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Houston SPCA: Are Your Pets Disaster Ready?

Houston SPCA Strongly Encourages Residents to Be 'Pet Prepared' As First Named Storm of Hurricane Season Forms in the Gulf of Mexico

[File: B-roll & Hi-Res Images Here](#)

HOUSTON (June 19, 2024) – The Houston SPCA strongly encourages residents to take time now to be pet ready as Tropical Storm Alberto is expected to bring heavy rains and coastal flooding to Texas. “Even before a hurricane or other natural disaster strikes, it’s critical to prepare essentials for all your family members, and that includes your pets to help reduce their stress levels, especially if you have to evacuate,” said Dr. Roberta Westbrook, Chief Animal Welfare and Medical Officer at the Houston SPCA.



As the lead agency during natural disasters for pets in the greater Houston area since the early 1980s, the Houston SPCA’s Emergency Response Team has rescued countless animals during natural disasters including the Memorial Day floods, Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Ike as well as assisted with animals left behind after Hurricane Dorian devastated the Bahamas.



A **pet emergency kit** should include a two-week supply of pet food and water as well as medication and vaccination records. Ensure dogs and cats wear collars with ID tags, in addition to having a microchip with **current** contact information. Add a second contact outside the greater Houston area in case land lines and cell phone towers are not working immediately following a disaster. A **[printable checklist in both English and Spanish can be found here](#)** Also:

- **Check the fence line and gate in your backyard to block any possible escape routes.**
- **Bring your pets inside your home in advance of a hurricane or flooding event.**
- **Create a safe place for pets, such as the inside of a pet crate in a quiet room. This will keep them from hiding and it enables you to evacuate more quickly if necessary.**
- **Place some of their favorite toys in their crate, as it can help lower anxiety levels.**
- **Just like your other family members, make sure your pet isn’t near windows or shelves during a disaster.**

Finally, if you must evacuate, be sure to take your pet. If conditions are unsafe for people, they are unsafe for pets. Pet owners should identify an evacuation route and make temporary housing arrangements well before a storm hits.



During the record-breaking number of hurricanes near the Gulf Coast in 2020, including Hurricane Laura, the Houston SPCA Emergency Response Team:

- Transported, provided medical care, and/or adoption services for more than 450 animals along the Gulf Coast including Galveston Island Humane Society between late August through September.

During Hurricane Harvey, the Houston SPCA Emergency Response Team:

- **Rescued 2,300** Harvey-impacted dogs, cats, equine, farm animals, and native wildlife.
- **Reunited 300** animals with their original owners, including 88 horses.
- **Distributed 120 tons** of donated pet food and supplies throughout the community.

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