

News

Pets in Crisis: Hurricane Harvey

By *Jasmine Streeter, DVM*
Special to *The Skanner News*

Over the past few days we have witnessed unbelievable acts of kindness and heroism towards humans and animals affected by Hurricane Harvey. People from all walks of life banded together during this catastrophic flood. According to the National Weather Service, Hurricane Harvey unleashed 27 trillion gallons of rain, causing 75 billion dollars in losses. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) estimates 450,000 residents will be in need of assistance. Many of the residents own animals.



Dr. Jasmine Streeter

Of the 72,000 people rescued, a significant number had pets. Wet dogs, cats, even birds were shown riding in boats, baskets and coolers. A few animals were seen being airlifted with their loved ones who had lost everything, and they were clinging to their only piece of hope. Tearfully, I watched owners struggle to carry their pets in waste-deep-water, some walking miles to seek shelter. Thankfully, many shelters in Texas were prepared to accept families with animals unlike in past disasters.

In 2006 the Pet Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act was passed, which mandates that FEMA accommodate pets and service animals in their plans for evacuating residents facing disaster. This bill was passed after thousands of animals died because of abandonment after Hurricane Katrina. Time magazine reported in its June 6, 2007 issue that of those surveyed that did not evacuate, 44 percent chose to



Siblings displaced by Hurricane Harvey entertain their dog Olive while sheltering in Gallery Furniture Showroom, Aug. 30, 2017, in Richmond, Texas.

remain in their homes, because they did not want to abandon their pets.

Numerous organizations from all over the country poured into Texas to rescue pets and livestock from flooded areas. Some worked on reuniting pets with their loved ones, while others rescued animals from flooded shelters. Videos on social media show cowboys roping released steers and leading horses to dry land. Thousands of animal lives have been saved but many more are still being rescued. Many local animal organizations are assisting in rescue and disaster relief, contact them to see how you can help.

Creating a pet disaster preparedness kit will aid you in emergency situations and can easily be created. An emergency contact number, tag and microchip are the most important tools if you and your pet become separated. A laminated recent photo, photocopied medical record, first aid kit and two-week-medicine supply should be included in your kit as well. Dry and canned pet food should be kept specifi-

cally for emergency situations and replaced every few months. Seven days worth of bottled water should be included for each pet along with portable food and water dishes. Toys, an extra collar or harness, trash bags, and scoopable litter should be kept for cleanup and travel.

Even through devastation, the resilient spirit of the people of Texas can be felt. The road to normalcy for many will be hard, but the love from their pets will bring comfort. To know even in times of despair the life of their pet is worth saving, gives me hope that we all have the ability to love and come together.

To help pets affected by Hurricane Harvey, donations are being accepted by the SPCA of Texas, San Antonio Humane Society and Louisiana SPCA. Many organizations are requesting monetary donations or gift cards instead of other supplies, this way they can make sure resources are allocated more effectively and efficiently.

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French Labor Law Changes Will Make it Easier to Hire, Fire

Controversial law passed Thursday is meant to stimulate the country's sluggish economy



AP PHOTO/THIBAUT CAMUS

France's Prime Minister Edouard Philippe gives a media conference with Labor Minister Muriel Penicaud in Paris, Thursday, Aug. 31, 2017. France's prime minister says five bold, and divisive, labor reforms are meant to "cure" not "treat the symptoms" of France's high long-standing jobless rate.

By *Elaine Ganley*
Associated Press

PARIS — President Emmanuel Macron's most daring undertaking, reforming France's nearly sacrosanct labor laws, got cheers and jeers as it went public Thursday. It trims union powers, adds a voice for small businesses and creates easier ways to hire and fire workers.

The measures meant to foster growth, reduce the nation's stubbornly high unemployment and revolutionize the

Opponents have feared changes will weaken France's hard-won worker protections that have become globally synonymous with the envied French lifestyle. Left-wing opponents fear the changes hand too much power to profit-focused bosses.

"Nobody today can seriously say that our ... labor law favors recruitment," Prime Minister Edouard Philippe said in unveiling the five measures. "The labor law as it is in our country is often perceived as an obstacle

“Nobody today can seriously say that our ... labor law favors recruitment. The labor law as it is in our country is often perceived as an obstacle to recruiting, an obstacle to investment

—Prime Minister Philippe

way the French work will get a hearing in the streets, with two protests planned for September.

Overhauling France's complex labor laws, which authorities say have proved a hindrance to investors and employers, is part of a larger program by Macron to stimulate France's sluggish economy. The high-stakes move comes just as the new 39-year-old president's popularity is sinking. But plans to make the labor market more flexible were at the heart of his election campaign.

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Still, Philippe conceded the government was treading on risky territory politically.

Even before the reforms were unveiled, the hardline CGT union called for a day of action Sept. 12, and on Thursday it encouraged retirees and students to join in. Far-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon has called for another protest on Sept. 23.

One key measure proposed by the government

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