

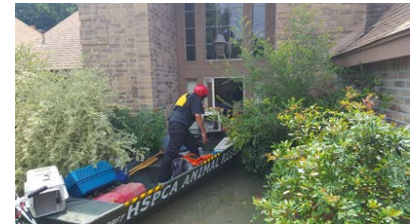
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Houston SPCA's Emergency Response Team Reminds Pet Owners: Prepare Now

Hurricane Season Starts June 1 and Runs Through November 30

[Images and B-roll Here](#)

HOUSTON (May 31, 2023) – At the start of hurricane season, the Houston SPCA reminds all pet owners to take a moment to gather supplies now in case of evacuation or help reduce their pet's stress levels if there is a loss of power.



The Houston SPCA rescued countless animals during natural disasters over the past several decades including Hurricane Ike and Hurricane Harvey while also stepping outside the greater Houston area to help communities in need including Louisiana, Mississippi and even The Bahamas after Hurricane Dorian. Last month, the animal rescue and protection organization distributed 200 portable pet kits and safety tip sheets at the NOAA and NWS Hurricane Awareness Tour.

“Even before a hurricane or other natural disaster strikes, it's critical to prepare essentials for all your family members, including your pets to help reduce their stress levels, especially if you have to evacuate,” said Dr. Roberta Westbrook, chief veterinarian at the Houston SPCA.

A **pet emergency kit** is simple to make and 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 service are not working immediately following a disaster. Also, be sure your pet is familiar with a properly sized crate. They should be able to turn around and sit down inside. A [printable checklist in both English and Spanish can be found here](#). A few more tips before a severe storm or flooding include:



- Check the fence line and secure gate in your backyard to block any possible escape routes.
- Bring your pets inside your home before a hurricane or flooding event. Do not leave them tethered outside.
- 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, take your pet. If conditions are unsafe for people, they are unsafe for pets. Pet owners should have an evacuation route and have a list of options for housing whether its family members, or hotel.

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, and distributed 28,387 pet meals.

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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