

Disaster Preparedness and Evacuation Planning for Livestock and Equine Animals

Disaster preparedness is important for all animals, but it is particularly important for livestock and equine because of the animals' size and their shelter and transportation needs. Disasters can happen anywhere and can take many different forms, all of which may necessitate evacuation. It is imperative that you are prepared to protect your livestock and/or equine, whether by evacuating or by sheltering in place.

The leading causes of death of large animals in hurricanes and similar events are collapsed barns, dehydration, electrocution and accidents resulting from fencing failure. In a slowly evolving disaster, such as a hurricane, leave no later than 72 hours before anticipated landfall, especially if you will be hauling a high-profile trailer such as a horse trailer.

Arrange for a place to shelter your animals. Plan ahead and work within your community to establish safe shelters for farm animals. Potential facilities include fairgrounds, other farms, racetracks, humane societies, convention centers and any other safe and appropriate facilities you can find. Survey your community and potential host communities along your planned evacuation route. Become familiar with at least two possible evacuation routes well in advance and secure safe transportation.

Take all of your disaster supplies with you or make sure they will be available at your evacuation site. You should have or be able to readily obtain feed, water, veterinary supplies, handling equipment, tools and generators, if necessary.

Inform friends and neighbors of your evacuation plans. Post detailed instructions in several places including the barn office or tack room, the trailer and barn entrances to ensure they are accessible to emergency workers in case you are not able to evacuate the large animals yourself. Important documents for your livestock and equine should be taken with you in a waterproof envelope, color photographs for identification, emergency telephone numbers and veterinary documents such as medical history, Coggins tests and history of allergic reactions.

James C. Robinson Escambia County Equestrian Center located at 7750 Mobile Highway in Pensacola, may accept equine animals during an evacuation as a result of hurricanes, based on the severity of the approaching

storm.

Once the stalls have been filled, people may bring their animals and keep them in their animal travel trailers if desired. All care of the animals will be at the responsibility of the animal owners. No feeding or care services will be provided by the county or pet shelter managers.