Humane Society of Manatee County

Hurricane Preparedness

By Rick Yocum, Executive Director,
Humane Society of Manatee County

During an emergency, the safety of your family pets depends on you. Always remember that during a disaster, what's good for you and your family is good for your pets.

The Humane Society of Manatee County has an Emergency Management/Evacuation Plan in place to protect all of the animals in our Second Chance Adoption Program. We highly recommend that every family in Manatee County have a family emergency plan that includes their pets.

If it is deemed unsafe for you to stay in your home in severe weather and other emergency situations, that also means it is unsafe for animals to remain in the home. Do not leave your family pet at home alone, and never use your pet as an excuse not to evacuate.

A safe and successful evacuation depends on preparedness and planning. Two keys to a weather-related emergency are to prepare for the risks and to act on those preparations when emergency officials recommend evacuation.

Preparing for an Emergency

It is important that you prepare an emergency kit for you and your family, it is equally important to prepare an emergency kit for your animals. All emergency kits should be located at least four (4) feet off the floor and readily accessible. Food, water and medications in these kits needs to be refreshed occasionally and not have passed expiration dates.

If evacuation is imminent, place your animal in a carrier or on a leash ahead of time so time is not lost chasing a scared pet at the last minute.

Listed below are recommendations for a basic pet emergency kit that should be clearly marked as a pet emergency kit and accessible when needed:

- Water—At least a three-day supply
- Non-perishable food—At least a three-day supply stored in an airtight waterproof container
- Treats (if your pet is used to receiving them)
- A non-electric can opener, if using canned food
- Medication—A one-week supply in a waterproof container or zip-lock bag
- Medical Records—Proof of vaccinations in a waterproof container or zip-lock bag
- Microchip information (Make sure owner information is current)
- A photograph of yourself WITH your pet, so ownership can be established if you are separated. Eighty percent (80%) of pets displaced by a storm are never reunited with their owners.
- A carrier along with a spare leash, a collar and an ID Tag
- Water and food bowls
- A few familiar toys
- Litter, litter box, puppy pads and dog waste bags (poop bags!!)
- A basic pet first-aid kit
- Paper towels
- A spare flashlight

Rick Yocum, Executive Director of the Humane Society of Manatee County. Photo by Ezekiel Photography

Please follow recommendations from emergency management authorities, and prepare ahead of time for yourself, your family and your pets.

In the state of Florida, hurricane season began on June 1st and extends to November 30th, so, if you have not already done so, prepare **NOW**, and make sure vaccines and microchip registration information for all of your pets are current.

If your pet is not microchipped or is due for vaccines, you can visit the Humane Society of Manatee County Veterinary Clinic by appointment.

Humane Society of Manatee County is located at 2515 14th Street West in Bradenton and can be reached by calling 941-747-8808. The Adoption Center is open Tuesday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For more information, visit www.humanemanatee.org online, or send an e-mail to info@humanesocietymanatee.org.

Open to the public, Humane Society of Manatee County Veterinary Clinic is located at 2415 14th Street West in Bradenton and can be reached by calling 941-747-8808, Option #1. The veterinary clinic is open by appointment Monday through Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and Saturday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For additional information about the clinic, visit www.humanemanatee.org.

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