

## Disposal of Animal Carcasses

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### Introduction

A disaster event may result in the widespread death of livestock and other animals. This impacts upon landholders through both an economic loss as well as the potential for the transmission of disease.

### Public health significance

Prompt and sanitary disposal of animal carcasses is necessary to protect the living animals in an area from disease. It will also reduce odours and fly breeding.

### Action to take

Landholders should search their property for dead animals as soon as possible after a disaster, provided it is safe to do so. In some cases, carcasses may have commercial value, so consider sending them to a rendering plant if possible. If rendering is impractical, dispose of the dead animals on the premises. The following procedures may be used:

- Cover a carcass with crude oil or kerosene to keep away dogs, scavenging birds and vermin. NOTE: Fat swine are the only animal carcasses that will burn satisfactorily. Old railway sleepers can be used as fuel. Burning of other carcasses **is not** recommended.
- Bury other carcasses. Use earth moving equipment if it is available.
  - Choose a site where subsurface drainage will not reach water supplies.
  - Bury the carcass at least 90cm -120cm (3-4 feet) deep, so predatory animals won't be able to reach them.
  - If quicklime is available, cover carcasses with it before backfilling. Quicklime will hasten decomposition.
- Contact your local council animal control officer for further guidelines.

### Acknowledgement:

Information for this document was sourced from *Fact Sheet DH 48, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida, Gainesville, FL 32611. Publication date: June 1993.*

### Related links:

- University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at website: [www.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html](http://www.ifas.ufl.edu/index.html)
- Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) at website: [www.emergency.qld.gov.au/emq/css/beprepared.asp](http://www.emergency.qld.gov.au/emq/css/beprepared.asp)
- Emergency Management Australia Community Awareness Publications at website: [www.ema.gov.au/www/emaweb/emaweb.nsf/Page/Publications](http://www.ema.gov.au/www/emaweb/emaweb.nsf/Page/Publications)
- Workplace Health & Safety Queensland at website: [www.deir.qld.gov.au/](http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/)