



West Chelsea Veterinary Forecasts Full Preparedness for Pets During Storm Season



When Mother Nature Comes Knocking, Thinking Ahead is Key to Keeping Pets Safe

The Atlantic Hurricane season spans from June 1 to November 30, peaking from mid-August to late October. Therefore, storm season is upon us, yet again, and it's a great time to put your pet's emergency plan in place.



Hurricane hazards come in a variety of forms, including the smell of smoke as a result of electrical issues, the noise associated with thunder and lots of rain and water, all of which can make pets fearful. It is crucial that pet owners are prepared to take pets with them if asked to evacuate in the face of a potentially destructive storm. It is our best recommendation that pet parents have an emergency plan in place that includes the safety of their animals. Laura Bevan, Eastern regional director for The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), advises, "If it isn't safe for you, it isn't safe for your pets." We believe this to be solid advice.

Whether you are being evacuated or you intend to ride out a storm, West Chelsea Veterinary encourages our clients to create a simple pet emergency kit. A pet emergency kit is not that much different from one you'd create for you and your human family members. The primary objective of this kit is to relieve any suffering, to save a life and to prevent further physical or psychological injuries your pet may face in an emergency before they can be checked by your veterinarian.



Create your own pet emergency kit today by combining:

- (1) Adhesive tape to secure bandages
- (2) Alcohol and alcohol swabs for sterilization of small areas of skin,
- (3) Antibiotic ointment for wounds,
- (4) Cotton swabs and contact lens solution for rinsing eyes or to clean wounds,
- (5) Enough pet-dedication water to last three days minimum,
- (6) Non-perishable food (include a can opener if needed),
- (7) A solid carrier or cage,
- (8) Litter box, Litter scoop, puppy pads and plastic bags for cleanup,
- (9) Your pet's prescriptions(s),
- (10) Medical records (vaccination documents too) to be placed in waterproof containers,
- (11) Water purification tablets,
- (12) Cotton sheet to place over the carrier to help keep your pet calm,
- (13) Sturdy leash for dog or harness for cat,
- (14) Comforting toys or treats,
- (15) A picture of your pet in case you get separated

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Many companies also offer a wide range of ready-built pet emergency kits that pet owners may purchase. SkyMall®'s Relief Pod Emergency Kit and rescue products provide the basics—first-aid supplies, food and water and tools—for survival during a disaster. The American Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) offers both a cat and dog ER Emergency Ready Pet Survival Kit, which contains food, water, collapsible bowls, a lightstick and blanket.

Storm Preparedness Tips from the American Veterinary Medical Foundation:

Talk with a veterinarian right now regarding a boarding kennel or grooming facility to see if they can offer safe shelter for your pet during an emergency. Ideally, you should arrange to shelter pets at a kennel or with friends or relatives outside the evacuation area. Know your pet's hiding places so you can easily find him/her during an emergency. Keep in mind a stressed pet may behave differently than normal and his/her aggression level may increase. Be mindful that panicked pets may try to flee. Place an emergency decal on your front window or door; if disaster strikes while you are not home, this decal will alert rescuers of the animals inside. Prepare beforehand written information about your pet's feeding schedules, medical conditions and behavioral issues, along with the name and number of your veterinarian in case you have to board your pets.

In 2000, the Humane Society of the United States and FEMA signed a partnership agreement to encourage and assist people who want to safeguard their pets during a natural disaster. Since that time, it has become easier to find a shelter that will accept pets. The New York City Office of Emergency Management reminds pet owners that the NYC emergency sheltering system is friendly to all pets. Legal pets with proper identification will be admitted into shelters with their owners.

Learn more at:

http://www.nyc.gov/html/oem/html/get_prepared/preparedness_pets.shtml

If you need to evacuate and plan on heading to a hotel, call in advance and make sure animals are welcome. Many hotels relax their policies during times of crisis, but do not assume that this will be the case. For on-line information about pet-friendly hotels, peruse <http://www.petswelcome.com/>.

If you have any questions regarding storm preparedness for pets or pet emergency kits, please call your pet's West Chelsea Veterinary team at:

(212) 645-2767

or watch for updates on our Facebook page at:

www.facebook.com/westchelseavet

