

Online Survey on Disaster Preparedness for Members' Families and Companion Animals

Overview

The Greenbelt Homes, Inc. Companion Animal Committee (CAC) prepared an online survey of members concerning disaster preparedness. A total of 161 responses were received by end of June 2012. One respondent was not a member of GHI, so that data record was deleted from the analysis data set (N=160). The results of the survey were downloaded from the GHI web site into an Excel spreadsheet. Excel Pivot tables were used to generate frequency counts and for some basic analysis.

The CAC's intent in doing an online survey was to provide some general information to the CAC to inform their development of materials and educational events concerning disaster preparedness.

Survey Findings Concerning Members and their Families

Age Groups

Respondents were in the following age groups:

Age Group	Number
18-29	9
30-44	40
45-60	50
61-74	49
75+	12
Grand Total	160

Gender

Most respondents were female:

Gender	Number
Female	125
Male	35
Grand Total	160

Disability and Mobility Limitations

Out of 160 responses eleven (11) females and four (4) males reported that they were disabled. Eighteen (18) females and one (1) male indicated that they have mobility limitations. Of those reporting mobility limitations (19), only seven (7) indicated that they were disabled with twelve (12) responding that they

did not have a disability. These results indicate that members with mobility issues may not consider themselves disabled. This is helpful data as the CAC develops educational events and materials, as it is important for members to address mobility issues when planning. We might have assumed that talking about members with disabilities would have included these members.

None of the respondents in the 18-29 age range indicated that they have a disability or reported mobility limitations. All other age ranges included respondents who were disabled and respondents who had mobility limitations.

Disabled

Age Group	Number
30-44	4
45-60	6
61-74	4
75+	1

Mobility Issues

30-44	1
45-60	6
61-74	7
75+	5

Except for the 30-44 age group, small numbers of members reported both being disabled and having mobility limitations, as shown in the table below:

Age Group	Number
30-44	1
45-60	2
61-74	3
75+	1

Survey Findings about Members and their Families and Disaster Preparedness

Members were asked the following questions about planning for a disaster. Frequency counts follow each question.

Are you prepared to shelter in place?

Yes	119
No	41
Total	160

Do you keep a three-day supply of food and water in your home?

Yes	113
No	47
Total	160

Do you have a first aid kit?

Yes	120
No	40
Total	160

Do you carry a list of all your medications with you at all times?

Yes	36
No	73
Does Not Apply	51
Total	160

This topic appears to be one that the CAC should develop some materials to address. In the event of an emergency, this information might be needed quickly. Based on these results, members may be unable to provide this information. There are special cards that can be filled out by members and carried in their wallets. This could be life saving information for members if available to first responders during a disaster.

Do you require the regular use of medical devices powered by electricity?

Yes	12
No	148
Total	160

Perhaps working with the Court Captain program, the CAC can urge Court Captains to identify members in their courts who are in this situation. It is important that these members make Pepco aware that they are dependent on medical equipment requiring electricity.

Has your family designated a place to meet in the event of a disaster?

Yes	37
No	123
Total	160

Although the current approach to emergency planning in Prince George’s County is to shelter in place, we know from other disasters that this does not mean that everyone will be in their homes when something happens. Family members may be coming home from around the metropolitan area or have children in child care in a different location. The family’s preparedness plan should address these issues. The CAC will make materials available to assist members with their planning.

Have you signed up to receive Greenbelt Alerts?

Yes	52
No	108
Total	160

The City of Greenbelt’s alert system is an excellent one, and GHI should do everything it can to encourage members to sign up for these alerts. During the recent earthquake, the City not only alerted residents that it was an earthquake, the alert contained instructions about what residents should do during an earthquake.

Have you completed CERT training?

Yes	13
No	147
Total	160

Perhaps Court Captains could determine if CERT members reside in their courts. Knowing this might be very helpful during an emergency, as the CERT member would know the correct way to approach and handle potentially hazardous situations.

We would like to work with our local CERT to determine what supplies should be available for each Court. This also might be an area where we could use the Court Captains to ensure that each court has these materials available.

Survey Findings Concerning Members' Companion Animals

101 respondents indicated that they have companion animals. The 59 members who said that they did not have companion animals ended the survey at this point. As a result the analysis database contained 101 respondents for the remainder of the survey findings.

Do you have any companion animal(s)?

Yes	101
No	59
Total	160

The members who answered yes to the question above were asked to indicate the types and number of each type of companion animal they have. These frequency counts follow.

Dog	
One	33
Two	12
Three	5
None	31
Blank	20
Respondents	101
Total Dogs	72

Cat	
One	20
Two	21
Three	7
Four	3
Five	1
None	24
Blank	25
Respondents	101
Total Cats	100

Rabbit
None reported by this group of respondents.

Ferret
None reported by this group of respondents

Small Animal	
One	2
Two	2
None	50
Blank	47
Respondents	101
Total Small Animals	6

Reptile	
One	1
None	52
Blank	48
Respondents	101
Total Reptiles	1

Amphibian
None reported by this group of respondents

Fish	
More than 5	1
None	50
Blank	49
Respondents	101
Total Fish	>5

Bird	
One	2
Two	1
None	49
Blank	49
Respondents	101
Total Birds	4

Other	
Chinchilla	1
Snake	1

Survey Findings about Members and their Companion Animals and Disaster Preparedness

The following questions were asked of the 101 respondents who indicated that they have at least one companion animal.

If you were told to evacuate, would you leave your animal(s) behind?

Yes	5
No	94
Blank	2
Total	101

Do you have a plan for your companion animal(s) in the event of a disaster?

Yes	40
No	60
Blank	1
Total	101

Do you have an up-to-date picture of you with your companion animal(s)?

Yes	37
No	63
Blank	1
Total	101

Members must be educated about having up-to-date photos with their companion animals. If they are separated from their companion animals during a disaster, members will have to establish that the companion animals belong to them in order to have the animals returned to them. A photo of the member with his/her companion animal is an easy way to accomplish this.

Do you keep at least a three day supply of food and water for your companion animal(s)?

Yes	87
No	13
Blank	1
Total	101

Do you have up-to-date vaccination records for your companion animal(s) that require(s) vaccinations?

Yes	85
No	12
Blank	4
Total	101

After a disaster, there may be a public health issue where members being able to prove that their companion animals have up-to-date rabies shots might become a life or death issue for their animals.

Do you have current county licenses for your dog(s), cat(s) and/or ferret(s) who require licenses?

Yes	58
No	36
Blank	7
Total	101

According to GHI's Green Book, all companion animals that are required to have a county license must have one. It is important that animals that are required to be licensed are licensed, as it can be a primary means for reuniting the animal with its guardian after a disaster and it is associated with records that can determine if the animal is current on its rabies shot. We will address this in our educational activities

Do you have a list of each companion animal's medications with the name and contact information for each animal's veterinarian?

Yes	38
No	57
Blank	6
Total	101

Having this information available may be very useful to an animal-related first responder trying to help a member with an injured companion animal.

If you have a list, will the first responders be able to find it quickly?

Yes	13
No	33
Does Not Apply	49
Blank	101

In the event that your home was damaged, have you made arrangements for your companion animal(s) to stay elsewhere?

Yes	40
No	59
Blank	2
Total	101

Do you have carriers, crates or lightweight containers for all your companion animal(s)?

Yes	72
No	28
Blank	1
Total	101

This is important because shelters that will allow companion animals may require that these animals be contained in crates or other secure containers, as in the case of reptiles and amphibians.

Are your licensed companion animal(s) micro-chipped?

Yes	45
No	54
Blank	2
Total	101

Companion animals with micro-chips have a second chance to be reunited with their guardians in the event the companion animals lose their collars and tags. Assuming that animal management staff members have the wands to read micro-chips, the chips can be used to identify animals and their guardians. The CAC just wrote an article on this topic urging members to micro-chip their animals.