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Animal Welfare Association Encourages Pet Hurricane Preparation Plans in Advance of Hurricane Season

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Voorhees, NJ – With New Jersey’s peak hurricane season approaching in mid-August, Animal Welfare Association (AWA) encourages homeowners to prepare their pet-inclusive evacuation plans in advance using its guidelines for pet hurricane preparedness.

“We don’t have a lot of time to make decisions when disaster strikes,” says Maya Richmond, executive director at AWA. “Evacuating your home with pets can be difficult, so it’s crucial to figure out the details ahead of time.”

Many evacuation sites and shelters do not allow pets to accompany their owners, forcing some people to stay home with their animals in unsafe conditions. To avoid this scenario, AWA strongly recommends creating a list of shelters, hotels and friends’ homes where pets can stay with their families if they need to evacuate due to a hurricane.

AWA also encourages owners to prepare an evacuation emergency kit for their pets. The kit should include a one week supply of their pet’s food and water, any medications, copies of vaccination medical records, pet insurance policy information and current photos in case of separation. If possible, include toys and a bed that can provide familiarity in a new place.

In the event a hurricane traps the pet owner away from their home, they should make prior arrangements with a neighbor to care for their pets. The pre-arrangement should outline core instructions for daily care and a signed authorization for veterinary services within specified financial limits.

An effective preparation plan includes how to care for a pet after successfully evacuating. Cats should remain in a specified room and dogs should be walked on leashes in fenced areas until acclimated to their new surroundings. Enduring a high-stress situation can alter a pet’s behavior – expect unusual displays of defensiveness or aggression for a few weeks following a disaster. Contact a veterinarian if the unusual behavior persists.

For more information, visit [Tips for Preparing Your Pets for a Disaster](#) at awanj.org.

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Animal Welfare Association, a private, non-profit, 501(c)3 animal welfare organization, serves the people and animals of southern New Jersey. AWA is dedicated to eliminating animal suffering, promoting the importance of the human-animal bond, and improving the role of animals in the wellbeing of people. Through a variety of programs including adoptions, veterinary services, pet therapy, and humane education. AWA is South Jersey’s leader in progressive companion animal care.

