

AVMA Situation Report 5 – Hurricane Charley

Date: 8/19/04 Second Report

Location: Southwest Florida

Incident Update:

VMAT-3, North Carolina, led by Dr. James Hamilton is currently on the ground in Florida assessing the local veterinary needs and public health issues. It is very important that once the efforts at a disaster site shift from response to recovery, that the local veterinary infrastructure is allowed to heal and resume functioning as soon as possible in order to maintain a healthy business environment for the local community.

Therefore, if major areas of need do not surface over the next couple of days, the VMATs will be demobilized gradually. This is so that the local veterinary infrastructure can progressively resume normal functioning capacity and return to a thriving community prepared to fully recover from this devastating disaster.

VMAT is currently seeing approximately 30 animal cases a day, many of the cases are not directly related to Hurricane Charley. In addition, a small number of large animal and wildlife cases have been addressed by VMAT to date.

The entire disaster affected area will be completely evaluated, the local veterinary infrastructure analyzed, and if the animal needs can be addressed by the local veterinarians the VMATs will be demobilized sometime this coming weekend.

Any veterinarians or animal health technicians wishing to provide assistance should contact the Florida Veterinary Medical Association (FVMA) -- see information below.

Anyone with animal needs please visit www.animalhelp.com.

For information on how you can help support VMAT and animal disaster preparedness, please visit www.avmf.org.

For information on how you can prepare for disasters visit www.avma.org/disaster.

Florida Veterinary Medical Association Update

Incident Update:

**FVMA MEMBERS HAVE BEEN EFFECTED BY HURRICANE CHARLEY
.... THEY NOW NEED YOUR HELP....**

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Monday, August 16/04

The destructive force of this hurricane has resulted in both short term and long term problems for a number of veterinary practices and the pet owning public. Our State Animal Disaster Response Team (SART) is now assessing the resulting animal care requirements and identifying the exact locations of veterinary practices that are closed. The magnitude of the veterinary hospital property damage is not known. A clear picture should be available by Wednesday. What we do know is that the majority of practices in the Charlotte, De Soto and Hardee Counties have been seriously affected. Specifically, practices in the communities of Port Charlotte, North Port, Bonita Springs and Punta

Gorda have been the hardest hit. Additional practices from Arcadia through Central Florida onward to Daytona have also been closed. For many of them, they now face major structural damage that will put them out of business for a considerable length of time.

As expected, the FVMA offices have been working with state agencies to identify the level of animal medical care or humanitarian support needed from the veterinary community in those effected areas. The identified need is in two main areas:

1. MANPOWER... in the form of veterinarians and technicians who are willing to be assigned to mobile veterinary facilities over the coming two-week period. Please provide your contact information and let us know the specific dates you are available. Remember, you will need to pay for your own transportation, bring your own food and water, clothing and bedding. Be ready to work in a hot and crowded environment. Contact the FVMA offices by phone 800-992-3862, fax 407-240-3710 or e-mail FVMA@bellsouth.net.

2. Financial Donations...The second need is for financial contributions that will either be used to provide needed medical care and supplies for animals being treated by veterinarians either at no cost or reduced cost. Other community veterinary practices once they regain power and are re-opened will be called upon to help lost animals hurt during the hurricane. Also, money is needed to assist the veterinary practices that are in distress because their doors are now closed for business. The FVMA wants to provide humanitarian help with the pressing day to day needs of the practice owners and their employees. Past experience demonstrates that many additional expenses resulting from this disaster will not be compensated for as anticipated by insurance policies or that anticipated payments from federal or state aid programs will take weeks before approved. In the meantime veterinarians and clinic staff need to pay their living expenses and continue with their family life.

Please make your tax-deductible donation directly to the **FVMA Foundation**, 7131 Lake Ellenor Drive, Orlando, Fl. 32789. Indicate if the donation is to be used either in whole or part for medical care, humanitarian care or leave it unspecified. To make credit card donations call the FVMA Helpline 800-992-3862. All money collected will be spent on projects resulting from Hurricane Charley.