

Hurricane Guidelines for Pets

- Keep current color photos of your pets with your emergency supplies.
- If you know that a disaster (such as a hurricane) is immediate, bring your pets inside. Lee County Ordinance prohibits pets from being tethered outside.
- Because of a greater threat of disease, it is important that your animals be up-to-date on their vaccinations.
- If you must evacuate, take your pets with you. Your pet's best protection is to be with you.
- Call ahead to make sure that hotels will accept your animals. Evacuation shelters will not accept pets of any kind unless designated an "Evacuation Pet Shelter." Find pet-friendly lodging in Florida and throughout the United States at www.petswelcome.com (Under "Instant Pet Friendly Search," select a state and city) or www.bringfido.com. You should pick a location outside of the area where the hurricane is projected to hit.
- Call boarding kennels or veterinarians with boarding facilities to see the possibility of housing them. Ask if someone will be there with the pets during the hurricane and if their boarding facility is structurally prepared to withstand hurricane-force winds.
- Ask friends or family to provide temporary foster care for your pets.
- Lee County's Evacuation Pet Shelter will be open for residents who live in areas that are under mandatory evacuation orders in the area where they live. This option should be your last resort if you are unable to execute your own personal evacuation plan for your family and pets. It should not be your "evacuation plan." Get more information about the Evacuation Pet Shelter.
- Acquire an impact resistant pet carrier or cage for each animal to use as protection if you are riding out the storm with your pets at home. Exceptions can be made to house more than one animal per carrier but do not mix different animal species together! Frightened animals may exhibit behavior changes. If you evacuate and must leave your pets behind, do not leave pets in carriers as they will not be able to get more food and water when needed. Remember, you may not be able to get back to your house for days or weeks. A carrier should permit a dog or cat to stand up and turn around in it. Help your pet to adjust to a carrier as part of routine training to reduce the stress of being confined. Place additional ID on the carrier. Birds should have a perch to grasp. (Birds, however, should be left in their cages for safety.)
- Survey your home to determine the safest location away from windows. Cover large openings of carrier or cage to protect from flying debris. Provide high areas when there is a risk of flooding.