



THE FEDERATION OF SPCAs AND HUMANE SOCIETIES  
FÉDÉRATION DES SOCIÉTÉS D'ASSISTANCE AUX ANIMAUX



For Immediate Release:

## **Canada Must Stop Leaving Pets Behind: Humane Canada Urges Government to Include Animal Response in Emergency Management as Wildfires Devastate Communities**

**June 6, 2025** – As wildfires continue to devastate communities across Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and beyond, Humane Canada is urgently calling on the federal government to formally recognize and accommodate Canadians with pets in emergency planning and response.

More than 60% of Canadian households include a pet, and the vast majority of those pet owners consider them family, yet Canada’s emergency management still fails to reflect that reality.

“Despite repeated tragedies, and clear public concern, the needs of pets and their families are still being left out of Canada’s emergency response systems,” said Barbara Cartwright, CEO of Humane Canada.

In an emergency, people need help evacuating their animals and accessing pet-friendly shelters and accommodations, animal food, supplies, and veterinary care. Lack of such pet-inclusive support services forces many to delay or avoid seeking safety, risking physical harm and potential maltreatment or death of pets.

Furthermore, misinformation, limited training and the lack of inclusion of animal response often adds to confusion and panic in an evacuation, jeopardizing the safety and well-being of first responders and creating a lose/lose environment.

**Humane Canada is petitioning the government and calling on the public to write to their elected officials to demand animals be included in Canada’s emergency planning.**

“We need to ensure that a coordinate animal response is included from the start, not as an afterthought, said Cartwright, the consequences are too serious to ignore any longer.”

Humane Canada is calling on the Government of Canada to:

1. Recognize the critical role that professional animal welfare providers play in emergencies and ensure that coordinated animal response is integrated into all

emergency preparedness response and recovery efforts at the federal/provincial/territorial level;

2. Ensure that people evacuating with pets are considered in decision-making, increasing access to pet-inclusive support services;
3. Provide co-sheltering options for evacuees with pets across all temporary housing;
4. Establish a responsive and adequate resource structure that supports Animal Response.

“Governments have got to wake up,” Cartwright added. “They have to recognize the human/animal bond, realize the important role animal welfare professionals play and make this central to their emergency response planning while also putting the resources in place to support it.”

The strength of the human-animal bond is undeniable, and Humane Canada continues to press for its recognition at every level of disaster response.

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For more information on how to support or access resources for the Manitoba wildfires through Winnipeg Humane Society, visit: <https://winnipeghumanesociety.ca>

For more information about National Response to Emergencies and Planning, please contact:

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Learn more about the [Humane Canada National Animal Emergency Response Program](#).

**ABOUT HUMANE CANADA**

Humane Canada, the federation of SPCAs and humane societies, brings together organizations that work with animals to end animal cruelty, improve animal protection and promote the humane treatment of all animals. Humane Canada, alongside the Winnipeg Humane Society and Canadian Red Cross, has helped coordinate emergency sheltering for evacuees with pets. In Northern Saskatchewan, rescue teams are working without support, using social media to try to reunite animals with their families.

For more information, visit <https://humanecanada.ca>