



Tips to prepare for a hurricane:

Mitigation:

- Identify if your area is prone to flooding. Check with your local emergency management agency to see if your location is in any areas of concern in flood maps.
- Check on insurance policies ahead of time to determine coverage in the event your property is impacted by flooding or wind damage.
- Consider cutting any dead trees or dead limbs or branches in and around the property that may fall and cause damage to your facility or property during the storm.
- Consider protecting any external buildings or kennels with sandbags and elevate any important equipment or supplies that you do not want to get ruined in the storm.

Planning:

- Remove animals from outside kennels prior to the storm.
- It is important to know where you would evacuate the animals to. Establish relationships with other shelters, rescues or ranchers outside the impacted area that might have the space and capacity to temporarily care for your animals.
- Contact your local emergency management agencies to identify where to bring animals to during an emergency like a local fairgrounds or stockyard.
- Understand your capacity to move animals – vehicles, equipment, supplies. Identify and procure or partner with others who have additional supplies and vehicles to help move your animals, if needed.
- Make sure to have an Emergency Supply Kit with enough supplies to help support your animals for up to 72 hours in the event of an evacuation – medication, water, equipment, supplies. If you have livestock, make sure to have enough feed for at least 48 hours.
- Have a secondary mechanism to keep you and your team in communication. Local phone lines and cell phones may not be available. Consider using an out of state contact that all team members can reach who can relay necessary information to each other and help keep you in the loop with one another until you are reunited.

Response:

- Identify actions you need to take in your organization's emergency plan. If a plan for your organization does not yet exist, follow the steps in the [Best Friends Emergency Preparedness Toolkit](#) to get started.
- Consider pre-staging animals and calling in support to help move them as soon as there is a likelihood of the threat.

- Become familiar with evacuation routes for your area. Evacuate early as roads can become heavily congested with people trying to evacuate at the same time. Cover crates with animals in them with a light sheet to help keep them calm.
- Make sure all pets are easily identifiable with a collar and tag. Make sure to label each crate and collar – use masking tape and marker if necessary.
- Have copies of paperwork for all animals including vaccination and medical records. For medication records, make sure it clearly indicates, medication type, dosing and frequency, as well as veterinary information.
- Take photos of each animal in the event of separation.
- If you are preparing your animals for transports, consider dedicating a staff member to pull together a thorough animal inventory which should include photos of animals that are medically eligible for transport. Also, make sure you indicate whether you have the capability of providing vet certifications for out of state transports. Add any additional information that receiving partners would want to know. The more information you can share, the more likely the animal will be pulled by receiving organizations – do they have any health or behavioral challenges? Are they spayed or neutered? Are they vaccinated?
- If you must leave animals behind, do not leave any of them crated, chained up or caged. Allow them the opportunity to escape if they need to. Do try to leave fresh water and food for a few days. If possible open a faucet to let water drip into a large container or partially fill a sink with water.