



**PHASE 1
OF 5**

WATCH OR WARNING ISSUED

Act now — before things get worse. A Watch means: start getting ready.

	WHAT TO DO	HOW TO DO IT
☐	Check the warning	Hurricane watch? Flood warning? Heat alert? > Confirm at your parish or county emergency website.
☐	Text all foster homes	Text everyone: “Watch issued for [storm/flood/heat]. Stand by. Review your disaster plan now.”
☐	Check your animal list	Make sure it is up to date. Update any changes. Print a copy.
☐	Check your supplies	How many days of food, water, and meds do you have? Restock anything under 72 hours — right now.
☐	Fill up all vehicles	Fill gas tanks before stations run out or close. Do this today.
☐	Charge all devices	Phones, tablets, power banks, radios — charge everything to 100%. Now.
☐	Print your records	Print your animal list and foster contact list. Paper works when Wi-Fi does not.
☐	Stop taking in new animals	Post on social media: “[Rescue name] is NOT taking new animals right now because of [storm/event].”
☐	Brief every foster	Call or text every foster. Confirm they know the plan, the check-in schedule, and when to leave.

UP NEXT // PHASE 2: 0 TO 6 HOURS

DISASTER PLANNING FOR RESCUES & RURAL SHELTERS: ACTIVATION FLIP CHART



BISSELL PET FOUNDATION®
Until every pet has a home.



**ANIMAL INCIDENT
MANAGEMENT®**

A BISSELL Pet Foundation® Initiative

**PHASE 2
OF 5**

0-6 HOURS

Shelter or evacuate? Make the call early. Do not wait.

WHAT TO DO		HOW TO DO IT
☐	Shelter or evacuate?	Has your trigger been met? YES > start loading. NO > shelter in place. Decide now. Do not wait.
☐	Check in with every foster	Contact every foster. Write down: SAFE / LEAVING / NEEDS HELP. No answer? Follow up right away.
☐	Account for every animal	Check your list. Any animal not accounted for? Assign someone to find out before moving on.
☐	Start your phone tree	Send your group chat message or start your phone tree. Everyone should know you are in active response.
☐	Move your supplies	Take emergency supplies out of storage and move them to the loading area.
☐	Set up crates — load order	Know which animals load first. Medical animals = Priority 1. Healthy adults = last.
☐	Confirm your destination	Call or text where you are going: “We have [#] animals. Arriving at [time]. Is that still OK?”
☐	Post your first public update	“[Rescue name] is [sheltering / leaving]. Animals are safe. Updates every 24 hours.”

UP NEXT // PHASE 3: 6 TO 24 HOURS

DISASTER PLANNING FOR RESCUES & RURAL SHELTERS: ACTIVATION FLIP CHART



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**PHASE 3
OF 5**

6-24 HOURS

Stay in touch. Check in every 24 hours. Silence = a problem.

	WHAT TO DO	HOW TO DO IT
☐	Check in with every foster	Contact every foster. Write: SAFE / NEEDS HELP / ANIMAL CONCERN. No answer in 2 hours > escalate.
☐	Update your animal list	Where is each animal right now? Write down any location changes.
☐	Flag animals needing care	Which animals need medicine, a vet, or special watching? Who is responsible for each one?
☐	Call the vet if needed	Describe the problem clearly. Set up a triage plan if more than one animal is affected.
☐	Call partner rescues	Need extra space? Call your partners now — they may fill up fast.
☐	Post your second update	Even one sentence: “[#] animals safe. [Status]. Next update in 24 hours.”
☐	Count remaining supplies	How many days of food, water, and meds? Anything under 48 hours > tell your coordinator now.
☐	Write down everything	Record every action: date, time, what happened, who did it. You will need this for grants later.

UP NEXT // PHASE 4: 24 TO 72 HOURS



PHASE 4
OF 5

24-72 HOURS

Help may be coming. Hold steady and keep going.

WHAT TO DO		HOW TO DO IT
☐	Check in with every foster	Are they safe? Animals OK? Supplies holding? Any animals that need a vet?
☐	Check your building	ONLY if it is safe to go in. Take photos of any damage. Never go in alone.
☐	Move animals if needed	Which fosters need animals moved? Who in your network can take them? Make those calls.
☐	Call state animal response team	Only if you have needs your local network cannot meet. Have your animal count and specific ask ready.
☐	Send a donor message	“Animals are safe. We lost [X]. Here is exactly what we need: [list].” Specific asks raise more money.
☐	Start tracking expenses	Write down every dollar spent starting now. Keep all receipts. Required for grants.

UP NEXT // PHASE 5: RECOVERY

**PHASE 5
OF 5**

RECOVERY

Do not go back to normal until every box below is checked.

WHAT TO DO		HOW TO DO IT
☐	Evacuation order lifted?	Get the official all-clear from your parish or county. Do not rely on social media.
☐	Building is safe to enter?	Check for gas leaks, damage, standing water, and downed lines. Do this with a partner.
☐	Supplies restocked?	You need a full 72-hour supply cache before you take in any new animals. Do not skip this.
☐	Every animal accounted for?	Every animal in your care is confirmed safe — or its status is written down. No one missing.
☐	All fosters stable?	No foster has unmet needs. New fosters lined up for any homes that cannot continue.
☐	Recovery post published?	“We’re back. Here’s what happened. Here’s how to help.” Your community wants to know you’re OK.
☐	Debrief scheduled?	Set a 30-minute debrief within 30 days. What worked? What failed? Update your plan before next season.

YOU PROTECTED WHAT YOU COULD. THAT IS ENOUGH.