

# Pawsitive Press

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## Summer Heat and Hurricane Preparedness

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Summer is here, and with all the fun in the sun comes a risk of heat stroke and hurricanes. Not only do we worry for ourselves, but also for our family pets. If the weather is not safe for us, it most likely is not safe for them either. Here are some tips for managing the Florida weather.

### What is Heat Stroke and how can I prevent it from happening to my pet?

Heat stroke is a common emergency here in Florida. Many families enjoy our beaches and causeways this time of year and the constant activity combined with the heat can quickly become an emergency. If your pet becomes over heated or collapses from heat exposure, place a towel moistened with cool water along the non-haired belly area or abdomen of your pet.



Remove the towel, dampen it, and reapply frequently. It is imperative to seek immediate veterinary care while providing this conservative therapy. Commonly people want to submerge the pet in an ice bath; this can cause severe problems and should not be done. To prevent Heat Stroke while enjoying the Florida sun, it is ideal to always travel with collapsible water bowls and fresh water. Having an umbrella to provide shade is also a great way to provide a cool area for your pet to rest. Please be aware that consuming large amounts of water quickly can also create problems, so limit and control the amount and duration of drinking. A good way to do this is to offer 1-2 cups every 10 minutes until your pet has had their fill.

### What do I do if I accidentally lock my pet in my car?

This is probably one of the most frightening things to inadvertently do in Florida. Please note that it is illegal to leave your pet in a car. Sadly, sometimes while running errands, getting fuel, going to and from dog park, groomers, or vet, pets can lock themselves in a running or non-running car. Sometimes these things just happen. My intention is to remind you that the police, sheriff and local locksmiths do not provide this as an emergency service. This is something that at all costs you should do your best to avoid completely or at least have a plan. Some ideas are to have your key in your pocket at all times when you are outside your car and traveling with your pet. Other suggestions are to have a hideaway key on your car, have a friend or family member that can come and help

**Summer Tips**  
**Continued**

you when needed, have a membership to AAA, or have a relationship with a locksmith and the phone number available. Unfortunately, it is illegal for anyone other than yourself to “break into” your car, and often with today’s technology the tempered glass is virtually indestructible. Please know that if your pet is locked in the car, there is potential for heat stroke and even death. Seek veterinary attention immediately if you have any concerns about the length of time and any potential side effects. We are here for you.

**Where can my pets and I go in the case of a hurricane evacuation and what do I need?**

Most emergency shelters do not allow pets due to risk of people being allergic or bitten, and pets fighting. Check with your local emergency management officials to see if exceptions are made for service pets. Locate and map pet friendly hotels in neighboring counties and states that will be on your evacuation route. Be sure to know weight restrictions and if any proof of vaccination is necessary.

Have a labeled carrier easily accessible, with personal items such as your pet’s bed, blanket, or toy so that there is something calming and familiar to them. Have food and water bowls, as well as enough food to last at least a week packed into a waterproof container. Dry food is preferred to avoid the concern of keeping food cool, tightly sealed, having a can opener, etc. Remember to include some bottled water for your pet, too. Pack an up to date vaccine record with you and any additional information like rabies certificates, microchip numbers, a recent photo, medication instructions, etc. in a waterproof bag. Be sure to have leashes and collars for your pet, even cats. Cats can become very stressed and difficult to hold when they are frightened.

**Should you get my pet microchipped just in case?**

Yes! We strongly advise having your pet microchipped regardless of if you are in an evacuation zone. This way in case they

accidentally escape and lose their collar, they have some form of id for people to locate you. The microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and goes underneath the skin between the shoulder blades. Veterinary clinics and shelters have scanners to read the number. Then we call the appropriate association to help locate your information so that we can reunite you and your pet.

**PET EMERGENCY SUPPLIES**

- ✓ Food
- ✓ Water
- ✓ Medicines and Medical Records
- ✓ First Aid Kit
- ✓ Collar with ID tag, harness or leash
- ✓ Important Documents
- ✓ Crate or other pet carrier
- ✓ Sanitation
- ✓ A picture of you and your pet together
- ✓ Familiar Items

Click on the picture below for more details!



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