

YOU CAN'T PREDICT THE FUTURE—BUT YOU CAN BE READY FOR IT.

There was no way anyone could have known what Hurricane Katrina would do to New Orleans and the Gulf Coast in 2005—no way to know that flooding would ensue, that mass evacuations would be necessary, that some citizens would be kept away from their homes for weeks while the stranded pets they'd left behind waited for rescue.

Disasters do not call ahead. They do not schedule a date that works for you. They do not knock and wait for you to get dressed.

But there are ways to prepare.

Does your family have a disaster plan? Does it include your furry family members? Do you have a “go bag” with supplies, in case you need to leave quickly?

A good evacuation kit will include a first aid kit, 3-5 days of nonperishable food and water, and medications—for everyone in the family.

It will also include leashes and carriers for pets, their medical records and photographs, litter boxes or bags for waste. It should also include clear written instructions for any special foods and medications your pets need, in case you have to board them.

And remember: Take your animals with you when you evacuate.

You can't know what's coming, but you can stay ahead of the storm. For more information, go to ready.gov/america/getakit/ and humanesociety.org/petsanddisasters.

