THE SENTINEL
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Pet Sheltering Workshop at Lee County Animal Control - Estero, April 12-13

By Kendra Stauffer, DVM

"Hey doc, when are we doing this again? We really learned a lot." Those were the most common questions and comments I heard as we demobilized from the Lee County Animal Control Pet Sheltering Workshop that took place April 12-13 in Estero.

The workshop utilized ICS to set up a temporary emergency pet shelter focusing on the decontamination of animals that were contaminated by flood waters from a hurricane. The exercise workshop used Mobile Information Management (MIM) system equipment and technology for intake and tracking, as well as resources from all of the participating SART partners. Animals were triaged, processed through intake, decontaminated, examined, and then sheltered.

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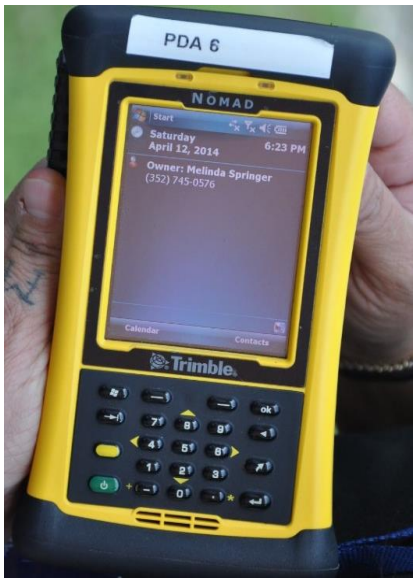
Fourteen federal, state, and local agencies as well as non-governmental agencies participated, sending 103 participants. Three media outlets covered the event. The majority of participants volunteered their time and willingly gave up their weekend, away from family, friends, and sometimes work as well, to participate in this workshop. Areas for improvement were discussed and incorporated into an improvement plan that was shared with the workshop coordinators. These considerations will be used to guide future training and resource acquisitions. A special thanks to John Haven, Director of the College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Florida who was the workshop coordinator along with Glen Johnson of Lee County Animal Control and Domestic Services for coordination and execution (and hosting) the workshop.

Agencies covering the event were: ASPCA, Florida Dept. of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Florida Vet Corp, Lee County Animal Control, Lee County Emergency Management, Miami-Dade Animal Control, NVRT, Palm Beach County REP, Polk County Animal Control, Florida SARC, University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine, USDA APHIS AC, USDA APHIS VS and VMAT.



Additional photos are available at http://flsarc.org/News_Photos.php.

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On the Medical Front

MRSA and the Overuse of Antibiotics

An anti-biotic resistant "superbug" that has long affected hospitals and health care locations around the world now has a new "reservoir" location: inside U.S. homes. The bacteria Methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) is resistant to many of the strongest antibiotics. Although recent prevalence has been limited to hospitals and nursing homes, a New York City study of residents who contracted MRSA found that these people's homes were "major reservoirs."

Antibiotic resistance tests; the bacteria in the culture on the left are sensitive to the antibiotics contained in the white paper discs. The bacteria on the right are resistant to most of the antibiotics. (Photo courtesy Dr. Graham Beards, Wikipedia)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC; www.cdc.gov) notes that in communities outside of health care settings, most MRSA strains are skin infections that are spread by physical contact, such as the sharing of towels or razors. Athletes, military barracks, prisons and other close-quarter living areas are at an increased risk of contracting and spreading the bug. Nearly one-in-three people carry staph bacteria in their nose, with no symptoms of sickness and two percent carry MRSA. The CDC reports that more than 2 million Americans get drug-resistant infections each year. And about 23,000 die from these diseases that are increasingly resistant to the strongest antibiotics that doctors use to fight the infections.

In medical facilities, MRSA causes life-threatening bloodstream infections, pneumonia and surgical infections. The new study shows that the MRSA "reservoirs" have spread into average U.S. homes. Thus, treating only the person infected does not eliminate the source; the home must be treated as well. Correct bandaging, protection of wounds and hand-washing are the best protections.

The World Health Organization (www.who.int) believes the overuse of antibiotics has become so common that even normal infections may soon become deadly, due to the evolution of bacteria strains.

"It is not too late," says CDC director Dr. Tom Frieden, "but if we're not careful, the medicine chest will be empty when we go there to look for a lifesaving antibiotic for someone with a deadly infection. If we act now, we can preserve these medications while we continue to work on lifesaving medications."

Map above: Spread across U.S. of carbapenem-resistant *Klebsiella pneumoniae* or CRKP. Studies in the U.S. and Israel have shown that about 40 percent of patients with the infection die.

SARS Evolves to MERS

Egypt recently discovered its first case of the SARS-like coronavirus in a patient at a Cairo hospital. The patient had just arrived from Saudi Arabia. The number of cases from the disease in Saudi Arabia has risen past 313 with 92 deaths inside the kingdom. The virus, known as which can cause coughing, fever and pneumonia, has spread from the Gulf region to Europe.

Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) is viral respiratory illness first reported in Saudi Arabia in 2012. It is caused by a coronavirus called MERS-CoV. Most people confirmed to have MERS-CoV infection developed severe acute respiratory illness: fever, cough and shortness of breath. About half of these people died. So far, all the cases have been linked to six countries in or near the Arabian Peninsula. No cases have been identified in the U.S., but the situation is still evolving.

Notes from CDC:

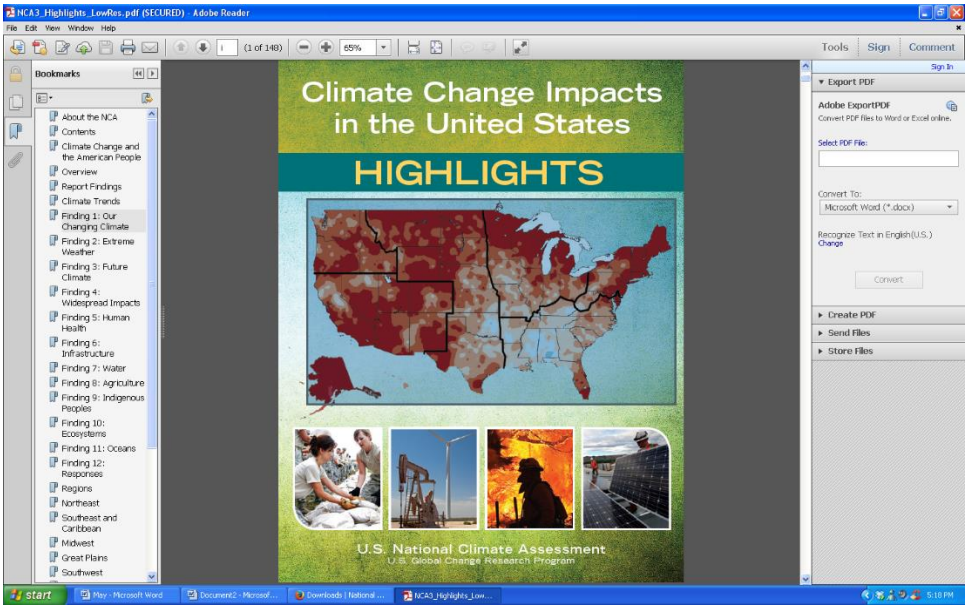
a. Most people will get infected with human coronaviruses in their life time. Young children are most likely to get infected. However, you can have multiple infections in your life time.

b. People become infected by contact with an infected person: coughing and sneezing, touching or shaking hands. These viruses may also spread by touching contaminated objects or surfaces then touching your mouth, nose, or eyes.
c. There are currently no vaccines available to protect against human coronavirus infection. You may be able to reduce your risk of infection by washing your hands often with soap and water, not touching your eyes, nose, or mouth, and avoiding close contact with people who are sick.

National Climate Change Assessment Published

A number of themes emerge from the regional reports included in the National Climate Assessment. They include increased fire situations in the Northwest, increasing aridity in the Southwest, unpredictable growing seasons in the Great Plains and Midwest, increasingly violent storms and rising heating costs in the Northeast and risks to infrastructure due to rising oceans in the Southeast and the Caribbean.

The Southeast -- known for its beaches, its seafood and ports, and as home to many of the nation's major cities – Atlanta, Houston, Charleston, Miami, New Orleans -- will face risks due to climate change: sea-level, rise, especially, but also extreme weather such as hurricanes, heat spells and inconsistent rainfall. The risk is intensified in that so many cities, roads, energy facilities and water supplies are on the Atlantic and Gulf coasts.



Examples from the report:

- North Carolina is raising the roadbed of U.S. Highway 64 across the Albemarle-Pamlico Peninsula on the coast by four feet, which includes 18 inches to allow for higher future sea levels.
- "Louisiana State Highway 1, heavily used for delivering critical oil and gas resources from Port Fourchon, is literally sinking, resulting in more frequent and more severe flooding during high tides and storms."
- Utilities will be under more pressure as rising seas allow saltwater contamination of freshwater supplies.
- The summer heat will continue to reduce crop productively and damage crops, as happened in Georgia in 2007, when a drought cost $339 million in losses. (The hot weather is only going to get hotter in the Southeast, though the increases for this region are predicted to be smaller than for some others.)

The recently released U.S. National Climate Assessment outlines the effects of climate change on the U.S. More than 300 experts helped produce the report, which breaks the country down by region and identifies specific threats should climate change continue. Read the full report at http://www.globalchange.gov/what-we-do/assessment.

Under the Radar

Genetic Engineering a Possible Canker Cure?

A report from UF's IFAS suggests that researchers are close to finding a possible cure for citrus canker. The work involves identifying a gene that makes citrus trees susceptible to the bacterial pathogen. Canker causes pustules on fruit, leaves and twigs. It's highly contagious and spreads rapidly through rain, wind and transportation of infected fruit. There is hope that, if genetic engineering proves to have a viable outcome, similar techniques can be applied to combat citrus greening. For an update on research about citrus canker, visit http://www.crec.ifas.ufl.edu/extension/canker/.

SART's Kendra Stauffer Blazing New International Trails

Editor's Note: Kendra Stauffer has been a vital contributor to the emergency preparedness mission in Florida and the wider U.S. She has also worked with Florida SART to build awareness and operational abilities. She is moving to a new position and given the *SART Sentinel* this farewell note.

"It is with mixed emotions that I leave my current position as Emergency Coordinator with USDA APHIS Veterinary Services and move on to my new position with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in the Global Disease Detection (GDD) Branch. I will be serving as Veterinary Medical Officer for GDD in the Republic of Georgia and will be responsible for implementing infectious disease activities at the human/animal interface throughout Georgia and the Southern Caucus Region, and serve as a key member of the leadership team for the GDD Program. My primary mission is to enhance the capacity of partner countries to detect and respond to infectious disease threats by leveraging and connecting assets.

"In the ten years that I have worked with Veterinary Services in different capacities and locations I have met so many wonderful people and I have had the privilege to work with numerous great state, local, and non-governmental partners. All of you have taught me so much and have allowed me to integrate into your systems, and yes, even the opportunity to cook-out and camp with you during events or exercises. I did not make this

decision lightly and I will miss my Florida family that has accepted me as one of their own. Please feel free to keep in contact with me through Facebook or LinkedIn. I wish you all the best and hope our paths cross again."

Kendra Stauffer, DVM, Diplomate ACVPM
District 2 Emergency Coordinator
"Once you make a decision, the universe conspires to make it happen."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

Florida SARC Schedules Courses

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition is teaching "Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – Awareness Level" to promote effective response for animals during disasters. Registration is required, but due to grants from Florida Division of Emergency Management and U.S. Homeland Security, no fee is charged for attendance. This course is certified by FDEM as course code FL-003-RESP.

Date & Time: Saturday June 21, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Location: Flagler County Emergency Operations Center, 1769 E Moody Blvd., Bunnell

Date & Time: Sunday, June 29, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Location: Collier County Domestic Animal Services, 7610 Davis Blvd., Naples

For information and registration go to http://www.flsarc.org/Training.html or contact Melissa Forberg training@flsarc.org (352) 658-1224, Pam Burns pamburnssarc@gmail.com, Andy Bass training@flsarc.org or Consie Von Gontard training@flsarc.org.

Farm Bill Aid

Florida will receive $5.4 million in federal funding through the recently enacted federal Farm Bill. The overall purpose of the monies is to prevent the introduction and spread of plant pests and diseases that threaten Florida's $108 billion agriculture industry. Funding will be managed through USDA APHIS and managed by FDACS.

In Florida, the funding will strengthen pest surveillance, detection and identification and help mitigate these threats. The state programs that will be funded include:

- Giant African Land Snail mitigation
- Detector dog inspections
- R&D into citrus health, including citrus canker and citrus greening
- Protection of avocado production (reduction of laurel wilt)
- Honeybee pest and disease surveys

Weed of the Month

Did you know there is a "Weed of the Month" for Florida? The weed is sponsored – if "sponsored" is the correct word – by the Botany Section of FDACS DPI, Bureau of Entomology, Nematology and Plant Pathology.

The January 2014 focus (the latest listed) is Chinese privet, described as "an ornamental shrub that has become an invasive menace." Chinese privet was introduced to the U.S. as an ornamental shrub in 1852 and was observed to have escaped from cultivation in the Southeast by the 1930s. Tolerant of low light conditions and poor soils, it has colonized abandoned homesteads, vacant lots, pastures and forests, and is now regarded as one of the major weeds of woodland habitats in the U.S. Southeast. It has a negative impact on native plant growth and survival, nutrient availability and succession in forest habitats. Chinese privet was nominated to the Florida noxious weed list in March 2013.

For more information about Florida's "Weed of the Month" and Chinese privet, go to http://www.freshfromflorida.com/Divisions-Offices/Plant-Industry/Plant-Industry-Publications/Weed-of-the-Month

Article Highlights UF's Julie Levy

A recent article in University of Florida's *Explore* magazine (Spring 2014, page 13) highlights the work of Dr. Julie Levy, DVM, Maddie's Professor of Shelter Medicine, Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program, Dept. of Small Animal Clinical Science, College of Veterinary Medicine.

Dr. Levy has researched many questions related to feline health, the most recent being the growth of cancers at the point of vaccination, typically below the elbow or knee joint in the leg, in 1-10 out of 10,000 cats vaccinated against infectious diseases. Levy's research suggests that the tip of the tail should be considered as an option.

(Photo above) Junior UF veterinary student Cleon Hendricks and Dr. Julie Levy are shown in the surgery area of the Veterinary Academic Building on September 25. Hendricks collaborated in the tail vaccination study through the Merial Veterinary Scholars program. The photo above and reference to her story in UF's *Explore* magazine are used with permission of Sarah Carey.
http://research.ufl.edu/publications/exploremagazine.html

About the SART Sentinel

The SART Sentinel is an e-mail newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team. Past issues of the **Sentinel** are archived on the Florida SART Web Site *www.flsart.org*.

If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in **the SART Sentinel**, please contact the editors.

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