

## **AVMA Situation Report 3 – Hurricane Charley**

Date: 8/18/04

Location: Southwest Florida

### **AVMA Veterinary Medical Assistance Team (VMAT) Update**

#### ***Incident Update:***

VMAT-3, North Carolina, has arrived in Florida led by Dr. James Hamilton. Currently VMAT-3 is working in conjunction with Emergency Management and the Humane Society of the United States. VMAT is co-located with the Humane Society of the United States at the Carmelita Recreational Complex in Punta Gorda, FL. This site is approximately 1 mile from the main Emergency Operations Center in Charlotte County.

The VMAT mission submitted by Florida includes assessment and support of the local veterinary infrastructure, and assessment and treatment of farm and companion animals.

VMAT-3 members started arriving in Florida very early Tuesday morning. The Team Commander, Dr. Jim Hamilton, has made contact with the Department of Agriculture representatives, the State Veterinarian, the State Veterinary Medical Association, and the humane organizations active in the area.

The VMAT command site set-up was completed early this morning, just before an unannounced visit from Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response.

VMAT-3 has sent out two 4-person strike teams to assess veterinary issues in the surrounding areas. The first team responded to Santa Bell Island and has not filed an official report at this time. However, preliminary reports indicate that no major animal issues have been identified at this time. More information needs to be gathered, and an official report from the area will be filed later today. On another positive note, the City Manager of Santa Bell Island had the foresight to establish a system whereby if the citizens of Santa Bell Island are evacuated and are unable to evacuate with their animals, they have a house key system set-up for city workers to be able to gain access to the homes and provide adequate nutritional care for the animals until their owners return home.

The second VMAT-3 strike team is currently visiting Arcadia and Wauchula in order to assess needs of local veterinarians and animal care facilities. Their report will be filed at a later time.

At this time, VMAT is providing medical care to injured animals. So far the injuries have proven minor in nature, but as the assessments continue they will be in a better position to evaluate all of the resulting animal/veterinary/public health issues that may arise. Surprisingly, large animal calls have not been as frequent as anticipated, and at this time no calls regarding cattle have come in to VMAT. VMAT has addressed some minor equine and small animal issues. VMAT will continue to monitor the situation in order to address issues as they arise.

Additional Hurricane Charley issues are addressed in the following updates from other disaster relief organizations.

Anyone wishing to help in the efforts should visit [www.animalhelp.com](http://www.animalhelp.com).

*For information on how you can help support VMAT and animal disaster preparedness, please visit [www.avmf.org](http://www.avmf.org).*

*For information on how you can prepare for disasters visit [www.avma.org/disaster](http://www.avma.org/disaster).*

### **Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) Update**

**<http://www.fema.gov/news/event.fema?id=3455>**

Critical needs being addressed:

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture has approved mass replacement of August food stamp benefits for recipients in Polk, Hardee, Manatee, Charlotte, Lee, Desoto and Sarasota counties. More than 48,000 households will have \$8.6 million in benefits electronically added to their food stamp accounts. Additional requests may be received early next week.
- Three Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (FL-3, FL-5, FL-6) are supporting damaged or destroyed hospitals. An additional three teams remain staged in the area awaiting potential assignments. Ten additional DMATs remain on alert at their home stations. A two-person epidemiology team is at the Sarasota Health Department and the Florida Department of Health has requested a second public health team. A Veterinary Medical Assistance Team (VMAT) from North Carolina is being deployed for a veterinary mission.
- FEMA Urban Search and Rescue teams (FL-TF1, FL-TF-2, TN-TF1) have completed their initial sweep in Punta Gorda and secondary searches of all 36 affected trailer parks. Operations on Pine, Cayo Costa and North Captiva islands have been completed.
- Approximately 865,000 customers remain without power (down from a high of nearly 1.6 million). Seventy communications sites are operating on back-up power.

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Three days after Hurricane Charley slammed into the Florida coast, the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency approved the first disaster aid checks to help victims of the storm. In addition to providing disaster assistance to individuals, FEMA continues to deliver life-saving and life-sustaining resources in response to the needs identified by the state and local governments.

"We are working diligently with our partners - including the state of Florida and the local governments in the affected communities, other federal agencies and volunteer organizations - to address the needs of the storm victims," said Michael D. Brown, Under Secretary of Homeland Security for Emergency Preparedness and Response. "Naturally, the first priority is to address the most pressing needs and the most vulnerable populations."

Shipments, staging and distribution of water, ice, and generators continue to be coordinated with the state. Large quantities of infant formula, baby cereal, fruits, vegetables, and meat continue to arrive. An airlift of 80 tractor-trailer loads carrying 180,000 gallons of water is scheduled to arrive at Lakeland Airport later today. At the request of the state, beginning Wednesday, August 18, 40 tractor-trailer loads carrying 90,000 gallons of purified water will arrive daily to support affected areas.

County health departments continue to conduct water quality testing as potable water continues to be an issue, and wastewater treatment plants are inoperable in Lee and Volusia counties.

As of 3 a.m. Tuesday morning, power had been reestablished to approximately 1 million households, leaving approximately 774,000 households still without power. Power crews are attempting to meet the most critical needs where life support is an issue such as hospitals, assisted living centers and long term care facilities.

To address the critical need for housing, FEMA has 650 housing inspectors fanning out over the storm-ravaged communities to assess damage. As of 7:00 a.m. Tuesday, 1,070 disaster assistance payments totaling more than \$2 million were issued, with many being issued by electronic fund transfer and already showing up in bank accounts. In addition, the first travel trailers will arrive at a commercial park in Venice, Fla., this afternoon from a staging area in Tampa.

Registrations for aid poured in at the rate of 2,000 per hour and by Monday evening, 23,535 persons had registered for federal disaster aid. FEMA reminds applicants that only primary residences are eligible for federal disaster assistance; vacation homes are not.

By Tuesday morning, four Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) were open, with five additional centers at mobile sites expected to open by Wednesday night. While it is not necessary for disaster applicants to visit a DRC, these centers are staffed with representatives of local, state, federal and voluntary agencies to provide one-on-one assistance to resolve particular issues.

FEMA's National Urban Search and Rescue program has completed its scheduled grid searches. The three teams, two from Florida and one from Tennessee, have been demobilized.

Three Disaster Medical Assistance Teams (DMATs) continue to provide assistance at damaged hospitals, including Charlotte Regional Medical Center in Punta Gorda and St. Joseph's Hospital in Port Charlotte. One of FEMA's Veterinary Medical Assistance Team arrived in Florida Monday night from North Carolina and will operate a field hospital in Carmelita Park, a stadium in Punta Gorda, to treat animals injured in the storm. The local humane society has set up an area to treat both large and small animals.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains

first responders, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

**Humane Society of the United States Update**

Date: August 18, 2004

Filed By:HSUS Disaster Animal Response Team

***Incident Update:***

How to Help and How to Get Help

**DONATIONS**

Donations of Supplies (in-kind) - Florida State Emergency Support Function-15 (ESF-15) - 1-800-FL HELP 1 All donations of supplies and equipment must be directed to this number, as transportation of material donations is very difficult and must be prearranged.

**VOLUNTEERS**

Contact the Florida Emergency Operation Center at 850-921-0326 or to [esf17@fleoc.org](mailto:esf17@fleoc.org) or go to [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org). Volunteers for non-animal issues go to [esf@fleoc.org](mailto:esf@fleoc.org) or 1-800-FL HELP 1 or go to [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org).

**ANIMAL DISASTER SERVICE FACILITIES**

Suncoast Humane Society  
6781 San Casa  
Englewood, FL 34224  
941-474-7884

HSUS Animal Disaster Service Center  
Located at the Carmelita Recreational Complex in Punta Gorda FL, at the corner of Florida and Charlotte streets, across from the county public works department at 7000 Florida St. This facility is about a mile and a half from the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center set up at the Charlotte County Airport.

Promenade Animal Relief Center  
Located at the Promenade Mall at Olean and Route 41 in Port Charlotte, FL

**PET SUPPLIES (TO GET SUPPLIES- DO NOT SEND DONATED SUPPLIES TO ANY CENTERS. CALL 1-800- FL HELP 1)**

Suncoast Humane Society  
6781 San Casa  
Englewood, FL 34224  
941-474-7884

HSUS Animal Disaster Service Center  
Carmelita Recreational Complex  
Punta Gorda FL

At the corner of Florida and Charlotte streets, located across from the county public works department at 7000 Florida St. This facility is about a mile and a half from the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center set up at the Charlotte County Airport.

Promenade (Mall) Animal Relief Center Olean and Route 41 Port Charlotte, FL

#### VETERINARY SERVICES

Suncoast Humane Society  
6781 San Casa  
Englewood, FL 34224  
941-474-7884

HSUS Animal Disaster Service Center  
Carmelita Recreational Complex  
Punta Gorda FL

At the corner of Florida and Charlotte streets, located across from the county public works department at 7000 Florida St. This facility is about a mile and a half from the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center set up at the Charlotte County Airport.

(Note: Veterinary services are not at the Promenade Mall facility.)

#### TO GIVE UP A PET

Some people find that with their home destroyed or severely damaged, it is impossible for them to provide a secure home for their pet. Owners wishing to give up a pet so that local humane societies can locate a permanent home in a safe area, contact:

Suncoast Humane Society  
6781 San Casa  
Englewood, FL 34224  
941-474-7884

HSUS Animal Disaster Service Center  
Carmelita Recreational Complex  
Punta Gorda FL

At the corner of Florida and Charlotte streets, located across from the county public works department at 7000 Florida St. This facility is about a mile and a half from the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center set up at the Charlotte County Airport.

Note: Pet give-up not available at the Promenade Mall facility.

#### FOSTERING:

Fostering services are available for people who are temporarily unable to shelter their pets. If you need this service or if you would like to offer this service, contact Suncoast Humane Society at 941-474-7884.

#### LOST and FOUND ANIMALS

Suncoast Humane Society (941-468-3208) is taking reports of lost animals and will forward this information to rescue teams as well as try to match against found animal reports.

In Punta Gorda people wishing to file a lost-pet report are advised to go directly to the HSUS Animal Disaster Services Center at the Carmelita Recreational Complex at in Punta Gorda at the corner of Florida and Charlotte streets, located across from the county public works department at 7000 Florida St. This facility is about a mile and a half from the Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center set up at the Charlotte County Airport.

In Port Charlotte, go to the Promenade (Mall) Animal Relief Center at Olean and Route 41.

Animals that have been found should be brought either to Suncoast Humane Society in Englewood, Florida, at 6781 San Casa, Englewood, FL 34224 phone 941-474-7884 -- or to the HSUS Animal Disaster Services Center at Carmelita Recreational Complex or the Promenade Mall. All animals will be transported to Suncoast Humane Society. All facilities will be trying to match up lost animal reports and found animal reports in order to reunite animals with their families.

OTHER QUESTIONS: Please refer to our web site at [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org) - go to the Disaster Center - or e-mail [disaster@hsus.org](mailto:disaster@hsus.org).

**United Animal Nations/Emergency Animal Rescue Services (EARS) Update**

For all of United Animal Nation's Action Reports visit their Web site at [www.uan.org/ears/action\\_report.html](http://www.uan.org/ears/action_report.html).