



Hardee County Emergency Management

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Pet Friendly Hurricane Shelter during Local State of Emergency

Hardee County plans to open its first “pet friendly” hurricane shelter since the 2004 season. Bowling Green Elementary School at 4530 Church Avenue will be the new shelter, where pet owners can bring their pets during declared emergencies and shelter in the facility. The shelter is specifically designated for pet owners who live in the county evacuation areas and who have pets that they wish to bring with them.

The new pet friendly shelter is the creation of the Hardee County Emergency Management and the School Board of Hardee County.

Under the program, residents of the emergency evacuation area and their pets will be sheltered in separate designated areas of the facility with Hardee County Animal Control caring for the pets during the storm and the Hardee County School staff managing the shelter.

Pre-registration for 2018 and 2019 hurricane seasons are being accepted now. Owners are required to show proof that they reside in the county and that their pets have up-to-date vaccinations and rabies shots.

“The pet friendly shelter concept is a very good idea, because we know of instances where people with pets have elected to stay in their homes in the evacuation zone during declared emergencies because they had no place that would take their pets,” said Jill Newman, Director of Emergency Management.

Despite the existence of this new shelter, people who live in the emergency evacuation area

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are strongly urged to make prior arrangements to go to the homes of friends and relatives who reside outside the evacuation area during declared emergencies. This is usually a more comfortable alternative for both people and pets than an emergency evacuation shelter.

We will be at Tractor Supply in Wauchula, 1101 US Hwy 17 South on September 16, from 1:00p – 3:00p to answer any questions and for you to pre-register if you are in an area that is normally ordered to evacuate such as low-lying areas, mobile homes, RVs or older constructed homes and you have nowhere else to shelter.

Residents who would like to pre-register for the new “pet friendly” shelter can also do so in person at the Hardee County Emergency Management, 404 W. Orange St., Wauchula, FL, 863-773-6373 or download the registration form at www.hardeecounty.net/eoc.htm and bring it by or email it to EM@hardeecounty.net

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