

Hurricane Season Preparations

Director of Emergency Services Bill Matthias reminds us that it is that time again to make plans, get prepared and keep an eye on the Weather Channel.

First order of business is to locate your re-entry pass. If you can't find it, go to the Public Safety Building to obtain one. Renters need to be mindful of the necessity of a re-entry pass to get back onto the island after evacuating. If you will need special assistance during an evacuation, go to the Public Safety Building to sign up now.

- Identify where you will go when you have to evacuate.
- Prepare a "grab n' go" box with your important papers, insurance policies, house inventory and other documentation in the event your house is damaged.
- Test your generator and be sure to have extra fuel.
- Prepare a disaster supply kit for seven days.
- Allow one gallon of drinking water/person/day. Do not reuse milk or juice jugs to store water.
- Take your medications, extra glasses and extra batteries for any devices that you use. If you use oxygen, be sure of an adequate supply.
- Stock up on high-energy, non-perishable food and include a manual can opener.
- Have a portable radio tuned to PKS Community Radio 1610AM and include extra batteries.
- Make up a sanitation kit consisting of toilet paper, alcohol wipes, antibacterial hand cleanser, bleach, soap, rubber gloves and trash bags.
- Have blankets or sleeping bags.
- Take your cell phone and charger.
- Identify a person as a contact so that you can communicate your whereabouts and status.
- Before you leave, secure your home and remove any loose items out doors that might turn into a projectile in the wind.
- Turn off/remove and secure your propane tank for your gas grill.

If you have pets, have proper identification including immunization and rabies records. Use a carrier cage, collar with identification and leash for each animal. Take an ample supply of food and water plus dishes and include any medications. Take old newspapers, litter box & kitty litter and trash bags for cleanup. (Pets are not allowed in public shelters and most hotels/motels do not allow pets, so check ahead.)

Next question is whether to stay or go? If in doubt, go. If the town's emergency services announce that they are leaving the island that is a good indication that the storm is bad.

Other things to factor into your decision – do you use medical equipment that requires power? Are you in an area prone to flooding? Is your place structurally strong? Do you have hurricane shutters? If you are not comfortable with being isolated without electricity, water and/or emergency services for several days, then you must leave.

Other things to do: Fill up your vehicle's gas tank and get cash. The bridges do not close to traffic going off the island but travel at your own risk if you do not evacuate when the order is issued.

Heed the curfew warnings because they are imposed for your safety. Do not attempt to return to your home until the all-clear is issued.



A "Growing" Problem

By Jacquie Pipkin

In a study in 2010, the US Center for Disease Control reported that 68% of adult Americans are overweight or obese and that childhood obesity in America is considered an epidemic. Not surprisingly, our pets are not far behind. According to the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention (APOP), in its latest study published in February 2011, 53% of cats and more than 55% of dogs are overweight or obese.

The health risks for overweight pets are similar to those for humans. In addition to a shorter life expectancy, heart and lung problems, diabetes, arthritis, high blood pressure, kidney disease, skin conditions and cancer are more common in overweight animals. In 2009, VPI Pet Insurance (a subsidiary of Nationwide Insurance) policy holders filed more than \$17 million in claims for conditions and diseases caused by excess weight.

To determine whether your pet is overweight, check the ribs. Put your hands on the rib cage with your thumbs over the spine. If you can easily feel the ribs, your pet is probably within his normal weight range. On the other hand, if you can see your pet's ribs, she's probably underweight. In a healthy pet there should be no sagging stomach. When viewed from above or from the side, a definite waist can be seen. Your pet's belly should go up from the bottom of the rib cage to inside the thighs. If your pooch has a pudge, it's time to decrease the caloric intake and increase the exercise. Go to the APOP website to check the ideal weight ranges for your breed as well as for the suggested daily caloric intake for indoor and more active pets as well as puppies, kittens and older pets.

Check with your veterinarian before drastically overhauling your pet's diet. You want to be sure that there are no unseen, contributing factors causing weight loss or gain. Simply feeding lesser amounts of the same diet may cause vitamin and mineral deficiencies and will probably not satisfy your pet's hunger. A high-fiber, low fat diet that leaves your pet satisfied is the best option. Remember, it's not the size of the treat but the giving of the treat that matters. Treats should not comprise more than 10% of your pet's daily caloric intake. With some research and by reading the ingredients' lists, you will be able to find some healthier diet and snack alternatives.

Again, your veterinarian can offer professional advice regarding feeding and exercise guidelines specifically for your pet. You may also want to review previous Shoreline articles that featured suggestions for healthy diets and exercise regimens for dogs and cats.

"If your dog is fat, **You** aren't getting enough exercise." (Author Unknown)

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