

As you make preparations for potentially dangerous storms this season, consider these tips compiled by the WFA from our team of experts as well as a 2014 disaster guide published by Harris County, Texas, the largest county in the state which includes Houston.

When creating a crisis plan for you and your family, it is imperative that you make preparations for your pets as well.

A PET EVACUATION CHECKLIST should include:

- Food and water (seven-day supply)
- Crate (make sure the crate door can be secured). Include extra crate pads and pee pads
- Unbreakable/travel friendly bowls for food and water
- Leash and/or harness (plus an extra leash and collar or harness)
- Medications and identification tags including pet's name, contact phone number, as well as tags for proof of shots including rabies (tags) and tags disclosing any medical conditions your pet has (include all tags on pet's collar).
- Important pet-related documents and enclosed in waterproof locking bags (including shot records and other important information)
- Toys and pet beds
- First aid kit for pets
- Muzzle for each dog
- Life vest that fits your pet (one for each pet)
- Grooming supplies
- Absorbent towels (that pack small)
- Pet-safe insect repellent
- Hard-copy list of important contact phone numbers to include a veterinarian, pet sitter, groomer, as well as important resource numbers such as poison hotlines and local emergency numbers

*****Label important items and include your name, contact number and address***

Plan in advance for options that will work for both you and your pets and even pack non-perishable items ahead of time in a backpack or other easy-to-grab bag should conditions require rapid evacuation. Leave a note tied to the bag containing a list of last-minute perishable items that need to be added.

“In the event of an evacuation, the single most important thing you can do to protect your pets is to take them with you. If you need to find a safe place for them ahead of time, check with your local animal care agency to help identify a pet-friendly evacuation shelter in your area,” Houston County officials write in their emergency response manual.

For more information about disaster preparedness for your pets call 202-452-1100 or visit www.humanesociety.org/disastertips

Possibly the most important tip is to ID your pet. Do that now. Make sure that your cat or dog is wearing a collar and identification that is up-to-date and visible at all times. You'll increase your chances of being reunited with a lost pet by having him or her microchipped. Also, if your pet is adopted from a shelter or rescue organization, make sure the registration has been transferred.