These pups are not just pets, but part of a family. So for their safety, it's important to have a plan ready if disaster strikes. You need to now what to do if, say, a tornado, hurricane or flood hits and you get separated from your pets. The key is to be prepared.

“A tag on the collar that says who you are and how to get in contact with you. The big thing is to make sure you put a collar on the animal and leave it on.”

Mayo Clinic Emergency Management Specialist Mark Bilderback says another option is to have your vet implant a microchip that will help ID and track your pets. Plus you should have papers that document your pet's name, your contact info, your vet's contact info and the address of where you plan to go if you have to evacuate.

Because, yes, pets are often considered part of the family. And research shows being around them can help reduce your stress level, which can run high during weather emergencies.

And that's today's Mayo Clinic News Network Headline, I'm Vivien Williams