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## Beware that minor cut ...

Responders often work in hazardous environments. Farms, ranches and kennels may seem relatively innocuous places, but as the following story shows, your personal safety and immediate medical attention to a wound can’t be neglected.

A Georgia college student named Aimee Copeland is fighting for her life because of a common and horrifyingly destructive bacterium. She developed a condition called *necrotizing fasciitis* after cutting her leg in a fall from a homemade zip line over a Georgia river. Doctors have since amputated her left leg at the hip; her hands and her right foot ... and the treatment will not stop there.

*Necrotizing fasciitis* is caused by a bacterium that also causes common strep throat and impetigo. The CDC says about 750 cases of flesh-eating bacteria occur each year and while only one in five cases proves fatal, almost all



are intensely disfiguring.

*Necrotizing fasciitis* is a very deep soft-tissue infection caused by a bacterium that is common in lakes and streams. William Schaffner, an infectious-disease specialist at Vanderbilt University Medical Center, says the bacteria can live in an oxygen-abundant environment, but if you put it down in a deep wound and close the wound with stitches, removing it from oxygen, it switches its metabolism to function in an oxygen-poor environment. This is what happened to Aimee Copeland.



“I could dive in that same stream, in the same place, and if I don't injure myself,” Schaffner says, “I'll be perfectly fine. It's not going to get on the surface of my skin and burrow in.”

According to Schaffner, the primary symptom is pain, because muscle is being eaten. Initially, there may not be much fever. The wound is on the surface and the infection is deep down, so the wound looks fine. It's not inflamed and with no

discharge, sutures are put in and they stay intact. So there's disconnect between pain and wound and without a lot of fever, doctors often figure it must be a bone bruise or bleeding deep in the wound is causing pain. Appropriate treatment is delayed until the real problem becomes obvious, but by then it's often too late.

*Necrotizing fasciitis* is treated with numerous antibiotics, but bacteria can become resistant. Aggressive surgery cuts away diseased tissue and exposes the depth of the wound to oxygen. It's common for surgeons to have to go back several times to keep up with spreading infection.

## **SART Team Continues County Visits**

By Bianca Blakley

Florida SART members from FDACS and USDA have been busy visiting with County Emergency Management Departments, County ESF-17 Coordinators, County Extension Agents and other partners from the end of the Panhandle to the Keys.

This is the fourth year that SART has coordinated county visits in all 67 counties of Florida. This year's focus has been on resources (regional equipment, training and veterinary assets) available to the county during declared events and local

emergencies, and on having a solid plan to deal with animal and agricultural issues before an emergency occurs. Emphasis is also placed on identifying local resources that may be available in the event of an emergency.

“Participation and enthusiasm from the counties has been good this year, with many of the counties expressing interest in the training courses SART developed and the new regional Large Animal Technical Rescue equipment,” said David Perry, FDACS-DAI ESF-17 Field Coordinator.

The county visits began in April and will wrap up at the end of June. Dr. Greg Christy and Joe Kight, both from FDACS-DAI, led the Panhandle and North Florida county visits, and David Perry will lead the remaining Central and South Florida county visits. Dale Dubberly, FDACS-AES; Richard Miranda, FDACS-DPI; Bianca Blakley, FDACS-DAI; and Kendra Stauffer, USDA/APHIS/VS; as well as FDACS Field Inspectors have also participated.



“These meetings continue to provide us with an opportunity to interact with the local stakeholders,” Joe Kight, FDACS-DAI ESF-17 Emergency Coordinating Officer said. “This sharing of information continues to provide strength to our overall program.”

## On Working with the Media

“Release of sensitive information by the media, though not intentional, might cause public panic or compromise law enforcement sources, thus hindering investigations. Food, agriculture and law enforcement officials need to develop a working relationship with the media to share timely and useful information to keep the public accurately informed but not overly alarmed. This can be accomplished by issuing public announcements.



Media briefing at the conclusion of Operation Red Fly, Florida EOC, January 2012.

**“It is paramount that food and agriculture officials and law enforcement authorities coordinate their media information and appoint one lead spokesperson to respond to the media. The designated lead spokesperson will help ensure the accuracy of the information being disseminated to the public. By selecting a lead spokesperson with expertise to answer specific technical questions, it is much easier to avoid the release of sensitive information.**

**“When media representatives investigate possible economic effects or the psychological impact of an attack on the U.S. food and agriculture system, they will aggressively seek information from investigators. Establishing a Joint Information Center (JIC) with a lead spokesperson will aid in dealing with media concerns and providing timely and accurate information.”**

**Criminal Investigation Handbook for Agroterrorism  
[A joint effort of the FBI, FDA and USDA]**

## **Teams Practice Equine Rescue**

**Story and Photos by John Haven**

**On Saturday, May 12, the U.F. College of Veterinary Medicine’s VETS Disaster Response Team, Alachua County Fire Rescue and Alachua County Sheriff’s Department Rural Services deputies gathered at a retired lime rock quarry to**



practice a joint response to livestock in a sinkhole (which became all too real as on that morning a large sinkhole opened in Jonesville).



**Above:** VETS Team Leader John Haven checking systems with the U.F. College of Veterinary Medicine's VETS Disaster Response Team, Alachua County Fire Rescue and Alachua County Sheriff's Department Rural Services

**Right:** Third year DVM student Kelly McGowan rappelling down the wall of a retired lime rock quarry.



The exercise assumed that a horse and rider were spooked off a trail, and fell to the bottom of the 35 foot quarry. The incident occurred well off the roadway, and the Sheriff's ATVs provided critical logistical assistance to move the rescue gear to the incident. This resource will be a valuable tool to both Fire and the VETS team in future incidents. Ideally in this situation, a crane, or Gradall truck from the county maintenance department would be available to create a highpoint to lift the horse, but for this exercise none was readily available.

With a full spectrum of skills and experiences in technical rescue, participants divided into teams to rig rescue systems under the direction of a rope rescue technician. After all the systems were complete, John Haven, VETS Team Leader, discussed each system and explained each configuration.



**Above:** Alachua County Deputy Sheriff Koon teaching horse handling issues.



**Right:** The victim, horse mannequin “Randy,” is well up the cliff.

With limited staffing, the teams worked together to lower Deputy Koon and 3<sup>rd</sup> Year DVM student Kelly McGowan to assess the victim, a 600 lb horse mannequin named “Randy.” Rescue gear was then lowered to them. Exercise participants then gathered around the mannequin victim to discuss issues with the rescue, options and horse safety issues. The “Rescue Glide,” which resembles a horse SKED stretcher was placed behind the victim, who was rolled onto the glide on which lifting slings were positioned. In this case the glide was used to protect the victim from the rock face as a mechanical advantage system attached to the slings was used to haul the victim up the cliff. Near the top, the rescue system snagged on a boulder, requiring the partial lowering of ACFR Lt. Rivera to free the obstruction. The raise was successfully completed, as well as the recovery of both responders. At the end, all participants discussed what went well, and what could be improved upon next time. The agencies plan to schedule another large animal technical rescue practice in the fall.

**NOTE:** In December, the VETS team collaborated with Sheriff’s deputies and Alachua County Fire Rescue to rescue a horse named “Midnight” from the mud of Paynes Prairie. In April, the VETS Team assisted with the rescue of the dog “Joe” from the sink hole.

## Fugate Advises Text Messaging, Social Media



It is better to send text messages than to call when natural disasters strike, because networks get congested, FEMA's Craig Fugate said recently. He also urged people to add battery-powered cell phone chargers to their storm emergency kits.

At a White House news briefing, Fugate said that forecasts for a "normal" Atlantic hurricane season should not keep those in potentially affected areas from getting ready for storms that could make landfall. "There's no forecast yet that says where storms are going to hit or not hit. So if you live along the Gulf Coast, the Atlantic, and as far inland as the folks in Vermont found out last year, you need to be prepared for this hurricane season."

Fugate noted that government is working to extend its public alert warning system beyond radio and television to mobile networks, and that most new and upgraded cell phones have the capacity to receive such emergency notices. Households without fixed-line phones should be ready to charge cell phones during power cuts. He called on families to make alternative communication plans for times when wireless networks are congested.

"When there's a big crisis, don't try to call people on your phones - text message. It's a lot faster and gets through." Fugate recommended using social media to update people, and to know how to keep electronic devices charged during a power outage.

## 2012 Hurricane Names

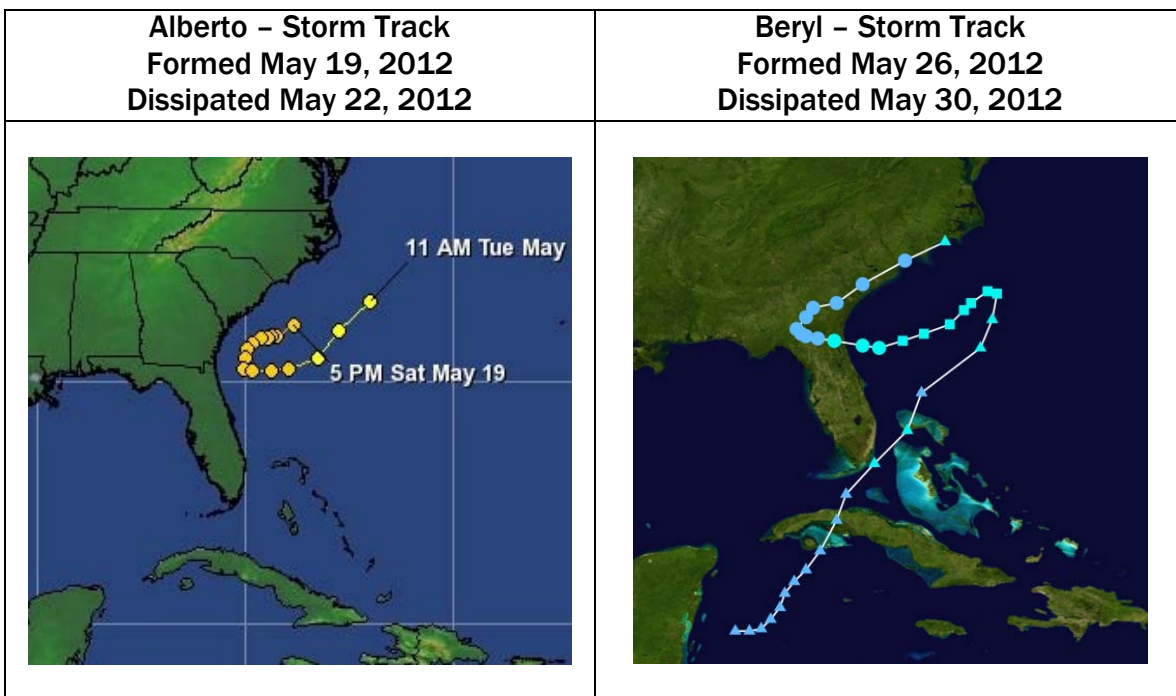
For every year there is a pre-approved list of tropical storm and hurricane names. These lists have been generated by the National Hurricane Center since 1953. At



first, lists consisted of only female names; however, since 1979, the lists alternate between male and female.

Basically, there are six lists that continue to rotate. The lists only change when there is a hurricane that is so devastating that the name is retired and another hurricane name replaces it – “Katrina,” for example. As there were no significant hurricanes in 2006, the 2012 hurricane name list is the same as the 2006 hurricane name list.

Alberto	Beryl	Chris	Debby	Ernesto
Florence	Gordon	Helene	Isaac	Joyce
Kirk	Leslie	Michael	Nadine	Oscar
Patty	Rafael	Sandy	Tony	Valerie
William				



**NOTE:** Follow the link below for NOAA’s Tropical Cyclone Preparedness Guide <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/hurricane/resources/TropicalCyclones11.pdf>. But remember that it is only a guide. The first and most important thing anyone should do when facing a hurricane threat is to use common sense.

## Florida SARC Schedules Awareness Courses

The Florida State Animal Response Coalition wants to know, *Are you ready to help animals during disasters?* It is teaching the course “Small Animal Emergency Sheltering: Awareness Level” to promote effective response for animals during



disasters. Registration is required, but there is no fee to attend. Breakfast, snacks and lunch will be provided through a sponsorship by IAMs Pet Foods.

Course Topics include: Personal Preparedness, Overview of the Incident Command System, Deployment Preparedness, Assisting in Shelter Set Up, Daily Care and Feeding, Proper Cage Cleaning and Disinfection, Animal Behavior, Stress Management, Zoonotic Disease, Personal Safety and more.

**June 16** – Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

First Coast No More Homeless Pets

6817 Norwood Ave., Education Center, 2nd Floor, Jacksonville, FL 32208

Host: First Coast No More Homeless Pets

**July 14** – Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Alachua County Emergency Operations Center

1100 SE 27th Street, Gainesville, FL 32614

Hosts: The Greater Gainesville Dog Fanciers's Association and Alachua County Emergency Management

**July 29** – This class is full. Please email Pam Burns

[pamburnssarc@gmail.com](mailto:pamburnssarc@gmail.com) if you wish to add your name to the wait list. A

Florida SARC representative will contact you if space becomes available.

SPCA Tampa Bay- Education Center

9099 130th Ave N, Largo, FL 33773

For more information go to <http://www.flsarc.org/Training.html> or contact Consie Von Gontard [training@flsarc.org](mailto:training@flsarc.org) (352) 658-1224.

## On the Radar

[SART Steering Committee at Work](#)

The Florida SART Steering Committee met at the UF College of Veterinary Medicine on May 30: (left to right) David Perry, Sue Rantuccio, John Haven, Joe Kight, Bianca Blakley and Kim Duffiney.



Hurricane season has begun, bringing, thus far, abundant rain to the Sunshine State. And while it has been several years since a serious storm impacted Florida, many agencies and individuals are planning for emergencies and remain alert to the possibility.

Amy Godsey, State Meteorologist at the Florida Division of Emergency Management, reminds that we may not be able to predict exactly when and where a storm will come ashore. On the other hand, she says, we can definitely predict that because of the peninsula's vulnerable position jutting out into the oceans, chances are high that severe storms will make landfall in Florida in the near future.

### **2013 Planning Meeting – Dates and Location**



The SART Steering Committee has set January 28-30, 2013 for the next state-wide SART Planning Meeting. Registration will be available online for several months prior to that date, but on-site registration will begin at noon on Monday the 28<sup>th</sup>. A general session for wrap-up and closing remarks will end at noon on Wednesday the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Although the agenda for the Planning Meeting is still under development, the site for the conference has been selected as The Shores, 2637 South Atlantic Ave., Daytona Beach Shores, FL 32118 Telephone (386) 767-7350 Fax (386) 760-3651 Toll Free (866) 396-2217 <http://www.shoresresort.com/>.

**NOTE:** Photos from the SART state planning meetings of 2007, 2009 and 2011 are available online at <http://www.flsart.org/photogallerylist/>.

### **FSA Closing Six County Offices**

Tim Manning, Florida State Executive Director for the Farm Service Agency (FSA), says USDA is closing FSA county offices in Escambia, Washington, Lafayette, Hamilton, Levy and Highlands Counties.

FSA will provide affected farmers and ranchers a choice of the most convenient neighboring county office for their business with the agency. Employees in a closing office will be given an opportunity to continue working with FSA. The process begins immediately.

FSA has been affected by congressionally mandated budget reductions. Since 2011, the Agency has lost 1,230 permanent employees through voluntary early separation and normal retirement. FSA has also been forced to reduce discretionary administrative expenses by 30+ percent in the last fiscal year.

For a list of affected FSA county offices go to [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov). For Florida questions contact Mark Cotrell at (352) 379-4512 [mark.cotrell@fl.usda.gov](mailto:mark.cotrell@fl.usda.gov).

### **What About Our Animals In A Nuclear Event?**

By Dr. Christina Law, North Carolina DA&CS May 2011

The recent catastrophic events in Japan have raised many questions about what happens to animals in a nuclear event, whether it be a nuclear release from an energy facility or nuclear material from a “dirty” bomb. The disaster in Japan was an extreme example of why it is so important to be prepared for the worst.

There is continual research, discussion and planning going on to establish best practices for being able to protect our animals in a nuclear event. The

radioactive material that we commonly hear about, particularly associated with nuclear release from a power plant, as in the nuclear release in Japan, is Iodine 131. It is well-known that people should take potassium iodine to prevent the thyroid gland from taking up the Iodine 131 and thereby preventing thyroid cancer that could occur some 20 years later.

A very common question that needs to be addressed is whether or not one should give potassium iodide to their pets as well. General consensus from the veterinary community is a resounding NO! The lifespan of most pets is not long enough to see the effects of contamination from Iodine 131. Potassium iodide can be extremely toxic to pets, particularly if dosed incorrectly. The medication can actually cause more problems for animals than the radiological contamination. It should only be administered under the strictest of veterinary advice.

In the event of nuclear release, detection of radiological contamination using approved monitoring equipment is available not only for us, but for our animals as well. Decontamination protocols for animals will essentially mirror those used for humans. Knowing that we are actively and continually preparing, and that the care of our animals is absolutely on the list of priorities, makes me proud of how we, as a nation, regard the idea of such a disaster. Of course it is foremost that any nuclear event is prevented in the first place, but we all realize the “what if” factor. In order to address this issue, plans are scrutinized and evaluated to make sure we are on top of the “what if.” With humans and animals alike, very stringent public health, welfare and environmental protocols will have to be followed.

For more information on potassium iodide use in people and pets visit <http://www.epi.state.nc.us/epi/phpr/ki/ki.html>.

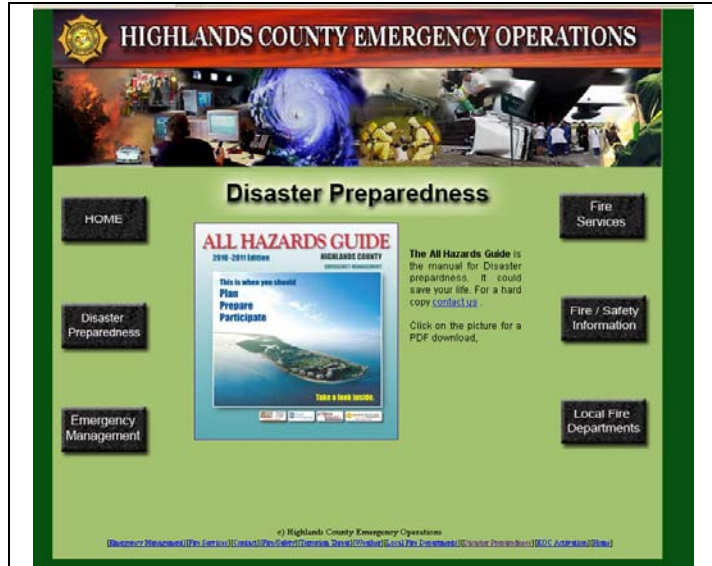
From *The VRC Connection* May 2011 Vol. 3, Issue 2  
North Carolina Veterinary Response Corps Quarterly Newsletter  
[Edited for length]



## **Coping with Children's Emotions**



1. Remember that children mirror their parent's anxieties. Be calm to reduce your children's fears.
2. Take something familiar such as a favorite toy or book into a new situation. This helps a child feel more secure.
3. In a crisis situation a child may demonstrate unusually childish behavior. This is normal for a child who is frightened and who doesn't understand a situation as serious as a hurricane.
4. Most children are not capable of understanding the magnitude and severity of a crisis situation. Be understanding and patient.



Highlands County *All-Hazards Guide* (<http://www.hceoc.org/> page 19)

## **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](http://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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