

*News Release*



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#090929-PFTRAINING

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### ***Volunteers Sought for Santa Rosa County Pet Friendly Shelter***

Santa Rosa County Animal Services and Emergency Management are looking for animal loving volunteers to assist with operations for the newly created pet friendly disaster shelter. A two-hour long training course, titled Partner Agency Shelter Operations Workshop, will be offered free of charge by the American Red Cross to interested residents on Monday, October 5 at 2 p.m. at Santa Rosa County Emergency Management located at 4499 Pine Forest Road in Milton. Volunteers will be asked to undergo a basic criminal background check. To register or for more information, contact emergency management at (850) 983-5360.

The Partner Agency Shelter Operations Workshop is an instructor led course designed to provide an orientation to the activities and duties performed by disaster shelter workers and volunteers. Upon completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Identify what services are involved in operating a shelter.
- Describe the roles and responsibilities of each shelter operation position.
- Describe important shelter resident information.
- Assume responsibility for each shelter function.
- Know what shelter supplies are necessary and how those supplies can be obtained.

The pet friendly shelter was developed by county staff because historical events have shown that citizens may refuse to evacuate from a disaster area when their pets cannot go with them. Santa Rosa County recommends that pet owners plan for their evacuations and utilize other accommodations such as pet friendly hotels or staying with family or friends if possible. The pet friendly shelter is for dogs, cats and their owners. Space will be limited and the disaster shelter should be a last resort for those who have no other place to go. Currently, Santa Rosa County has approximately 25,794 households with pets.

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