Are you prepared to take care of your bird when a disaster strikes? If not, NOW is the time to stock up on the items that you will need so you will not get caught unprepared. Listed below is a handy shopping list for you to use. The next time you buy food or supplies for your bird, take this list with you. Don't put off doing what you should do now – it may just make the difference between being able to keep your bird alive when a disaster strikes.

SHOPPING FOR YOUR BIRD

Here are the supplies that you should have in a Disaster Kit for birds. Adjust the amounts, depending on the number of birds that you have.

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1. FOOD:

_____ Always have a reserve supply of the type of food your bird is used to eating that would last two weeks.
_____ Store food in an airtight, waterproof container and clearly mark all your containers with your personal info.
_____ Rotate food at least once every three (3) months.

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2. GRAVEL / CUTTLEBONE / BEAK CONDITIONER:

_____ Have at least a two week supply at all times. (Not for all types of birds.)
_____ Always have an extra cuttlebone / beak conditioner in your disaster kit.

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3. WATER:

_____ Have enough drinking water to last at least two weeks for each bird in your household.
_____ Store water in a cool, dark location, and be sure to rotate it so it remains fresh.
_____ Remember that if the tap water is not suitable for humans to drink, it is also not suitable for animals to drink.
_____ Include with your disaster supplies, an extra water dish, just in case the one normally used is lost.
_____ Make sure you have enough water on hand for cleaning as well.

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4. SANITATION:

_____ Have paper towels in your disaster kit.
_____ Have some plastic bags in your kit for disposing of your bird's dirty paper towels.

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5. CLEANING SUPPLIES:

_____ Include in your kit, a small container of soap for washing out and disinfecting the dishes and the bird cage.
_____ Have at least a two week supply of whatever it is that you put on the bottom of the cage (ie: newspaper).

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6. EXTRA SEED BOWLS AND WATER CONTAINER:

_____ Have several seed cups/water containers to replace ones that might get broken.
_____ You may want to put an extra food and water dish in the cage, so that in case you forget to feed the bird in all the confusion, the bird will have plenty of food and water available.

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7. FIRST AID SUPPLIES AND BOOK FOR BIRDS:

_____ Check with your veterinarian to find out what he/she recommends you include in your First Aid Kit.
Some suggested items include:

a) Kwik Stop or Corn Starch to stop bleeding
b) Tweezers
c) Heavy DutyGloves (for handling the bird if it is injured and trying to bite)
d) Bandaging Materials

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8. CAGE FOR EVACUATION:

_____ You should have a small cage for transporting (evacuating) your bird and be sure it is one that your bird cannot chew his/her way out of.

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9. NET AND TOWEL:

_____ A long handled net with small enough openings so that your bird cannot poke his/her head through, and a heavy towel in case your bird escapes and you have to recapture him/her.

_____ A heavy towel/blanket should be with your kit in case disaster strikes when it is cold and you have to cover the cage to keep your bird warm.

_____ Some birds need to have the cage covered for sleep. Use a towel if you have to. Remember to try and pack a light cotton sheet in case a disaster happens during the hot summer.

10. PICTURES:

_____ You should have in your disaster kit, some current photos of your bird to use in case your bird gets lost during the disaster. Include yourself in some of the photos in case you have to prove ownership.

11. FLASHLIGHT AND BATTERIES:

_____ This is used to regulate light hours for your bird, which is important for your bird's health.

In addition to having the above supplies, here are some other suggestions to keeping your bird safe:

- You may want to consider having your bird microchipped. Check with your veterinarian for more information about this permanent form of identification. Microchipping works great with birds since you cannot put a collar and tag around their neck.
- If your bird is on long term medication, be sure you always have at least a two week supply on hand. Your vet may not be open to fill prescriptions during a disaster.
- Check with your vet to see if the clinic has a disaster plan. Locate a backup vet in case your vet doesn't and familiarize yourself with the Disaster Animal Response Team headquarters during a disaster. They are trained to evacuate or look after all domestic animals during a disaster.
- Check to make sure that your cage is secure. All opening doors and a removable top or bottom on your cage should be fastened to prevent them from opening during a disaster – and your bird escaping. You can use twist ties or metal ring closures to secure the cage. You should also secure the cage to a wall, using a hook and eye. Be sure you do not keep the cage under a shelf, where objects might fall during a disaster, or keep the cage near a window that might break during a disaster. Keep a pair of pliers and wire in your disaster kit to make any necessary repairs to the cage after a disaster.
- If you are unable to evacuate your bird(s), please check in with the CDART volunteers immediately to see about getting the birds out or, at the very least, maintained with food and water. Sadly, during the Terrace Mountain Fire in West Kelowna in 2009, two birds did perish as a result of lack of water.

If you would like more information about being prepared during a disaster, or becoming a trained disaster volunteer for animals or if you want someone to speak to a group regarding the Disaster Animal Response Team during a disaster, please contact:

Canadian Disaster Animal Response Team
Box 235 . 113 – 437 Martin Street
Penticton, BC V2A 5L1
Phone: 250.494.5057 . Email: inquiries@cdart.org

We are grateful to United Animal Nations and their Emergency Animal Rescue Service division for providing us with most of the material in this information flyer. If you have any questions or comments, please contact CDART at the address and phone number as noted above.