



County Disaster Risk Identification and Recent Incidents

Fresno County resides within the Inland Region of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) administrative response regions. The Fresno County Hazard Mitigation Plan (2024) identifies several potential hazards including, but not limited to, dam failure, drought, earthquake, levee failure, severe weather, and wildfires. In recent years, Fresno County has experienced a number of disaster declarations for wildfires and severe winter weather which resulted in flooding, landslides, and mudslides. The Creek Fire in 2020 was a significantly large fire, resulting in the evacuation and sheltering of a large number of animals.

Emergency Plans

- Fresno County Operational Area Master Emergency Services Plan (2024)
- Animal Evacuation and Sheltering Plan Element (2019)

County Animal Services and Capabilities

Fresno County Animal Control (FCAC) is situated under the Fresno County Environmental Health Department and currently has six full time Animal Control Officers (ACOs) as well as additional shelter volunteers. FCAC contracts with Fresno Humane Animal Services for animal control services who may also provide additional staff and volunteers during a disaster, if feasible. FCAC will coordinate evacuation and shelter-in-place/field services with law enforcement, fire, and other volunteer groups if approved by the Incident Commander.

Response Organizations and Capabilities

Central California Animal Disaster Team (CCADT) is the community animal response team (CART) that provides animal disaster response services for Fresno County. CCADT has approximately 100 members and provides disaster services for six different counties in central California, all of which are registered Disaster Service Workers (DSWs). CCADT is responsible for activating emergency animal shelters when requested by the county, for providing care to sheltered animals, and for coordination with additional non profit organizations and national organizations for additional assistance if needed. The team would provide 5-10 volunteers, depending on the number of animals sheltered, and can pull from other counties if needed. CCADT is currently in the process of implementing the Shelterly program that will run concurrently with Fresno County's Redcap program for the identification and tracking of animals during disaster operations.

Central California Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (CCSPCA) is another organization in the county that has assisted with small animal evacuations in the past. CCSPCA also has several Animal Humane Officers that could be called upon to address any animal neglect situations that may arise.

Additional support organizations in the county include the Fresno County Sheriff's Mounted Posse who CCADT works in close coordination to assist with small and large animal evacuations, the Fresno County Jeep Rescue Unit (aka Jeepers) who assist the Sheriff's Posse' during the evacuation phase and the Agricultural Commissioner's Office who has provided staff to help with shelter-in-place care and animals care at the county Fairgrounds. The Fresno County Agriculture Department manages large animal sheltering in coordination with Fresno Humane Animal Services and CCADT.

Equipment and Supply Caches

- County Animal Control animal care cache
- 4 CCADT animal care caches (8' x 20' shipping containers) (1 large animal and 3 small animal)
- 1 small and large animal equipment container (shared with Fresno County Sheriff's Office)

Current Operational Area Coordination Efforts

Fresno County does have a seat for an Animal Services Group Supervisor in the Operations Section of the Operational Area (OA) Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The Animal Services Group Supervisor will coordinate animal response operations with CCADT, and Fresno Humane Animal Services. The Division Manager or designated representative from the Environmental Health Department is responsible for activating CCADT. CCADT facilitates animal disaster training in the county and invites county ACOs to attend.

AT-A-GLANCE

Animal Services:

- **1.2 Animal Control Officers per 100K animals in the county**

Central California Animal Disaster Team (CCADT):

- **Covers multiple counties**
- **Registered DSWs**
- **Sheltering, evacuation, and shelter-in-place services**

Additional organizations:

- **Fresno Humane Animal Services**
- **Fresno County Sheriff's Mounted Posse**
- **Fresno County Jeep Rescue**

Level of Veterinary Assistance Needed:



HIGH

Fresno County has also implemented the Ag ID Program (Ag Pass program) to allow producers in evacuation zones to tend to livestock as needed. This program is housed within the Agricultural Commissioner's Office.

Shelter Facilities and Fairgrounds

Fresno County has one main shelter location in the City of Fresno that currently shelters around 100 animals. Potential emergency shelter locations have already been pre-defined by the county and will be selected by the Animal Services Group Supervisor in coordination with the Fresno County Office of Emergency Services (OES), law enforcement, fire, and American Red Cross. Coalinga College Rodeo Grounds is a potential large animal shelter location, but it has been used as the Incident Command Post (ICP) location for Cal Fire in previous responses. Fresno County Sheriff's Substation property in Yokuts Valley is another potential large animal shelter location.

A member of the Environmental Health Department staff is responsible for visiting the human shelter locations and determining if there is a need for animal sheltering. In most cases, animal shelters will be collocated with human shelters. Only service animals will be allowed into American Red Cross (ARC) shelters as ARC does not currently provide cohabitation shelters.

Veterinary Capabilities

The county does not have a veterinarian on staff. However, there are small and large animal veterinarians in the county that could be called if needed. During disaster response operations, it is not uncommon for the county to encounter animal hoarding situations. This has resulted in a significant need for veterinary care.

Areas of Potential Improvement

Members of Fresno County identified the following needs:

- Need for formal agreement for large animal sheltering location
- Additional trained volunteers for animal evacuations
- Additional veterinary support during large responses

CVET Support and Integration

Fresno County is well situated with a large number of response and support organizations, as well as the presence of CCADT with trained responders in multiple counties and an established training program. Due to the expansive volunteer members of CCADT, volunteers needed for shelter operations likely would only be needed in large responses, multiple shelter locations, or events of significant duration. However, the county does not currently have a formal agreement for a large animal shelter location which could become an issue during a response. CVET recommends the establishment of a formal memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a large animal shelter location to secure this space in advance.

In regard to veterinary care, there are some veterinary resources in the county. However, there are no formal agreements in place and the county does not have a veterinarian on staff. During a large response, or during an event that also involves an animal hoarding or cruelty case, additional veterinary support will likely be needed. CVET recommends identifying potential veterinarians in the county that would be willing to assist and pre-determine what services and with what frequency they would be able to be provided. This will provide insight to determine when additional veterinary support should be requested to meet the local need. Given the large number of animals in the county, the need for veterinary services may easily overwhelm the local capacity.

