



NEWS RELEASE

Texas Animal Health Commission

"Serving Texas Animal Agriculture Since 1893"

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 8, 2015

TAHC Response to Statewide Animal Issues Due to Severe Weather

AUSTIN – In response to record breaking weather events across Texas, the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) has been actively engaged with local communities impacted by recent floods and tornadoes.

“First and foremost, our thoughts are with all that have been affected by the recent severe weather events,” said Dr. Dee Ellis, TAHC Executive Director. “The TAHC continues to monitor statewide storms and flooding. We are available to provide requested resources and to assist with any animal issues that arise.”

The TAHC is the state’s lead agency for all animal issues during disasters. The agency assists local jurisdictions with damage assessments, animal identification, and with the care, evacuation and sheltering of animals during and after disasters. Animal search and rescue operations can be facilitated at the request of the local community. The TAHC also supports carcass disposal activities working in partnership with veterinary stakeholders, fellow state agencies and industry groups.

After the Van tornado in North East Texas, the Region 4 staff assisted with damage assessments, communicating regularly with county and city officials, and pre-staged livestock equipment.

Central Texas experienced both tornadoes and flooding causing our Region 7 staff to respond to a wide variety of calls from companion animal issues in Wimberley and San Marcos to large animal issues in Guadalupe, Gonzales and Lee Counties.

Flooding was prevalent in all areas of the state. In Liberty and Walker Counties, along the Gulf Coast, Region 2 staff worked hard to protect livestock from flooding while TAHC Region 3 field staff responded to storms and tornadoes in North Central Texas. In Region 5, South



Ryan Brockenbush, Region 7 Supervising Inspector, transported horses to higher ground during Lee County flooding.



Flooding in North Texas



Dusty Boullion, Region 7 Inspector, helped with companion animal rescue during Lee County Flooding.

Central Texas, staff assisted in livestock and equipment rescues in Bandera County.

“Severe weather such as tornadoes and flooding can leave little time for response,” said Jeff Turner, Director of Emergency Management. “It is important to have a plan for your animals in place before the event. Pre-planning for both evacuation and sheltering should cover all possibilities.”

If you have questions regarding livestock or pet evacuation, contact your local emergency management county office. The TAHC reminds fellow Texans to take appropriate steps to prepare your livestock, poultry and pets before disaster strikes.

For more information on how to protect your livestock before and after a disaster occurs, read the TAHC brochure, *Protecting Livestock When Disaster Strikes* at http://www.tahc.state.tx.us/news/brochures/TAHCBrochure_EmergencyManagement.pdf.

For more information on how to protect your companion and assistive animals visit:

- http://texasprepares.org/English/family_pets.shtml
- <http://www.ready.gov/caring-animals>

Founded in 1893, the Texas Animal Health Commission works to protect the health of all Texas livestock, including: cattle, swine, poultry, sheep, goats, equine animals, and exotic livestock.

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