

# Animals in Disasters

## MODULE B UNIT 7

### Developing Community Support for a Disaster Preparedness Plan Involving Animals

#### Overview

This unit covers ways to find community support for your disaster preparedness plan involving animals. It looks at ways to approach the government, organizations and the public. Examples of public awareness campaign ideas and methods to enlist help from the community are given. This unit also identifies training resources including local, State and Federal sources and types of training such as independent study and residential training.

#### Objectives

Upon completion of this unit, you should be able to:

- ▲ Approach government, organizations and the public with your disaster preparedness plan involving animals
- ▲ Conduct a public information campaign using brochures and other awareness tools
- ▲ Solicit help from the community in promoting the plan
- ▲ Locate training opportunities through local, State and Federal, and private organization resources

#### Spreading the word

Once you have completed the emergency operations plan, let everyone in the community know about it. This is a good time to promote the plan – when enthusiasm is high – through a public information campaign and within your community’s government. Use this time to renew contact with agency officials, voluntary groups, and the public. While an annex on the care of animals in a disaster is only a small part of the plan, it provides an opportunity to raise awareness and disaster preparedness.

Your approach will vary with each interest group. Your ultimate goal is

## Approaching government

to have a well informed and fully prepared community. A few examples of groups to contact are listed in the next section. The primary audience for the plan are those people with responsibilities in community organization and emergency operations. The most effective way to get these people involved with the plan is to hold training sessions with various officials, departmental staff, and individuals from the private sector who have defined roles in the plan. The objective of these training sessions is to review with officials how they and their organization fit into the overall plan.

Examples of group to involve in planning include:

- ▶ The animal control department – primarily responsible for stray animals (any animal whose owner cannot be identified).
- ▶ The health department – deals with any aspect of animal care that may affect human health. This includes oversight of human shelters in disasters.

At these training sessions, you should provide a broad overview of the plan, but also let each individual know their specific duties and responsibilities in times of emergencies or disasters. Meet personally with key individuals within your community's organizational structure. Do not just send out a memorandum informing them of their responsibilities – memos are often lost or put aside. However, a memorandum can be sent after the meeting to confirm what must be done. This will acknowledge the representatives' input and reinforce their commitment.

## Approaching organizations

The next group to involve in the implementation of your plan are private-sector groups who have an interest or responsibility for emergency actions. If you have cooperated with these groups throughout the plan development stage, it will be much easier to approach these groups and get their support at this point. Examples of groups to involve in planning include:

- ▶ Veterinary practices,
- ▶ Animal shelters,
- ▶ Businesses that cater to the animal care community, and
- ▶ American Red Cross.

If these groups are involved, they should provide people willing to

disseminate information and add credibility to the final plan.

The information shared with these groups will vary depending on what type of group they are, their role in the plan and their stated interest in the plan. Volunteer leaders should be provided with an overview of anticipated emergency operations in the basic plan, though their primary concern will be the annex in which they have a specific role.

### Approaching the public

Though the general public will not be interested in the details of the plan, they should be informed when it is completed. The public should know that a plan exists and that its purpose is to help officials and citizens respond to disasters. Their primary concern will be, “what should we do?” People will probably be most interested in annexes on warning, evacuation, and public and animal welfare ( food, shelter, etc.).

The animal-owning public will be especially interested in a plan that addresses the care of animals; after all, most people think of their pets as family members. Discussing the care of animals in disasters also provides a great opportunity to introduce basic human disaster preparedness.

Citizens should know how to plan their response and be confident in their plan. You can inform the public about the community’s plan through the organizations you have worked with or by reviewing previous disasters that have affected your community. By emphasizing the importance of community preparedness and awareness, the citizen response to a disaster can be greatly enhanced.

There are other ways to notify the public of community plans regarding animals and their owners, and encourage individual plan development. The most obvious is to use the local media. Radio and television stations can broadcast public service announcements. Radio announcements are easy to prepare because they do not require visuals. Or, your local newspaper could run a series of articles about the emergency operations plan. Identify hazards specific to your community.

Another way of getting the word out is to speak to local community groups such as the PTA, Chamber of Commerce or the Board of Realtors. Do not pass up the opportunity to speak to any group.

## Brochures

The more informed people are in your community, the better your plan will work in time of emergency. If possible, print a brochure to use as a handout. A local printer may print brochures at no cost. As an enticement, you could have “Sponsored by XYZ business” on the brochure. Many printing companies are willing to print pro bono if they can get free promotion as a result. Other businesses may sponsor your programs if they can see how they will get credit for their input.

Here are two suggested ways to get brochures distributed.

- ▶ Use businesses, such as veterinarians, animal shelters, pet and feed stores, and boarding and grooming facilities.
- ▶ Ask if the tax collection agency or a public utility will allow you to insert the brochure with a tax statement or utility bill. Some telephone directories include disaster preparedness information as well.

## An example of a disaster awareness campaign

Take every opportunity to let the public know what is expected of them in times of emergency. The completion of the plan is one such opportunity. You can provide the public with the following information.

- ▶ The plan basics;
- ▶ Provisions for warning, evacuation routes, and other efforts to assure their safety;
- ▶ Information about shutting off home utilities, food and water storage, and other survival hints.

Don't wait until a disaster strikes before you tell people what to do. Mitigating disasters and getting people and animals out of harm's way is the most effective method of preventing lost lives or property damage in disasters. *Be prepared!*

Remember that people are more likely to care for others, such as their children, parents, grandparents and animals, than they are to care for themselves. Use your plan to care for animals and their owners to enhance overall community disaster preparedness.

## Getting help from the community

Trying to develop a list of resources needed in a disaster would be a near impossible task if you were to attempt to do it yourself. Just maintaining a list with current information is difficult. Instead of relying solely on information gained through existing contacts, consider some of the alternative choices listed below.

### City departments

Often an emergency management office operates on a limited budget and paid employees are not available to help you. You should look into the possibility of using paid personnel from other departments to help with some of the work. In some jurisdictions, certain departments have slow seasons and personnel could be assigned to help you on a part-time basis. Someone that owns animals whose supervisor will approve of a temporary re-assignment could be an enthusiastic helper.

### Community volunteers

Most successful emergency program managers get volunteer help from the community. Take advantage of these resources. A good place to begin is by asking to present your program to citizens groups. See if you can get them to help with the development, maintenance or implementation of your plan. At a minimum, get a personal information sheet from each member so that you can see what special talents, abilities, or equipment they may contribute in a disaster.

Perhaps the best sources of volunteer help can be obtained from senior citizen groups and young adult groups. Many retired citizens are extremely dedicated and hard workers.

Importantly, most of them are available during normal working hours and would not have other responsibilities in an actual event. Senior citizens can be used to take surveys, conduct interviews, and run routine office operations.

Young adult groups, such as 4H, Future Farmers of America, pony clubs, explorer

scouts or church groups can also be used as volunteers. In some States there is a minimum age requirement at which volunteers can be insured to work in disasters.

Don't overlook the local media in helping to locate volunteers. For example, local newspapers could print a resource questionnaire that people can complete and mail back.

## Improving emergency response through public affairs

Responding to the media and the general public during and after an emergency is just one public affairs responsibility of the emergency manager. Many emergency workers have found that in a disaster, people are likely to pay attention to messages concerning animals; therefore, this is an important way to communicate information that will be helpful to people and animals.

Because emergency management is concerned with protecting lives and property, it is the responsibility of the emergency manager to provide the public with safety information before a disaster occurs. Awareness campaigns, sponsored by community groups, local government officials, and area business and industry, are perhaps the best way to fulfill this responsibility of emergency management.

Awareness campaigns accomplish the following.

- ▶ Address hazards concerning your area,
- ▶ Provide a public education vehicle for communities, and
- ▶ Teach and change the behavior patterns of citizens in preparing for, responding to and recovering from any disaster or emergency.

Kits, handbooks, and other materials are available on almost any emergency subject including hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes, and nuclear power emergencies. FEMA and the Red Cross have handbooks concerning natural and technological disaster preparedness. There are also brochures available on the care of animals in disasters. Check with your local emergency management agency, animal shelters and veterinarians.

Emergency managers can distribute pamphlets to stimulate community groups. Choose several volunteers to take the lead and chair a committee, like an official from the mayor's office, a newspaper publisher, or a TV station manager. Involving the community leaders not only makes the job easier, but expands resources for getting the job done.

In addition to helping the citizens of the community, a well-planned public awareness campaign has other advantages. It expands the emergency manager's working relationship with the community and helps develop alliances between the manager and the local media. It also increases public knowledge about the emergency management organization and the services that it has to offer.

In helping animals we help people

It is important to stress that the care of animals does not take precedence over the care of people. To facilitate care for people and animals, emergency management and the animal-care community should enter into partnerships in the planning stage. Having done this it is more likely that issues of importance to both groups will be addressed during a disaster. Furthermore, the most qualified or experienced resources or persons can deal with pertinent issues and speak to the public. To avoid misunderstanding the priorities, issues relevant to the care of people should always be reported first.

Awareness campaigns help the emergency manager and animal-care community grow within their community. There are additional public affairs functions that can be used to build a strong emergency program. Here are some suggestions:

- ▶ Deliver speeches to community groups.
- ▶ Give presentations at local humane groups, dog training classes, pet stores, horse clubs and farmer's associations. Get emergency managers, veterinarians, humane shelter workers and county extension educators to work together on these presentations.
- ▶ Develop personal relationships with the local media. Do not just call or mail public releases. Deliver them and meet the reporters who can tell the story.
- ▶ Hold open houses at the Emergency Operations Center where the community can visit and find out just what an emergency manager does.
- ▶ Offer to make presentations at local elementary and high schools. Reaching young people is important and often what is learned through these sessions can save a life later.
- ▶ Give talks or presentations on how to improve the care of horses at riding schools.
- ▶ Work with scout leaders to initiate work among both the Boy and Girl Scouts toward an emergency management badge.
- ▶ Invite the media to participate when exercises are conducted, either as a player or an evaluator. This will help reporters learn more about the importance of emergency management.
- ▶ Work with the Chamber of Commerce to distribute posters, set up exhibits, etc. during high hazard seasons.

- ▶ Cable networks have cable time for local public services. An emergency program can add to your community's safety knowledge and get more support for your programs.
- ▶ Have a phone number that interested volunteers can call to become more active in disaster programs.
- ▶ Call press conferences to announce initiatives and to comment on ongoing activities or project progress. Consider holding monthly breakfasts or coffees with the local media.
- ▶ It is recognized that your priorities lie with the emergency management programs and plans. A public affairs plan can assist in raising the level of knowledge of the importance of emergency management.

## Training

In disaster preparedness training, it should be assumed that emergency management personnel are familiar with their duties and responsibilities and that animal-care providers are competent to deal with animal-related issues. Assumptions like the following can be made.

- ▶ Veterinarians are familiar with most veterinary emergencies and how to treat them. Veterinarians are generally also familiar with scheduling, directing staff, assessing needs, ordering supplies and distributing these efficiently.
- ▶ Animal control and humane shelter workers are often familiar with capture and rescue of animals, as well as housing and feeding needs.
- ▶ County extension educators are familiar with animal husbandry, community resources and financial issues.

The expertise of each person should be shared during training – this gives others an opportunity to learn from their peers. It should also be recognized that it may not be necessary for these individuals to be trained in areas where they already have expertise. Relying on and respecting the expertise of others is the best way to facilitate plan development and implementation.

### Local training opportunities

Often there are local training opportunities for emergency program managers and others interested in learning more about emergency management. For example, to improve your understanding of the emergency response phase, you can actively participate in or observe the training programs or exercises of your fire or police department. Training should be seen as part of the planning process as it allows the responders to get to know each other and practice working as a team.

From the management standpoint, check the classes offered by your community colleges or the adult evening classes at high schools. There are good courses on basic management principles. The principles learned can be applied directly to your job. Check the classes offered on budgeting and financial planning as well.

Don't overlook the opportunities for training from service agencies such as the American Red Cross. Their programs in first aid and cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) may be important. The Red Cross also conducts disaster services training in areas such as damage assessment or sheltering operations. Educational seminars may be put on by local veterinarians and humane groups. County extension educators can help you understand how issues facing the community's economy relate to animals.

Finally, there are often private sector training opportunities for emergency program managers. For example, a local chemical plant may conduct in-house training programs in hazardous materials management. If in your hazards analysis you find companies dealing with hazardous materials, check to see if they have training programs for their staff. Ask to be included in this training. Most companies would be happy to have you as a participant or observer.

### State training opportunities

State training programs in emergency management are often the most accessible. However, the Federal government, many counties, and municipalities also offer training. Many who start with one course, get hooked, and take many more.

Most State training officers coordinate training and educational programs for emergency program managers and other interested citizens. Classroom instruction is provided in the areas of emergency management, preparedness planning, emergency operations, and career development. Participation in these programs may be open to all people who hold emergency operations positions.

The State training officer is a valuable resource even if you are unable to participate in programs offered by your State. The training officer can help you define your training needs or suggest other training resources that may be of value to you.

Some States have emergency operations simulation training. This is when a mock emergency is staged to test your preparedness plan. In the process, you see if the plan is executed properly. Most of all, you learn if the plan meets the demands of the simulated emergency. It is better to find out where the plan needs improvement in a simulation than in an actual emergency. You may also want to take a course that will teach you how to conduct your own exercises.

### Federal training opportunities

FEMA provides a variety of opportunities for continuing education as part of its Professional Training Program. The subjects of FEMA training are as varied as the emergency management profession. They include topics such as fallout shelter management, working with public officials, and managing volunteers. They improve the personal effectiveness and professional stature of emergency program managers. Instructional methods include independent study and classroom instruction.

The FEMA regional training and education officer can tell you what programs are available for you and your emergency management and operations staff. Let's look at a few of them that may be of interest. This course is the first on animals in disasters. By taking it you become a more responsible animal owner or emergency manager with an awareness of disasters, hazards and how to manage and survive these.

### Independent study courses

*Emergency Management, USA* gives the public an orientation to disaster hazards and preparedness. This course provides a good overview of many topics with which both the public and the emergency program manager should be familiar. This course provides detailed information on natural hazards in the United States, how to prepare family plans and how to safeguard against common household hazards. Module A of *Animals in Disasters* is based on *Emergency Management, USA*.

*The Emergency Program Manager: An Orientation to the Position* is designed to provide the basics of the job for the emergency program manager. Module B of *Animals in Disasters* course is based on the *Emergency Program Manager* course.

*A Citizen's Guide to Disaster Assistance* provides a basic understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the local community, State, and the Federal government in providing disaster assistance. It is appropriate for both the general public and those involved in emergency management who need a general introduction to disaster assistance.

*Hazardous Materials: A Citizens Orientation* details how to identify and protect against hazardous materials. This course has a lot of useful information and is highly recommended for employees of all animal-related businesses.

Another independent study course that should be of interest for nuclear attack and fixed nuclear facility preparedness is called *Radiological Emergency Management*. Its subjects include fallout effects, exposure monitoring, and protective and decontamination measures. It also covers many other subjects that are relevant to workers in veterinary practices, where X-ray equipment and occasional radioisotopes are used for diagnostic tests.

*Basic Incident Command System* – this Basic Incident Command System (ICS) Course will begin to provide training for non-first responders who may be called upon to function in an ICS environment. The course has been developed as self-instruction but can also be delivered, with the use of an instructor, in a classroom. The course includes a large number of scenarios, examples, and opportunities for students to apply what they have learned.

#### Residential and field training

Residential and field training provided by FEMA emphasizes performance-based exercises. It is highlighted by the *Integrated Emergency Management*, a course where personnel from all departments and agencies in a community practice policy-making, planning, and emergency operations. This course covers the definition of emergency management, the relationship between military defense planning and emergency management planning, nuclear weapons effects, shelters, natural disasters, warning, emergency operations, support programs, and governmental responsibilities for emergency management. This course is recommended for public health and services veterinarians and related animal-care providers.

In addition to *Integrated Emergency Management*, major topics of the FEMA training program include sessions in four areas.

1. The *Emergency Management Process Curriculum* provides training that cuts across subject areas and hazards to provide personnel with the management and problem-solving skills needed to effectively lead a community in an emergency. Included is a professional development series for emergency program managers as well as upper-level workshops and seminars dealing with a broad spectrum of contemporary emergency management problems and issues. The audience for these courses, which build on training at the State and regional levels, includes the emergency program manager; emergency operations managers in law enforcement, fire, public works, and emergency medical; and public officials responsible for protecting lives and property.
2. The *National Preparedness Program Curriculum* provides an overview of the multijurisdictional civil preparedness program including civil defense policies, nuclear civil preparedness and crisis relocation, planning economic stabilization, and special subjects such as shelter design, industrial protection, and the National Defense Executive Reserve. The audience for these varied courses includes emergency program managers, architects and engineers, industrial emergency planners, regional and State personnel with responsibility for developing and conducting multi-hazard evacuation exercises and nuclear civil protection planners.
3. The *Natural Hazards Curriculum* explores natural hazards focusing on planning, response, recovery, and mitigation. Some courses are fundamental – exploring the characteristics and causes of the major natural hazards – while others deal with specialized training and exercises designed to test participants and their community in terms of hazard identification, mitigation, response operations, recovery, and community planning. Participants in these courses include emergency program managers; Federal, State, and local personnel involved in all phases of natural hazard programs; and specialized audiences such as hazard mitigation teams.
4. The *Radiological and Technological Hazards Curriculum* deals with contemporary problems associated with nuclear power plants, nuclear weapons accidents, and the manufacture, transport, and storage of nuclear and other hazardous materials. These courses also address radiological defense in a nuclear attack. Attendees at courses in this curriculum include Federal, State, local, and nuclear power plant radiological health physics personnel; and those involved in off-site nuclear plant emergency planning.

Advanced training in each of these curriculum areas is offered by FEMA to graduates of these programs. Generally, the participants must complete assigned advanced reading or research to discuss the topic during the seminar.

## Implementing training programs

Often the best training programs for disaster management are those that are developed by the persons who will be leaders in the event of a disaster. The principles of effective training are:

- ▶ *Promote* the idea that the course would be useful to the public.
- ▶ *Instruct* members of the public by providing information and incentives for study.
- ▶ Use the trained public as a *resource* for further information and education of others.
- ▶ Once you have completed this course you should feel comfortable to *teach* it to others. You will soon discover that the best way to learn is to teach, and teaching emergency management is rewarding and helpful to others.

How can training and education be conducted?

The following table outlines ways that training and education can be conducted.

Individual instruction	Teaches a particular skill to a trainee on a one-on-one basis. This may sound very formal but can include showing a subordinate how a specific piece of equipment works or how your warning system is activated or showing a senior citizen volunteer how your filing system works.
Meetings	Many meetings are a form of instruction. Any time a group gets together to discuss a problem, learning takes place. As you can see, your job as an emergency program manager may involve a lot of informal instruction. There may be times when you will actually be teaching your audience something you have learned at one of the seminars you have attended.

Prepackaged programs	Often videotapes, movies or slide presentations are available on various topics that might be of interest to those associated with your emergency management program. FEMA publishes a catalogue of motion pictures useful for community education. The American Red Cross, the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the Discovery Channel also provide a variety of useful training and education films.
Seminars	A seminar is a special kind of meeting or group instruction in which experts or key individuals are used as resources for a group. With a seminar, your primary function is to organize the seminar and have experts carry on the instruction for you.
Exercises	You learned earlier that the preparedness plan should be tested and that many State offices will help you in carrying out a simulated emergency. These simulations, whether table-top or full-scale exercises, are valuable learning experiences.

As you can see, being an educator or trainer does not mean that you are standing in front of a class and giving a lecture. In your daily routine as an emergency program manager, you will often be educating someone about emergency management or training them to perform some skill.



## LEARNING CHECK – WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT DEVELOPING COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR YOUR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PLANS?

This activity is designed to assess your understanding of the information presented in this unit.

**Directions:** Answer the questions – use the Answer Key in Unit 9 to check your answers.

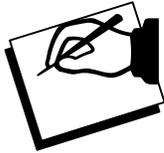
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### True or False

1. The public is likely to be most interested in the parts of the plan that discuss warning, evacuation, and public and animal welfare.
2. Senior citizen groups are a good source of volunteer help.
3. Sending memos is an effective way to inform key individuals in your community of their emergency responsibilities.
4. Kits and handbooks describing a variety of emergency subjects are available from FEMA.
5. Veterinary practices and animal shelters should be included in planning for disasters.
6. The public is the primary audience for emergency operations plans.
7. Brochures are ineffective in providing the public with information regarding emergency plans.

### Multiple Choice

8. Which of the following is **NOT** a method for implementing training?
  - a. Promote the idea that the course is useful
  - b. Provide incentives for study
  - c. Use trained members of the public as a resource
  - d. Share information only among trained members of the public
9. Teaching a particular skill to a trainee on a one-on-one basis is which type of training?
  - a. Individual instruction
  - b. Seminar
  - c. Table-top exercise
  - d. Focus group
10. Providing volunteer group leaders with an overview of anticipated emergency operations in your basic plan is a method of approaching which of the following groups?
  - a. Government
  - b. Organizations
  - c. The public
  - d. Animal-care providers



## THINGS TO DO

1. Work with the public affairs branch of your local government to develop a small informational brochure about the Emergency Operations Plan for the general public. It should contain short clear sentences so everyone can understand it. It should explain briefly what the some of the issues affecting animals and their owners in your community are, what warning system is in place, how the people will be notified, and what to do when the warning sounds.
2. Develop a private community resource inventory and catalog the resources in a systematic way. If you already have a resource inventory, determine when it was last updated. If the resource inventory is more than a year old, verify the information on the list and see if you can expand it.
3. Contact your State training officer and find out what training programs your State offers, when they are given, and who can attend. Find out if the State conducts simulation exercises.
4. Contact your county or State training office and determine which Federal training programs are available and appropriate to you.
5. Contact the local and State library.
6. Use the Internet. Visit [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) and [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) for starters.

## Summary

This unit addressed ways to find community support for your disaster preparedness plan involving animals. It covered ways to approach the government, organizations and the public. Examples of public awareness campaign ideas were given as well as methods to enlist help from the community. This unit also identified training resources including local, State and Federal sources and types of training such as independent study and residential training.

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## Review

### Instructions

Now you have completed the units of instruction for this Module. Before moving on to the final examination, let us revisit the scenarios presented in Unit 2. As you will recall, the scenarios included information and questions for animal owners and emergency managers. Having completed this Module, think about how your answers to these questions may have changed.

1. A train carrying propane derails and prompts the immediate evacuation of 1000 households in a 2-mile radius. You estimate that approximately 50 percent of families in the evacuation area own animals.

Emergency Managers: Do you have an action plan to evacuate people with their animals, and know where to house the animals?

Animal owners: How would you evacuate with your animals? What supplies would you take for your pets? Where would you shelter your animals?

2. During Hurricane Jackie many persons become separated from their horses.

Emergency Managers: How would you reunite the horses and their owners?

Animal owners: There are 35 bay mares in a temporary enclosure for horses. If one of them were yours, how would you positively identify it to a security guard at the pasture?

3. In a tornado, a tank of herbicide is knocked over. It may have contaminated the grain bin on a dairy farm and been sprayed onto the skin of some pigs at a neighboring farm.

Emergency Managers: What are the potential public health risks associated with contaminated livestock feed and food-producing animals?

Animal owners: Who would you contact to determine the safety of your cows' feed and to determine the potential contamination of the milk?

The pigs do not appear to be affected.

Who can determine the withdrawal times for safe slaughter of the pigs for human consumption?

4. Many farms are in low-lying areas close to rivers. Flooding is a problem that can result in animals drowning, and difficulty in supplying feed to stranded animals.

Emergency Managers: How many farms in your community are potentially affected by floods and what types and numbers of animals do they have? How would you obtain this information?

Animal owners: How could the problem of recurrent flooding be prevented? What department in your State could help you in this regard?

5. During a heat wave there is a local power failure that results in the death of 500,000 chickens in two adjacent barns.

Emergency Managers: What emergency power supplies could have been mobilized and prevented this costly loss?

Animal owners: How would you dispose of this large mass of dead birds?

6. A brush fire precipitates the escape of a large private collection of exotic animals. The animals include lions, tigers and bears. There is great risk of people being injured. The animals are very valuable and belong to an influential local resident.

Emergency Managers: Should the escaped animals be killed or captured?

What factors would help you reach the most appropriate decision.

Animal owners: Whom would you call in your jurisdiction to help you with this situation?

