

# Protect your pet in a disaster

## Downloadable Disaster Pack for Fish

Just as you do with your family's Disaster Survival Kit, think first about the basics, for your fish – **food, water and warmth.**

### Think about two Disaster Survival Kits –

1. One kit for if you need to stay at home for up to three days.
2. The other, a more portable lightweight version (Getaway Kit) for when you, your family and your fish need to leave quickly.

**Remember: If where you are is not safe for you, it is not safe for your animal.**

Place these kits somewhere easy to get to in a hurry. And make sure everyone in the house knows where they are kept, including a neighbour.

Always re-check these kits for expiry dates, to ensure supplies stay fresh.

**Note:** In case of an emergency that involves an aquarium remember that water and electricity DO NOT MIX. Always unplug all aquarium items such as heaters, filters and lights before allowing yourself or others to come in to contact with the water. In cases where the glass is or may be damaged use extreme caution when moving or working on or around aquaria as broken glass is a major hazard.

It is strongly advisable to have an electrical safety device such as an RCD fitted permanently to an aquarium. They are cheaply and readily available from hardware stores and may just save a life in an emergency and will prevent damage to life support systems such as heaters and filters in the event of tank breakage.



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## Prepare for your Fish – Checklist

### Emergency Survival Items:

- **Food:** Healthy fish will be fine without food for up to two weeks and in any case stressed fish are unlikely to eat and so any food added will only pollute the aquarium or holding tank. Keep a good forward supply of fish food on hand but only because obtaining of supplies may be disrupted by emergencies.
- **Water:** Make sure you have a supply of water on hand for conducting aquarium top ups and partial water changes.
- **Sanitation:** Include any transfer tanks/buckets and suitable plastic bags for moving fish. Also include a bottle of ammonia remover (e.g. "Ammono Lock") a bottle of water conditioner (chlorine remover) and a battery operated air pump including batteries and airline/ airstone. Other useful items are old towels, newspapers, paper towels, a net and plastic bags.

### Identification:

- **ID Information:** Add ID info to your fish transfer container or plastic bag – include your name and phone number. Include a back up ID fixture in your fish's Disaster Survival Kit. In addition back up this information electronically - to places such as 'Dropbox', your mobile phone or save a folder in your Webmail (ie gmail). This means you can still access these vital details if you are cut off from returning to your fish.

### Equipment:

- **Transportable container:** This is to transport your fish safely. A transportable container should be at least large enough for your fish to swim comfortably, the larger it is the better so long as it is able to be carried. Your fish may have to stay in this transportable container for days. Large plastic storage containers (40 litres and up) with a lid or even better large Chilly Bins make excellent fish storage and transport containers. **Never** feed fish in transport containers as this will only pollute the water and likely kill the fish.

### Safe Shelter Places

- **A Safe House:** Plan and agree with a family member or friend (who doesn't live with you and who has cared for your fish in the past) if they will care for your fish for any length of time, in case of a disaster.
- **Place their full name, address and telephone number in your Disaster Survival Kit in a waterproof container.** All adults and children in your household should know these primary and alternative contacts (names/addresses/contact numbers) or always carry this information with them.
- **Show them and a neighbour where your Disaster Survival Kits are** just in case you are not at home when disaster strikes and you are cut off from returning to your fish. This means your neighbour can at least feed and attend to your fish in the interim. Also show them how to access a spare key to your house. Or even better provide them with a key (as your hiding place may be destroyed in a disaster).
- **Have a plan to communicate with your contact after the event.** You will want to arrange a meeting place in a safe area so you can be reunited with your fish.

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