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Working Dogs and Disaster Preparedness: Identifying Gaps in the Literature

Preparing for a disaster encompasses many activities, some of which include creating and implementing disaster preparedness plans and assembling supplies. This is especially important for those with pets or assistance animals. Some is known about the creation and implementation of disaster preparedness plans by pet owners, while less is known about the engagement in these activities by service animal (guide dog) handlers.

However, little is known about the activities that working dog (search and rescue dogs) handlers perform to prepare a disaster plan for their working dogs. Thus, the purpose of this study is to determine the gap in the literature regarding the activities that working dog handlers perform to prepare a disaster plan for their working dogs. Analysis was based on searches in MetaLib, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and MEDLINE. Search terms included: working dogs (representing search and rescue dogs), service animals (representing guide dogs), disasters, and disaster planning. The search results revealed 7 possible articles. Six were from the viewpoint of the veterinarian, and one from the viewpoint of the handler, revealing a gap

in the literature. In future research, factors influencing the development of disaster preparedness plans for working dogs by their handlers will be examined.

Presentation Theme: Preparedness plans; Working dogs

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