

CONTACT: Melanie Villafana
PHONE: (727) 841- PAWS(7297)
EMAIL: melanie@doggonerolutions.com
www.DogGoneSolutions.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PLANNING YOUR PETS FOR HURRICANE SEASON

Hurricane season is here and the time for preparations is among us. While you're prepping your window shutters and planning your evacuation routes, plan for your pets too. Here's a guide to help make sure your pets are season ready!

Identity! Make sure ALL of your pets have current information and tags and/or microchips! Microchips are tiny, harmless electronic devices (inserted by a veterinarian just under the dog's skin) containing identification information including the owner's name and address, which provides the swiftest and best opportunity of being reunited with your pet in the event of separation.

Pack pet food and water for at least five days. Use zip closure bags to hold single servings of food in case you are not available to feed them. Consider using only dry food unless you are able to purchase single serving wet food cans or pouches. Refrigeration may not be available.

Make sure your pet is up-to-date on all of their vaccinations as they may not be allowed in public facilities without them. For dogs with specific medical needs, please visit www.pethealthalert.com to receive a free medical alert tag, "A Free Pet Medical Alert Tag Provides Critical Pet Medical Information When You Can't". Tag numbers can be registered on their site for additional recording and tracking.

Keep a sturdy collar or harness and leash with your pet as well. Pack pet's medicines, vaccination papers, first-aid supplies, bedding and toys. Attach a current rabies tag, county license, and temporary I.D. tag with name and number of a friend or relative outside the disaster area in addition to your own. Take a photo of the pet with a family member as proof of ownership.

A standard first-aid kit, a muzzle, and Velcro restraints should also be kept with your animal in the event of an injury. Dog booties or shoes are also a good idea in case the injury occurs in a foot or pad to help secure the wounds bandaging and prevent your dog from biting and licking it.

Have a pet carrier or kennel large enough for your animal(s) to stand, turn around, lie down, and hold food and water bowls. Do not go any larger as you may end up in smaller accommodations than anticipated. Write your name, contact information, feeding times, your pet's medical conditions, and behavior problems, along with a 'family' photo on a sheet of letter size paper. Place this paper in a sheet protector and 'seal' the information to the carrier with packing tape. This will help ensure it does not wear off or become water damaged.

Residents living in flood/evacuation zones who must evacuate from their homes prior to a disaster should plan in advance where to take their pets. Contact close friends or relatives and ask if they can shelter your animals when you have to leave home. If you have multiple pets, they may be more comfortable together; however, be prepared to house them separately if needed.

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Some hotels accept pets. You can search for pet-friendly hotels at www.Hotels.com and searching by the "Allow Pets" amenity. Call around early to check, as well as restrictions in size, number, species, and breed. Also ask if "No Pet" policies or pet restrictions can be waived in an emergency.

If you're left with no choice and must leave your pets home, there are a few things you should do to ensure their comfort and safety while you're away. Prepare an area that is easily cleaned, such as a bathroom or utility room; something with a tile floor is best. The garage is not a good choice!

Leave several days supply of dry food and water in containers that will not easily overturn; large pots work well or any bowl or container where the bottom circumference is equal to or wider than the top. Consider purchasing a timed feeder to prevent your animal from eating it all at once.

Do not leave your pet(s) near windows. If you must, secure the window both inside and out with plywood in addition to using a film or tape to secure any broken glass. However, please consider a friend, neighbor, or family member first.

Make sure the animal is thoroughly confined to the area you specified. Cover all plugs and outlets. Unplug any appliances and secure any cords out of reach. Secure cabinet doors so they won't be accidentally opened. Leave a key and contact information with a neighbor or two. This way, your animals can be checked on as soon as possible.

Please remember that during this time, your pet will be under stress. You will most likely return to a space that has been scratched, chewed, as well as urinated and defecated in. Do not reprimand your dog or animal for this. Upon your arrival, immediately take your pet out and take dogs for a walk. Worry about the mess later.

Give your animal a good examination to make sure they are as they were. Most importantly, give your pet time to settle back into regular routines. If behavior problems persist, contact your veterinarian and/or trainer for guidance.

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For more information, contact the DogGone Solutions LLC at 877-789-PAWS (7297).