

Preparing pets for hurricanes

Pets are important members of the family and must be considered in developing your family hurricane plan. The stress of storms can cause changes in your pet's normal behavior. The sounds of wind, thunder and falling debris may frighten them. Pets should be microchipped in case they are lost and separated from their owners. Be sure all shots and licenses are up-to-date. Have a sturdy kennel/crate and your pet's favorite blankets and toys to make him feel secure and safe until the storm



is over. If you must evacuate, be sure your pet can be sheltered with you. If that is not possible, arrange for your pet to be boarded or sheltered in a safe location. Call your veterinarian or local emergency manager for options. Some localities may have pet friendly shelters.

Whether you stay or go, your pet's portable hurricane kit should include:

- Medications, immunization records and a first-aid kit
- Sturdy leashes, muzzles, harnesses and carriers or cages to transport pets safely
- Current photos of your pets in case they get lost
- Food, drinking water, bowls, cat litter/box and can opener
- Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems and the name and number of your veterinarian



After the Storm

- Do not let your pet outside until your environment is safe. Debris such as glass and nails are particular hazards for animals. Downed power lines could electrify puddles. The sound of emergency vehicles, chain saws and other equipment can frighten him.
- Walk your pet on a leash until he becomes re-oriented — often familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet could easily become confused.
- If your pet is lost, contact the local animal control office and the Heritage Humane Society. This is when microchips, up-to-date licenses and recent photographs can make all the difference in recovering your pet.
- After a disaster, animals can become disoriented, fearful or defensive. Monitor his behavior and eating habits.

Sounds of recovery: chain saws and generators

Chain saw safety

The chain saw is a time saving and efficient power tool in the hands of a trained and competent person. Chain saw accidents are common after hurricanes resulting in severe and debilitating injuries including amputations. Be sure to have the proper chain saw safety protective gear used by professionals. Contact your local tool or building supply company for information on chain saw safety programs.



Generator Safety

If used properly, portable generators can provide a temporary source of electrical power. There are several considerations essential to the safe operation of a generator.

To avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning:

- Operate generators outdoors only in a well-ventilated, dry area, away from air intakes to the home and protected from direct exposure to rain (preferably under a canopy, open shed or carport).
- Never use a generator indoors or in attached garages.

To avoid electrocution:

- Plug individual appliances into the generator using heavy duty, outdoor rated cords with a wire gauge adequate for the appliance load.
- Observe the generator manufacturer's instructions for safe operation.
- Do not plug the generator into a wall outlet.
- If connecting the generator into the house wiring is necessary, have a qualified electrician hook up the standby electrical system.
- Improper use of generators can cause back feeding to lines which are being repaired and result in electrocutions of emergency workers.

Courtesy of the American Red Cross and the Virginia Department of Emergency Management



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- 12490 Warwick Blvd., Newport News 594-9890
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- 2098 Nickerson Boulevard, Hampton 850-0544

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