

Mitigation for Hurricanes

Mitigation consists of adopting and enforcing appropriate planning ordinances that do not allow building in areas where hurricanes will strike and where extensive floods from hurricanes can be predicted to occur. Construction standards for hurricane-susceptible areas should ensure that buildings are resistant to wind damage and elevated above sea flood level.

Homes should be retrofitted to withstand wind and flooding. Coastal homes in flood hazard areas should be elevated. All windows should be shuttered, and structural connectors reinforced. Hurricane strapping should be installed. Unreinforced masonry should be strengthened. Homeowners and renters should buy flood insurance policies.

Before a hurricane, pet owners should identify the following in the immediate area and within a 100-mile radius: motels and hotels that allow pets, boarding kennels, veterinary offices with boarding facilities, grooming shops, dog or horse racetracks, and approved areas at fairgrounds or parks. In addition, individuals should be encouraged to set up “buddy systems” with friends or relatives who live outside their area, places to which an animal can be safely evacuated. Local volunteer organizations can assist with the development of these lists (e.g., local American Red Cross chapters, horse clubs, and veterinary practices).

If a horse is not accustomed to being transported in a trailer, its owner or caretaker should practice leading and loading it regularly in a variety of circumstances, such as rain, extreme heat, at night, and when the person is tired. A flood-free evacuation route should be identified.

A household inventory with pictures or a video should be made and kept with insurance policies in a safe place, such as a safety deposit box. The inventory should include items in the barn or elsewhere that are used to maintain and care for animals.