

Santa Rosa County Emergency Animal Plan

Introduction

Based on human and pet population estimates from 2007, there were 82 million cats living with humans in this country. Three out of ten people reading this guide will own a cat. Combine this statistic with the number of domestic dogs, 72 million, gives us an estimated number of 154 million pets in this nation¹. In the same year, the human population of the United States was estimated to be 301 million². There is almost one pet for every two people. This fact alone is staggering; and, considering that dog and cat owners spent 23.2 million dollars on vet expenditures in 2008³, it's safe to say that pet welfare is an important aspect of daily life.

Historical incidents have shown that citizens may refuse to evacuate from a disaster area when their pets are not provided for. These persons may choose to shelter-in-place with their animals and manage the consequences of a disaster alone. Depending on the severity of destruction, rescue workers may not reach such individuals for days or weeks. Human life and safety would clearly be in jeopardy during such situations. Santa Rosa County is located on the Gulf Coast of Florida and very vulnerable to the effects of hurricanes and other natural disasters. Considering these facts, ensuring animal welfare by incorporating household pet and service animal considerations into emergency operational plans is vital to protecting human life and safety.

Purpose

The Santa Rosa County Animal Emergency Plan is guided by the following assumptions:

- Human lives may be lost due to the refusal of owners to evacuate without their pets or livestock. Public education by the County and animal-related organizations is needed to make the people aware of pet sheltering facilities available, and the need to plan in advance.
- The large number of homeless/injured pets, livestock, and exotic animals, would be a health and nuisance/bite threat which would necessitate a response to address the capture and subsequent sheltering of these animals.
- Triage and treatment of sick and injured animals to include euthanasia, if necessary,

¹ American Veterinary Medical Association. U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook, 2007. (<http://www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/sourcebook.asp>).

² United States Census Bureau. Population Estimates. (<http://www.census.gov/popest/estimates.php>).

³ American Veterinary Medical Association. U.S. Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook, 2007. (<http://www.avma.org/reference/marketstats/sourcebook.asp>).

would have to be accomplished by veterinarians, Santa Rosa County State ET certified animal services employees.

- Commercial pet/livestock food would need to be imported into the county by prior arrangement with vendors. Food drops for wild animals would be organized by various wild-animal-related groups and state agencies.
- The accumulation of shelter animal waste and carcasses must be removed and transported to approved solid waste dumping sites.
- The accumulation of animal carcasses throughout the County must be removed and transported to approved solid waste dumping sites and/or burnt on site.
- Sheltered animals will need to be re-united with their owners after the disaster.

In advisement of these assumptions, this plan has been developed to:

1. Minimize loss of life and/or suffering of pet owners due to insufficient care for pets.
2. Ensure the humane care and treatment of animals during emergencies
3. Formulate a comprehensive plan for rescue, evacuation, transportation, shelter, and recovery for animals within Santa Rosa County.

Authorities

Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards Act of 2006 – Amends the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (the Stafford Act). The Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act ensures that state and local emergency preparedness operational plans address the needs of individuals with household pets and service animals prior to, during, and following a major disaster or emergency. Specifically, the PETS Act ensures that state and local plans address the rescue, care, shelter, and essential needs of individuals and their pets and animals. The Act also states that financial contributions can be made to states and local authorities for animal emergency preparedness purposes, including the procurement, construction, leasing, or renovating of emergency shelter facilities and materials that will accommodate people with pets and service animals⁴.

FEMA Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.19 – Identifies the expenses related to state and local governments' emergency pet evacuation and sheltering activities that are eligible for

⁴ United States Congress. Pets Evacuation and Transportation Act of 2006. Public Law 109-308. Approved January 3, 2006. (www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h109-3858).

reimbursement following a major disaster declaration under Category B, Emergency Protective Measures, and provisions of the Public Assistance Program. The terms household pet, service animal, and congregate household pet shelters are defined. The policy details eligible reimbursements related to shelter facilities, supplies and commodities, eligible labor, equipment, emergency veterinary services, transportation, shelter safety and security, cleaning and restoration, and the removal and disposal of animal carcasses⁵.

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 – Provides enforceable standards to eliminate discrimination towards people with disabilities. This law requires that all businesses and organizations that serve the public to allow people with disabilities to bring their service animals into all areas of the facility where customers normally go. Service animals are animals that are individually trained to perform tasks for people with disabilities. A person with a disability cannot be asked to remove their service animal from the premises unless: (1) the animal is out of control and the animal's owner does not take effective action to control it or (2) the animal poses a direct threat to the health or safety of others⁶.

Responsible Agencies

Santa Rosa County includes numerous organizations relating to animal welfare and emergency planning, preparedness, response, and recovery. The following organizations are directly involved with emergency management and animal care; therefore they may be included in the implementation of the Santa Rosa County Animal Emergency Plan:

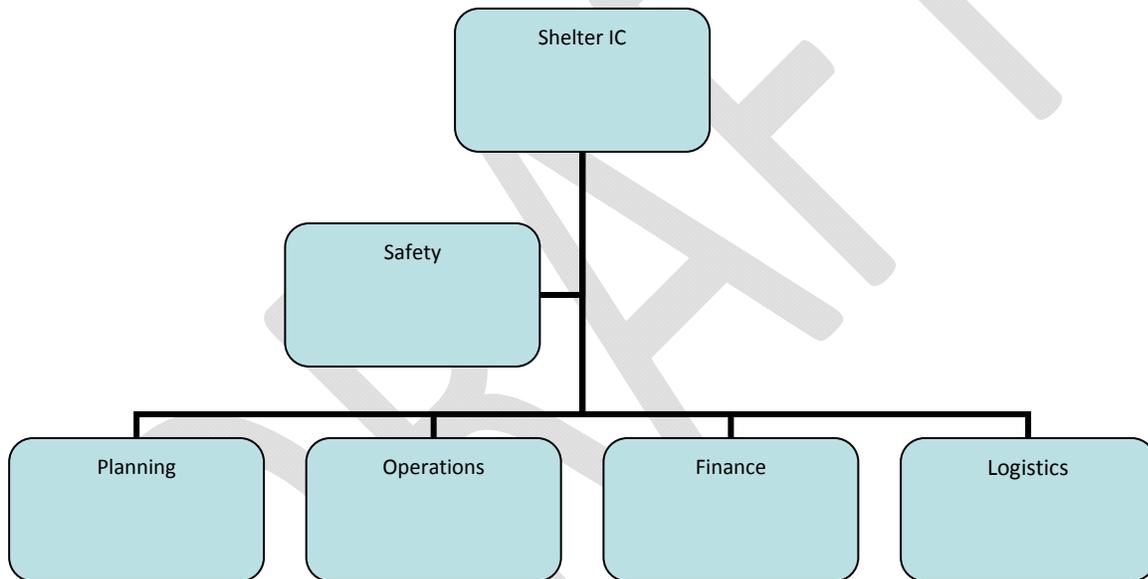
- Santa Rosa County Animal Services
- Santa Rosa County Health Department/ Environmental Health
- Santa Rosa County Cooperative Extension Office
- US Department of Agriculture: (County Office)
- Natural Resources
- Conservation Services
- Farm Services Agency
- US Department of Agriculture District 1
- Northwest Florida Veterinarian Association

⁵ Federal Emergency Management Agency, Disaster Assistance Directorate. Disaster Assistance Policy 9523.19: Eligible Costs Related to Pet Evacuations and Sheltering, 2007. (http://www.fema.gov/government/grant/pa/9523_19.shtm).

⁶ United States Department of Justice. Americans with Disabilities Act. (<http://www.ada.gov/>).

- Black Water Stables / Division of Forestry (Over flow kennels for dogs)
- Humane Society of the United States (H.S.U.S.)
- Gulf Breeze Zoo
- Santa Rosa County Sheriffs Department\ Live Stock Officer
- Santa Rosa County Horse Assistance Council
- North West Florida Animal Clinic (large Animal Veterinarian)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Volunteer Resources

Concepts of Operation



Santa Rosa County Animal Services will be the primary entity for coordinating other agencies involved in the emergency plan. This office will also be responsible for assessing and determining the resources needed for implementation and operation of a pet friendly shelter. Animal Services Office will designate one individual who will serve as the incident commander in the event of an emergency. Emergency Management will form a committee which will be responsible for the development, maintenance, and improvement of the plan. The responsibilities of each agency will be as follows:

- A. Emergency Management Office
 1. Develop plan
 2. Provide coordination and logistical support when necessary
 3. Distribute information to the public.
- B. Animal Services
 1. Coordination and oversight of plan
 2. Upon a disaster designate AERC
 3. Distribute information to the public
- C. Veterinary Agencies
 1. Provide pet care during an emergency
 2. Assist in distributing information to the public

Estimated Number of Pets in Santa Rosa County

In order to prepare facilities in advance, it is important to estimate the number of pets in Santa Rosa County. The American Veterinary Medical Association's US Pet Ownership and Demographics Sourcebook provide formulas to calculate this estimate: Companion Animals (Pets) - the number of pet-owning households = $.589 \times 43,793$ (number of households in Santa Rosa County according to the 2006 census) = approximately 25,794 pet households in Santa Rosa County

- Dogs = $.534 \times 25,794$ = approximately 13,773 dogs.
- Cats = $.598 \times 25,794$ = approximately 15,424 cats.
- Birds = $.126 \times 25,794$ = approximately 3,250 birds.
- Rabbits/Ferrets = $.023 \times 25,794$ = approximately 593 rabbits/ferrets.

Animals Covered

For an animal to be accepted into the pet friendly shelter it must be pre-registered. The registration form can be found in Appendix B. All animals must have a collar and rabies tag, proof of current vaccinations, and proof of ownership. Pet owners should bring food, leash (if applicable), toys/comfort items, crate, cage, kennel, and bedding with their animals to the pet friendly shelter at the time of entry. Service animals are allowed in any building accessible by the person and to the extent of Federal, State or local laws. In addition to service animals, the following animals are covered under the Santa Rosa County Emergency Animal Plan:

Dogs/Puppies:

- Must be in a crate or kennel large enough for the animal to turn and lie down.
- Aggressive or growling dogs will be admitted only with the approval of the on-call veterinarian, animal services officer or kennel tech.

Cats/Kittens:

- Domestic cats only, no feral or wild-trapped.
- Must be in a crate or kennel.

Animals that are NOT permitted

- Exotics (primates, snakes, etc.)
- Ferrets
- Birds
- Rodents
- Rabbits
- Spiders/Insects
- Farm/Agricultural animals

Equine animals

The Escambia County Equestrian Center accepts equine animals during an evacuation as a result of hurricanes. Once the stalls have been filled, people may bring their animals and keep them in their animal travel trailers. 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.

The Equestrian Center

7750 Mobile Highway

Pensacola, FL 32526

(850) 941-6042 office

(866) 585-1490, Toll Free

For other equine evacuation options: <http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/animals/disasterprep.html>

Animal Rescue

The Pet Friendly Shelter cannot take in rescued animals. The shelter is providing pet owners in need of public shelter, the opportunity to evacuate and shelter with their pets at the same location. Animal rescue will be coordinated through ESF 17 and animals will be taken to the appropriate local animal organization.

Animal Transportation

Any persons requiring transportation for animals must have animals appropriately crated/caged for transport. Animals must also have proof of vaccinations and be properly marked for identification. Transportation will be provided only to and from the pet friendly shelter.

Mitigation

Mitigation is necessary to decrease the likelihood of a disaster from happening. Because the main focus of this plan is on the safety of animals, there are several steps owners can take to protect and ensure the survival and safety of their pets before a disaster occurs. Pet owners are responsible for developing emergency plans for their pets.

Pet owners can take steps ahead of time to prepare for their pets in times of disaster. Along with a family emergency kit, pet supplies should be made readily available. Each pet kit should include a 5 day supply of:

- water and food
- medication
- first aid kit
- small trash bags,
- a comfort item such as a blanket or toy
- a cage for travel
- phone numbers and addresses of local animal shelters and hospitals
- a picture of the pet
- proof of pet vaccinations to include rabies

It is important that pet owners make sure their pet's identification tags are up to date and securely fastened to their pet's collar so in the event that the pet goes missing or is separated from their owners, it can be identified and returned. Up-to-date tags also ensure quick entry and acceptance into the pet friendly shelter.

In the event of an official evacuation order, pet owners should be aware that most public emergency shelters do not allow animals. Pets will be allowed only in designated pet friendly shelters. Pets will be allowed in the shelter on a first come, first serve basis. Santa Rosa County continues to recommend that pet owners pre-plan for their evacuations and the accommodations for their pets through in-county and out of county resources to include hotels, motels, veterinary hospital border facilities and other border facilities. For a list of local pet friendly accommodations please refer to Appendix A. The following website offers a listing of pet friendly hotels <http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/animals/disasterprep.html>.

Public Information

Educational information will be made available to the public regarding proper procedures for their pets during an emergency. Santa Rosa County authorities will coordinate with the media, local shelters, and local pet supply stores to distribute information regarding important animal safety information and updates to the Animal Emergency Response Plan. A copy of the plan

and the animal pre-registration form are available on the animal services website <http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/animals/disasterprep.html>.

Review

The review and update of this plan is the responsibility of the Santa Rosa County Emergency Management Division and the Animal Services Division. Review of the plan will take place after a major event by a thorough debriefing session. Improvements recognized in the after-action report will be included in future implementation of the plan.

Pet Friendly Shelter

Facility: The Pet Friendly Shelter will be located at the Avalon Middle School. The area to be used is identified by a map in Appendix C.

Avalon Middle School
5445 King Arthurs Way
Milton, Florida 32583

The design standard of the facility is ASCE 7-93, wind speed of 110 mph. There are storm shield hurricane barriers installed on all exterior windows and door openings in the main building. The facility does not have HVAC on generator power. This facility is located north of Interstate 10 and is not located in an evacuation zone. It is in a Zone C flood zone which means there is a low risk from rainfall/basin flooding. Due to the use of rocks in the construction of the roof, do not park within 100 feet of the building. Santa Rosa County and School District will not be responsible for damage to vehicles.

Approved Shelter Areas:

Main Hallway

Science Lab – Room 511 (1200 sq.ft – 725 sq ft. working space)

Science Lab – Room 514 (1200 sq.ft – 814 sq ft. working space)

Lockers and Showers (1100 sq.ft)

Cafeteria (6031 sq.ft)

Exercise Area – yard between 500 and 600 hallways

Because of the various sizes of animal crates and various sizes and types of the pets, the capacity of the facility is merely an estimate. For initial planning purposes, potential maximum capacity of the facility is estimated to range from 100 - 150 pets.

Facility Preparation

Once the need to open a pet friendly shelter has been determined, the facility must be prepared to accept pets in a manner that will minimize impacts of the pet friendly shelter operations on the facility itself. Supplies for the initial set up (carpet runners, plastic sheeting , duct tape, etc.) will be purchased by the county. An incident commander of the facility will work to identify specific operational procedures to allow for a safe and healthy pet shelter environment.

Intake and Registration Process:

A person must register for both the pet friendly shelter and the general population shelter at the time of entry. Registration forms and methods to track people and pets that go in and out of the facility during shelter operations will be managed by the incident commander. These procedures can be found in appendix C.

Separation of Sheltered Pets and People:

Owners will be expected to feed, exercise and clean up after their pets. During the height of the storm, pets and people must remain separated. Should a health issues arise with the pet, the owner will be contacted. If for any reason the pet owner cannot be contacted and shelter staff feel veterinarian services are needed, shelter staff will seek the services of the on call veterinarian. Any costs/expenses associated with these services will be the pet owners responsibility. **Pets will not be allowed in the people area at any time.** Pet owners will accept and acknowledge shelter requirements by providing their signature at check-in.

Staffing:

Staffing will be determined by severity of the event. Ideally, there will be four staff members present per twelve hour shift. Staffing will consist of Animal Services staff (as available) and trained volunteers. Pet shelter staff and people will be fed by the American Red Cross as a support function. A Deputy and a Paramedic/EMT will be stationed at the shelter.

Transportation:

Pet owners who will require transportation to the shelter can call 850-983-INFO (4636) to make arrangements. It is required that their pet be in a cage and that the pet owner will be able to lift the pet in its cage to board and exit the bus/vehicle. The drivers' are not responsible for the movement of any pets, pet cages or property. People must call only when they are 100% "ready to go" so that when transportation arrives, they can immediately board the vehicle.

Vaccinations:

You must provide current vaccination records for your pet. If none is provided, a veterinarian will provide the vaccination at your expense.

Discharging of Pets:

Shelter staff will verify that people leave with the pets they arrived with.

Abandoned Pets:

Any abandoned pets during the disaster or any pet being left behind when the shelter closes will be referred to the Animal Services Division and will be subject to County ordinance 2004-30.

SECTION 9. IMPOUNDMENT. *In the event the owner of any animal impounded under any section of this Ordinance fails to reclaim it within five (5) days from the impounding date, the County animal shelter may make such disposition of the animal as is in the public interest. It is lawful for the County Animal Shelter to release suitable, unclaimed animals to new owners on payment of required fees and provided that any animal, so released, is vaccinated as required by Section 6 of this Ordinance. New owners shall enter into a written agreement with the County Animal Shelter guaranteeing that the animal will be sterilized within thirty (30) days of the release to the new owner or prior to the animal's sexual maturity. The County Animal Shelter shall require a new owner to place a neuter and spay deposit, which deposit shall be refundable upon presentation to the County Animal Shelter of written evidence by the veterinarian performing the sterilization that the animal has been sterilized. It shall be a civil infraction, punishable as provided in Section 19 of this Ordinance, for any new owner who has entered into such an agreement, not to have the animal sterilized as required by this section.*

Impoundment, redemption, and adoption fees shall be charged as established by the Board of County Commissioners. An owner claiming an unvaccinated animal will be required to have the animal vaccinated within 72 hours as required in Section 8 of this ordinance.

Shelter Demobilization:

Once the facility closes, shelter staff will pack up all equipment and supplies. Non-perishable goods will be stored for use in future pet shelter activations. Perishable items will be provided to the Animal Services Shelter for use, donation, or disposal as appropriate. The facility and grounds will be left in the condition it was received and thoroughly sanitized and sprayed for fleas immediately following closing and before any students are allowed in the facility.

APPENDIX A

Santa Rosa County Hotels/Motels Accepting Pets Disasters/Hurricane Emergencies

NAME OF HOTEL	ADDRESS	PHONE	PET ROOMS	CHARGE	PETS ALLOWED	CONTACT
COMFORT INN	4962 HWY 87 S	623-1511	ALL	\$10+TAX PER NIGHT	INDOOR PETS	GAYNELL/LAURA
EMERALD SANDS INN	6436 HWY 90	623-3821	NO LIMIT	BASED ON SIZE	UNDER 20LBS	MARSHA
RED CARPET INN	4905 HWY 87 S	626-7631	3, 4	\$10	UP TO 20LBS	JO/PETE
RED ROOF INN	2672 AVALON BLVD	995-6100	ALL	NONE	UP TO 30LBS	PAMELA
COMFORT INN NAS CORRY	3 NEW WARRINGTON RD	455-3233	101	\$25	DOMESTIC	TASHA
PALM COURT INN	6911 PENSACOLA BLVD	479-3800	120	NONE	DOMESTIC	TINA
LA QUINTA INN	7750 N DAVIS HWY	474-0411	130	NONE	UNDER 25LBS	SCOTT
MERRITT LODGE	30 N NEW WARRINGTON RD	453-2904	25	\$35	UNDER 25LBS	ROBIN
MOTEL 6	7226 PLANTATION	474-1060	80	NONE	SMALL PETS	FRONT DESK
MOTEL 6	7827 N DAVIS HWY	476-5386	108	NONE	DOMESTIC	VICKI
RAMADA INN BAYVIEW	7001 SCENIC HWY	477-7155	150	\$25-\$50	UNDER 20LBS	LINDA
RED ROOF INN	6919 PENSACOLA BLVD	478-4499	120	\$15-\$50	DOMESTIC	LES
RESIDENCE INN	I-10/DAVIS HWY	476-7960	108	NONE	UNDER 80LBS	MERLENE
COMFORT INN	601 E CHASE ST	432-0202	78	\$100	DOMESTIC	SANDRA
SUPER 8 MOTEL	7220 PLANTATION RD	476-8038	60	\$10	UNDER 50LBS	SHAH
TRAVELODGE	6950 PENSACOLA BLVD	473-0222	60	\$50	DOMESTIC	GLENN
UPDATED 05/2008						



Pet Friendly Shelter Registration Form

General Contact Information

Full Name:			
Physical Address:			
City, State, Zip Code:			
Mailing Address:			
City, State, Zip Code:			
Home Phone:			
Cell Phone:			

Additional Information

Primary Language:	
If primary language is not English, does anyone in your family speak English? Who? :	
Do you need transportation:	
If yes, do you require any special accommodations? :	
If method of transportation is personal vehicle, please provide license plate information:	
Total family members registered:	

Family Members Information

<i>Family Member #1</i>		<i>Family Member #2</i>	
Name:		Name:	
Age:		Age:	
Gender:		Gender:	
<i>Family Member #3</i>		<i>Family Member #4</i>	
Name:		Name:	
Age:		Age:	
Gender:		Gender:	
Are there any members of your family who currently need medical attention or need assistance taking medication? (If yes, please specify):			