

Pet-Friendly Hurricane Evacuation Centers

By: Monica Sabates

Hurricane season in Miami-Dade County is a force to be reckoned with. The season's span between June 1st and November 30th leaves a considerable amount of time for a hurricane to strike suddenly and swiftly in one's vicinity. Being mindful and prepared for what may come is the first step to ensuring one's safety and the safety of one's pet or service animal. One option for an individual living in an evacuation area, unsafe structure, or mobile home in Miami-Dade is to pre-register for a Pet-Friendly Hurricane Evacuation Center (PFHEC) before a hurricane announces its arrival.

In order to apply for occupation in a Pet-Friendly Hurricane Evacuation Center, the individual must contact the Miami Dade Answer Center to receive the application by mail. Some of the requirements for participants include residing in one of the mandatory evacuation zones and ensuring their pets' or service animals' vaccinations are up to date. The kinds of animals allowed in the evacuation center include: dogs, cats, birds, and other small mammals such as guinea pigs and mice. The application that the individual receives consists of four main criteria: registration for the adult in charge of the pet, the pet's description, the pet's medications, and crate/cage specification. Upon completing the first part of the application, the individual will receive a temporary acceptance letter. Once the mandatory evacuation order is issued, the individual and their maximum of three pets must go to the PFHEC with food, water, and other essentials for both the owner and pet. Admittance into the shelter will be determined by a

veterinarian, who upon inspection will deem whether the pet is a health risk to other animals or humans.

Currently, there are two locations that provide the service of a Pet-Friendly Hurricane Evacuation Center (PFHEC) during a hurricane emergency:

- E. Darwin Fuchs Pavilion
10901 SW 24th St.
Miami, FL 33165
- Dr. Michael M. Krop Senior High
1410 County Line Road
Miami, FL 33179

For more information and tips on how to keep you and your pet safe during hurricane season, visit Miami Dade County Animal Services online at:

<http://www.miamidade.gov/animals/disaster-preparedness.asp>