

SSHC PRESS RELEASE:

In 1992, Hurricane Andrew, with winds of 145 miles per hour, gusts to 175 miles per hour, slammed into Florida causing losses that included a large number of horses. Then in 1998, the northern half of Florida's East coast was on fire, and again more horses were put in danger, not just from the fires but also from the smoke the fires created. In both cases, many horse owners were caught by surprise. Where could they take their horses to protect them from danger? At the last minute there aren't a lot of choices.

We needed something better. We needed a place to find information on where we could take our horses in the event of an emergency.

The Sunshine State Horse Council now has a web site that contains emergency preparation information, emergency resources, and a database of relocation sites - places that will provide space for horses displaced by fire or hurricane, on a temporary basis until the emergency subsides. The address is www.SSHC.org/evac.

If you can provide space for horses displaced by an emergency condition, you are encouraged to add your facility to the database. Complete instructions are included on the site - Just click on "Instructions". You simply fill out a form, telling where you are, what space you have available, directions, and how you can be reached by people looking for a place to go. That's important: Make sure you include your phone number.

When there is an emergency and your space is filled, make sure you go back to the database and change the "available" box. That will help you avoid having a lot of people call you when you don't have any more room. Simply come back to the site, sign in as a "Member" and update the information. It's simple and easy.

Those who are faced with an emergency situation can come to the web site, select a county that is out of the path of danger, find a place to go, make contact and make the necessary arrangements to get there.

Hopefully, with your help, the next time a hurricane or fire strikes in the Sunshine State, we'll have the resources and information available and we can avoid some of the confusion and loss that we have seen in the past. They deserve better, and hopefully, now we have a way to do a better job of protecting them than we have in the past.