures are communicated to the affected facility. Once the National Veterinary Services Laboratories (NVSL) confirms the disease, response operations move into the initial response phase, typically within the first 48 hours. During this period, an Incident Management Team (IMT) is activated, working to establish quarantine and movement controls, conduct surveillance, and initiate epidemiological investigations.

In the following 24 to 96 hours, response efforts intensify. The IMT expands its operations to include depopulation and removal procedures, laboratory diagnostics, vaccination strategies, and public awareness campaigns. The scope of containment measures depends on the scale of the outbreak, the number of infected animals, and the geographical spread of the disease. If new positive cases are detected, the containment cycle restarts, potentially increasing the size of the quarantine zone and requiring additional personnel and resources. Throughout this process, County AWM ensures local compliance with state and federal mandates, while County OES provides operational support if the outbreak disrupts broader county functions.

As containment efforts progress, the response transitions into the recovery and disease freedom phases. These stages includes long-term disease control measures, reevaluation of

quarantine and movement restrictions, and submission of documentation to the World Organization for Animal Health (WOAH) to restore the County's disease-free status. Recovery efforts may take weeks to months, depending on the severity of the outbreak. County AWM, CDFA, and USDA-APHIS continue conducting surveillance to ensure that no residual infections persist.

To achieve disease-free status, the following measures are implemented based on CDFA recommendations:

- Depopulation of infected and exposed animals to eliminate sources of infection.
- Safe removal of carcasses through approved methods such as burial, composting, rendering, or incineration to prevent environmental contamination.
- Cleaning and disinfection of all affected premises, including livestock facilities, equipment, and vehicles used for animal transport.
- Extended quarantine and movement restrictions until all testing confirms the absence of the disease.
- Post-outbreak surveillance and testing of remaining and newly introduced livestock to detect any lingering infections.
- Implementation of vaccination programs, if applicable, to prevent future outbreaks and enhance herd immunity.
- Biosecurity training and reinforcement for livestock owners, farmworkers, and emergency personnel to prevent reintroduction of the disease.
- Public awareness campaigns to educate farmers, veterinarians, and the public on best practices for disease prevention and reporting.

These steps are continuously monitored and evaluated until WOAH requirements for disease-free status are met, allowing for the release of movement restrictions and full recovery of the livestock industry in San Diego County.

Throughout the entire response, biosecurity precautions remain paramount, especially for individuals handling animals in shelters or emergency evacuation settings. Since some livestock may be asymptomatic carriers, thorough screening and decontamination protocols are enforced to minimize further transmission risks. Additionally, public communication plays a vital role in maintaining transparency and ensuring that affected stakeholders understand response measures.

By integrating local, state, and federal resources, the Foreign Animal Disease Preparedness and Response Plan ensures a comprehensive and coordinated approach to managing FAD outbreaks. Whether through disease containment, resource deployment, or public awareness efforts, the County remains prepared to protect both its agricultural economy and public health in the face of a livestock health emergency.