

LOUISIANA GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND  
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

JOINT INFORMATION CENTER

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 31, 2008**

Department of Agriculture and Forestry News Update

**Ag chief says to call local OEP offices for pet evacuation information**

Baton Rouge - Agriculture and Forestry Commissioner Mike Strain, D.V.M., said it's not too late for residents with pets and critical transportation needs (CTN) to evacuate.

"Trucks and buses are ready at parish pick-up points to evacuate you and your pet if you have a critical need," Strain said. "We'll keep the trucks there as long as it's safe for our volunteers."

"Call 2-1-1 or your local office of emergency preparedness for information on how to evacuate yourself and your pet," Strain said. "Get to your parish pick-up point as soon as possible because it will take time to register everyone and their pets."

Parish pick-up points for transportation to the CTN pet shelters are expected to close as storm conditions become unsafe for volunteer and OEP personnel.

Strain stressed that the pet shelters are not "stop-and-drop" facilities.

Pet owners will be sheltered separately from their pets but close enough to provide care for the animals.

More than 160 trucks have been outfitted with pet crates to handle the evacuation, Strain said.

People with or without pets who are evacuating on their own should stop at shelter-information points along the evacuation route to receive a reservation for the nearest shelter with openings. Those shelters will open as mass-scale evacuations begin. The shelter-information points (also listed on the Louisiana evacuation guides) are located at:

- Tourist Welcome Center, U.S. 65 & 84, 1401 Carter St., Vidalia.
- Tourist Welcome Center, 836 I-20 West, Tallulah.
- Sammy's Truck Stop, I-49, Exit 53, 3601 La. 115 West, Bunkie.
- Med Express Office, 7525 U.S. 71, Alexandria.
- LSU-Shreveport, P.E. Gym, One University Place, Shreveport.
- Pickering High School, 180 Lebleu Road, Leesville.
- Tourist Information Center, 8904 U.S. 165, Oberlin, La.

LDAF State Veterinary Officer Dr. Henry Moreau said evacuees with large animals should contact their local LSU AgCenter county agent for information on what accommodations can be made for horses and livestock.

Strain said the LDAF office is open 24 hours a day to advise residents on pet and livestock issues but should call their local OEP or 2-1-1 for immediate pet evacuation information.

The LDAF phone number is 225-922-1234 or 800-558-9741.

The LDAF Animal Evacuation Center can be found at the LDAF Website at [www.ldaf.state.la.us](http://www.ldaf.state.la.us)

Additional information can be found at the Louisiana State Animal Response Team Website at [www.lsart.org](http://www.lsart.org).

For the latest information on Hurricane Gustav, you can visit [emergency.louisiana.gov](http://emergency.louisiana.gov) or call the state's emergency hotline at 1-866-288-2484 to listen to a recorded message with the most up-to-date information.