

What to do in the Event of a Hurricane

Below are listed the possibilities you may have to pursue in the event of a hurricane, as well as what to do with pets and what to do after the storm.

Hurricane Shelters

Staying at Home

After the Storm

What to do with Pets

Hurricane Shelters

When making your plans for a hurricane, going to a shelter should be considered only if you cannot leave town. Remember, these shelters are in schools or community centers. There are no beds or cots. There are no showers. There is no privacy. If power goes out, there will be no electricity. A shelter is just that, it offers shelter: a roof, four walls and a floor. Here are some things that should be brought with you if you go to a shelter:

- Bedding
- Beach or lounge chair
- Medications and Medical alert Tags
- Clothing and personal care items
- Flashlight/batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Identification, insurance and other valuable papers
- Books, games
- Infant care items
- Cash, traveler's checks
- Drinking water, snacks and a 24 hour supply of non perishable food

You will need to be considerate of the other people there. There are general guidelines that will help you get through this stressful time:

- NO WEAPONS
- NO DRUGS
- NO ALCOHOL
- NO PETS
- NO SMOKING IN THE BUILDING

There are other things to keep in mind:

- Respect quiet hours
- Watch your children
- Keep your area clean
- Register when you arrive
- Smoke in designated areas only
- Help keep the shelter clean
- Be careful with your valuables as they are your responsibility
- Sign in and out when entering or leaving
- Keep food and beverages in designated areas

Staying at Home

Move all furniture, including beds, away from windows. Electrical appliances should be off the floor, preferably in a closet.

Objects should be cleared from the floor and from the tops of desks and dressers.

Residents should place all valuables in a lockable closet or drawer, which should remain locked when the residents are not in the room.

Clean your bathtub and fill it half full with water. In a hurricane there is the risk of loss of water supply. If this should happen, the water in the tubs will be needed for washing and flushing toilets. Fill smaller containers with water for drinking purposes. If additional drinking water is needed, it will be made available as soon as possible.

Close all windows tightly. Venetian blinds should be raised all the way to the top. Curtains or drapes should be closed.

Each person should have his/her own flashlight in case of power failure. Do not use candles or other flame-type lighting under any circumstances. Use battery powered light only.

After the Storm

Check for injuries. Do not move a seriously injured person unless he or she is in immediate

danger of further injuries. If you need emergency assistance, call 911.

Be aware of any structural damage around you, and if necessary and safe to do so, carefully leave the building.

Always check for hazards. Fire or fire hazards. Damaged electrical wiring. Downed or damaged utility lines. Stay away from downed lines, even if power appears to be off.

Fallen objects in closets and cabinets. Displaced objects may fall when you open the door.

Telephone. Make sure each phone is on its receiver. Telephones off the hook can tie up the telephone network.

Clean up potentially harmful materials or medicines that may have spilled.

What to do with pets

Contact your veterinarian or local humane society for information on preparing your pets for an emergency.

Before the Disaster

Make sure that your pets are current on their vaccinations. Pet shelters may require proof of vaccines. Have a current photograph. Keep a collar with identification on your pet and have a leash on hand to control your pet. Have a properly-sized pet carrier for each animal - carriers should be large enough for the animal to stand and turn around. Plan your evacuation strategy and don't forget your pet! Specialized pet shelters, animal control shelters, veterinary clinics and friends and relatives out of harm's way are ALL potential refuges for your pet during a disaster. If you plan to shelter your pet - work it into your evacuation route planning.

During the Disaster

Animals brought to a pet shelter are required to have: Proper identification collar and rabies tag, proper identification on all belongings, a carrier or cage, a leash, an ample supply of food, water and food bowls, any necessary medications, specific care instructions and news papers or trash bags for clean-up. Bring pets indoor well in advance of a storm - reassure them and remain calm. Pet shelters will be filled on first come, first served basis. Call ahead and determine availability.

After the Disaster

Walk pets on a leash until they become re-oriented to their home - often familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and pets could easily be confused and become lost. Also, downed power lines, reptiles brought in with high water and debris can all pose a threat for animals after a disaster. If pets cannot be found after a disaster, contact the local animal control office to find out where lost animals can be recovered. Bring along a picture of your pet if possible. After a disaster, animals can become aggressive or defensive - monitor their behavior.