

Speaker 1: [00:07](#) Hello everyone. Welcome to "Prep Talk," the emergency management podcast. Find out what you need to know about preparedness, get all the latest tips from experts in the field, and learn what to do before the next disaster strikes. From the Emergency Management Department in the city that never sleeps, here are your hosts Omar Bourne and Allison Pennisi.

Omar Bourne: [00:28](#) Hello everyone. Thank you for listening. I am Omar Bourne.

Allison Pennisi: [00:31](#) I'm Allison Pennisi. Thank you for joining us. We want you to come back as often as you can, so feel free to add "Prep Talk" to your favorite RSS feed. You can also follow us on social media.

Omar Bourne: [00:41](#) This episode, we're focusing on how we can prepare our furry, scaly and feathery family members.

Allison Pennisi: [00:48](#) That's right, Omar, and now, listen, we're not talking about your aunts, your uncles, your cousins, even your siblings, or your parents.

Omar Bourne: [00:55](#) We might be.

Allison Pennisi: [00:56](#) Well, we might be, but we're actually talking about your pets and service animals. They need to be ready for an emergency just like us.

Omar Bourne: [01:04](#) Here to speak about this important topic are Matthew Puvogel and Andrew Perlman from New York City Emergency Management. Now, Matt is part of the agency's community engagement team, and Andy is a human services specialist who is part of the city's Animal Planning Task Force. Welcome to "Prep Talk," guys.

Andrew Perlman: [01:21](#) Thank you.

Matthew Puvogel: [01:21](#) Thank you for having us.

Omar Bourne: [01:24](#) Andy, we're going to start with you. What are some simple things that New Yorkers can do to prepare their pets for an emergency?

Andrew Perlman: [01:31](#) Just like preparing ourselves, we should gather supplies that our pets and service animals need, making up a Go Bag. Things like extra leash, food, toys, and even vaccination information from their veterinarian.

Allison Pennisi: [01:47](#) That's a great point. Matt, would you like to add anything about that?

Matthew Puvogel: [01:51](#) Sure. It's also good to actually have a picture of your pet in your Go Bag in case if that does happen, if your pet goes missing. Also, really important, my wife and I we have another pet, another dog, which she has issues with anxiety. When we had a smoke alarm go off recently, she hid, so knowing your pet's hiding places is extremely important, too.

Allison Pennisi: [02:11](#) That's a really good point. Matt, it's interesting, you brought up that you have another pet. Matt, you're somebody who has a service animal. We're talking about how it's important for pets to be prepared, but service animals also need to be prepared for an emergency. Can you explain to our listeners how preparing a service animal may be similar or even different?

Matthew Puvogel: [02:36](#) Similar would be a service animal, such as a service dog, it's a dog in the end, so they're going to have similar supplies to any other pet that's a dog. Like Andy mentioned, having a leash, having toys, a blanket, other things such as that for Cliff who is my guide dog. Things that might be a little different would be knowing where you're going to evacuate to, knowing that in advance.

Matthew Puvogel: [03:01](#) Because guide dogs specifically if you've traveled to a place on one occasion, they're really not going to know the location, so it's really important to practice evacuation routes, one that's near and one that's a little bit further away. Practicing that with your service animal so that they get familiar. People who have service animals, specifically guide dogs, they are working with that specific dog, and they're going to know where to go.

Matthew Puvogel: [03:26](#) The dog will pick up on those cues, and by that practice they'll be able to know where to go specifically during an emergency.

Omar Bourne: [03:34](#) Wonderful. Good point. Now, in New York City as you know we have winter, we have extreme heat, hurricanes even, so are there specific steps that New Yorkers should be taking to protect their pets and service animals from different types of emergencies?

Andrew Perlman: [03:52](#) Well, during extreme heat we have to be very mindful that when we walk our animals, take them outside, do it when the heat is at its lowest very early in the morning or later in the evening. During the wintertime, it's important that we wipe the

paws down, because there's salt out there and it can be very, very abrasive to their paws.

Omar Bourne: [04:23](#) That's salt for when you want to clear driveways and stuff like that.

Andrew Perlman: [04:25](#) Sure. It's just a matter of not leaving them outside too long in the elements to protect them from the heat and the extreme cold.

Omar Bourne: [04:35](#) Matt?

Matthew Puvogel: [04:37](#) For pets, also, if it is a hot day, also, not leaving your pets in a car too long. That's really important. Also, in winter weather, you're not leaving them outside too long. They do experience the same issues as we do during winter weather. They do have fur, but again, the elements if they're out in the elements too long, that can cause many issues.

Allison Pennisi: [04:58](#) We've seen in some disasters like hurricanes that people are afraid to evacuate or leave their homes because they don't want to leave their pets behind. My question is, what does the City recommend for pet owners and service animal owners during an emergency that requires them to evacuate?

Andrew Perlman: [05:19](#) We never want to make people choose between evacuating to a place of safety or staying home where it's unsafe with their pets or service animal. The best place to evacuate to would be a friend or a relative, and they certainly can take their pet with them for an event where we have advanced notice, like a coastal storm. It would be a good idea for people to board their pets at a kennel if possible.

Andrew Perlman: [05:49](#) It's also important for people to understand that New York City emergency shelters do accommodate pets, and, of course, service animals. If for some reason they can't evacuate to a friend or a relative and take the pet with them, pets will be accepted in the emergency shelter system. If people can't bring the items we mentioned before like leashes and food and blankets, New York City Emergency Management and its external partners can provide those support items for the people and their pets.

Matthew Puvogel: [06:23](#) Also, for the shelters, too, they are pet friendly obviously. Also, for service animals, when an individual does come to the shelter if they have a service animal we do not separate the service

animal from the individual. For myself if that happened with Cliff, he would not be very happy about it. It's something as far as stress is a main issue if you separate someone from their service animal.

- Matthew Puvogel: [06:47](#) In the shelters themselves we have a pet friendly location that has, like Andy mentioned, extra supplies. If someone does come to the shelter they have supplies for their Go Bag, because that's what we recommend, pets having a Go Bag but everyone in the household having one, too. If someone has a Go Bag for their pet and they have some supplies but they don't have everything, we'll help out if that is an issue.
- Omar Bourne: [07:11](#) I like that you mentioned the Go Bag, because I think a lot of people don't understand that just like a family member, each individual needs a Go Bag, it's the same for a pet. They have different needs. It's the same for a service animal. They have different needs than we do, and so we want to be thinking about them as well.
- Allison Pennisi: [07:34](#) I also really love, Matt, that you brought up the fact that pets are part of the family, and service animals are an extension of a person. For them to be separated from their family or from the person they're helping out, that's obviously hard enough. Going through an emergency is tough and can be traumatic, and to be separated from a family member or something that's an extension of you is probably nearly impossible. I think it's a really great point that you brought that up.
- Matthew Puvogel: [08:04](#) It's added stress as far as if that does happen. Pets, like you were mentioning, they're a part of the family, but especially service animals, especially Cliff because he's traveling everywhere throughout the city with me. Most people if they have pets, they'll see them when they go home. I'm with Cliff 24/7. It's, I guess, probably a stronger bond. When he retires it's going to be a little different for him. As far as an everyday basis, I'm traveling with him all the time.
- Allison Pennisi: [08:31](#) A ready pet.
- Matthew Puvogel: [08:33](#) Exactly.
- Allison Pennisi: [08:33](#) A ready service animal. That's great.
- Omar Bourne: [08:35](#) I want to go back to you, Matt, with this question. We always say that practice makes perfect. How important is it to practice

with, one, your pet, and two, your service animal, your evacuation route, and just your emergency plan in general?

Matthew Puvogel: [08:55](#) I think it's important for pets and also service animals. Like I mentioned before, one of our pets has anxiety, so if you do have a pet that has some stress issues or anxiety, planning out how you're going to evacuate with them, how are you going to find them during an emergency. We also have two guinea pigs in our house too, so that's another added little thing that we have when we have to evacuate, so having maybe a carrier for them specifically so we can get out quickly with them.

Matthew Puvogel: [09:21](#) For pets, having things in place, thinking in advance, not time of emergency because if you do think time of emergency, you're definitely going to forget certain things for your pets. Similarly to our own plans, if we don't plan in advance we're going to forget information and other things.

Matthew Puvogel: [09:39](#) For that and also for service animals, again, like I mentioned, evacuating, practicing it way in advance. Practice makes perfect, like everyone always says, so that's something that if you do that in advance you'll know where to go. It's definitely safer during an emergency. You'll know where to leave and if there is such as a barrier or a door that's closed, or you can't get through, you're going to know what the second option's going to be.

Omar Bourne: [10:06](#) Andy, as I mentioned earlier, you are part of the City's Animal Planning Task Force. For our listeners, what is that task force?

Andrew Perlman: [10:14](#) The Animal Planning Task Force is a work group of organizations that's chaired by New York City Emergency Management that incorporates the needs of pets in emergency planning. That's the preparedness and planning portion of what the task force does. There's also a response component. Our partners will respond to emergencies like fires whenever pets are displaced from their homes.

Andrew Perlman: [10:37](#) There's also a public education component where the partners will go out and host public education activities, bringing information to the public as it relates to emergency preparedness for pets and service animals.

Omar Bourne: [10:52](#) You mentioned partners, who are some of the other partners that we work with on that task force?

- Andrew Perlman: [10:57](#) We work with government agencies, non-profit organizations like the Mayor's Alliance for New York City's animals, the ASPCA, Animal Care centers, the American Red Cross, the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit and the Humane Society. There are other supporting partners as well, but that's the main, core group. We convene meetings every month and we just make sure that all of the partners know the capacity of what all of the other partners have available in the event of an emergency.
- Allison Pennisi: [11:33](#) Matt, we've been talking about planning, practice making perfect. What are steps New Yorkers can take to actually make a plan for their pet or service animal?
- Matthew Puvogel: [11:44](#) We have the Ready New York Pets Preparedness Plan. For that, family members can sit down in advance and actually write out a plan, so including contacts, meeting places, supplies that would be in a Go Bag to prepare their pet or service animal. Also, some of the things they would have in a Go Bag, thinking about vaccination records, possibly having a picture, like I mentioned before of someone's pet.
- Matthew Puvogel: [12:11](#) Having those extra things in a Go Bag, and also at home in case if there is such as winter weather, and the pets, we don't want them being outside too long, so having supplies at home, having extra water, or having extra food for their pets. Certain items like that, so when an emergency actually happens everyone will be safe. There won't be any issues.
- Allison Pennisi: [12:31](#) Great. For our listeners, you can visit NYC.gov/readyny to get the Ready New York: My Pet's Emergency Plan. That's this edition of "Prep Talk." If you like what you heard, you can listen anytime online or through your favorite RSS feed. Until next time, stay safe and prepared.