



# Protect Yourself from Animal- and Insect-Related Hazards After a Natural Disaster

## General

- Avoid wild or stray animals.
- Call local authorities to handle animals.
- Secure all food sources and remove any animal carcasses to avoid attracting rats.
- Get rid of dead animals, according to guidelines from your local animal control authority, as soon as you can. See "Animal Disposal" ([www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/animaldisposal.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/animaldisposal.asp)) for answers to frequently asked questions.
- For guidance on caring for animals entering shelters and for people working with or handling animals following an emergency, see "Interim Guidelines for Animal Health and Control of Disease Transmission in Pet Shelters" ([www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/animalhealthguidelines.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/animalhealthguidelines.asp)).
- For more information, contact your local animal shelter or services, a veterinarian, or the Humane Society for advice on dealing with pets or stray or wild animals after an emergency. Also see "Resources for Planning How to Protect Your Pets in an Emergency" ([www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/petprotect.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/petprotect.asp)).

## Avoid Mosquitoes

- Rain and flooding in a hurricane area may lead to an increase in numbers of mosquitoes, which can carry diseases, such as West Nile virus or dengue fever. In most cases, the mosquitoes will be pests but will not carry communicable diseases. Local, state, and federal public health authorities will be actively working to control the spread of any mosquito-borne diseases. For more information on West Nile virus, see CDC's West Nile virus website ([www.cdc.gov/westnile](http://www.cdc.gov/westnile)).
- To protect yourself from mosquitoes, use screens on dwellings; wear long pants, socks, and long-sleeved shirts; and use insect repellents that contain DEET or Picaridin. Follow directions on the product label and take care when using DEET on small children. More information about these and other recommended repellents can be found in the fact sheet "Updated Information Regarding Insect Repellents" ([www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/RepellentUpdates.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvbid/westnile/RepellentUpdates.htm)).
- To help control mosquito populations, drain all standing water left outdoors in open containers, such as flower pots, tires, pet dishes, or buckets.

## Prevent Contact With Rodents

- Remove food sources, water, and items that can provide shelter for rodents.
- Wash dishes, pans, and cooking utensils immediately after use.
- Dispose of garbage and debris as soon as possible.
- For more information, see "Rodent Control After Hurricanes and Floods" ([www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/rodents.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/katrina/rodents.asp)).

**Protect Yourself from Animal- and Insect-Related Hazards After a Natural Disaster**  
(continued from previous page)

**Prevent or Respond to a Snake Bite**

- Be aware of snakes that may be swimming in the water to get to higher ground and those that may be hiding under debris or other objects.
- If you see a snake, back away from it slowly and do not touch it.
- If you or someone you know are bitten, try to see and remember the color and shape of the snake, which can help with treatment of the snake bite.
- Keep the bitten person still and calm. This can slow down the spread of venom if the snake is poisonous. Seek medical attention as soon as possible. Dial 911 or call local Emergency Medical Services. Apply first aid if you cannot get the person to the hospital right away.
  - Lay or sit the person down with the bite below the level of the heart.
  - Tell him/her to stay calm and still.
  - Cover the bite with a clean, dry dressing.

For more information, see "How to Prevent or Respond to a Snake Bite" ([www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/snakebite.asp](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/snakebite.asp)).

**For more information, see the following:**

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**
  - Avoid Contact with Wild Animals ([www.cdc.gov/ncidod/op/animals.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/op/animals.htm))
  - Dog Bite Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/biteprevention.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/biteprevention.htm))
  - Healthy Pets, Healthy People ([www.cdc.gov/healthypets](http://www.cdc.gov/healthypets))
  - Rabies Web Site ([www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dvrd/rabies))
  - Rat-Bite Fever: Frequently Asked Questions ([www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/ratbitefever\\_g.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/ratbitefever_g.htm))
- **American Veterinary Association**
  - Dog Bite Prevention Message Points ([www.avma.org/press/publichealth/dogbite/messpoints.asp](http://www.avma.org/press/publichealth/dogbite/messpoints.asp))
  - Education Resources for Dog Bite Prevention ([www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/biteprevention.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/duip/biteprevention.htm))
- **Texas A&M University**
  - Medical Problems and Treatment Considerations for the Red Imported Fire Ant (<http://fireant.tamu.edu/materials/factsheets/FAPFS023.2002rev.Medical.pdf>)

For more information, visit [www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters),  
or call CDC at 800-CDC-INFO (English and Spanish) or 888-232-6348 (TTY).

September 16, 2005

Page 2 of 2