



DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SHOULD INCLUDE OUR PET FAMILY MEMBERS, TOO!

"In today's world, we must be ready for anything," said Anne Culver, director for Disaster Services at The Humane Society of the U.S. "Pets are a part of our families too, and we need to plan now for their safety and well-being if an emergency should occur. It's better to get ready now than to be caught unprepared later. We believe that a reasonable approach will address most situations." The following are suggestions from Ms. Culver and other sources. The HSUS suggests that all pet owners have an emergency supply kit for their pets. This kit should include:

- A three-day supply of food and water, as well as bowls, cat litter and litter box, and a manual can opener.
- Current photos and descriptions of your pets to help others identify them should you and your pets become separated. Pets should wear up-to-date identification, including the phone number of someone out of the area in case your pet becomes lost while you're not at home.
- Medications, medical records and a first aid kit stored in a waterproof container.
- Sturdy leashes, harnesses, and carriers to transport pets safely as well as blankets or towels for bedding and warmth. Carriers should be large enough to comfortably house your pet for several hours. If the need arises to evacuate an area, keep your pet with you. **If it isn't safe for you to stay in area, it isn't safe for your pets.** Pets that are turned loose or left behind to fend for themselves are likely to become victims of exposure, starvation, predators, contaminated food or water, or accidents. Bring your pet indoors at the first sign of storms or other disasters...they can become disoriented and wander off.
- Evacuation shelters might not accept pets (Red Cross Shelters do not), so it's best to plan in advance where you will go. "No Pet" restrictions at local hotels and motels might be lifted in an emergency, so it's best to ask. Check with friends and family members who live outside your area to see if they can shelter you or your pets if needed.
- Microchip your pet. In any situation, even non-disaster, this is a good idea. Almost all vets have scanners now that can read this tiny chip implanted under the skin. The microchip could make the difference in whether you and your furry love are reunited or not!

Help us help the pets who were left behind. Donate to the Pawprints – Katrina Animals Fund. We are a 501 (c) (3) All donations are going to the badly hit Humane Society of South Mississippi, are tax deductible and so very needed! Give what you can. Go to www.InasPawprints.com and click the ark!