

Hurricane Evacuation List

Thank God Hurricane Rita has come and gone. Most, if not all of us, were touched by the storm. What we have realized is how severely the storm affected our pets. The stress of evacuation and displacement was an enormous factor during Hurricane Rita.

We have compiled some suggestions for you to consider if we should ever have to evacuate again.

1. Take your pets with you. No pet left behind!
2. If your pet is on medication, please keep at least a one month supply of the medication on hand at all times. This includes heartworm prevention, flea prevention, heart medications, seizure medications, pain medications, insulin, thyroid medication, etc.
3. Have a supply of tranquilizers to reduce stress in your pets.
4. Have portable cages available (preferably one cage for each pet).
5. Have a good collar and leash for dogs and cats that will not slip off their head.
6. Attach your pet's current rabies tag to his/her collar and be sure to keep your pet's immunization records with the rest of your important papers.
7. If you know your destination and have to board your pet, try to call ahead and secure a place.
8. If your dog(s) will be boarded, have them vaccinated for kennel cough (Bordatella).
9. Be sure to keep your pet's immunizations current. We can supply you with a copy of your immunizations records.
10. Keep an ID tag on your pet's collar that has your current cell phone number. Also, it is a great idea to have your dog microchipped. A microchip is implanted into the dog with a needle and carries a unique identification number in it. Most veterinary clinics, shelters, and humane societies have a scanner to read microchips. Once your dog's microchip is registered, his/her number is nationwide. So, if you lose your dog in Missouri, and a vet clinic reads your pet's microchip number, they can find out the dog's name and your cell phone number within minutes.

11. To avoid changes in your pet's diet during an evacuation, take with you a one month supply of your pet's food. This is critical – especially if your pet is on a prescription diet.
12. If possible, pack and use your pet's current food and water dishes.
13. If possible, have cool, bottled water for your pet to drink.
14. Bring your own cat's litter and litter box.
15. Road travel can be slow and cause your car to overheat. A battery operated fan is a great way to keep your pet more comfortable in rising temperatures.
16. Be sure to pack a first aid kit; tape, gauze, scissors, hydrogen peroxide, and antibiotic ointment.
17. Don't be surprised if your pet gets sick and ends up with an upset stomach. If possible, be sure to pack plenty of paper towels, cleanser, and deodorizer for cleaning your auto interior.
18. Once you arrive at your destination, consider using expandable "baby gates." This will separate and protect your pet from areas of harm.

Remember, your pet senses the stress you are experiencing during an evacuation. Be sure to give your pet plenty of love and affection. Without your love and help, serious consequences can occur.