Relief Comes Quickly for Tornado Victims

Pet product manufacturers, animal welfare groups and veterinarians rushed to assist victims of an Oklahoma tornado that killed 24 people, an estimated 150 horses and an undetermined number of pets May 20.

The companies ranged from ThunderWorks and Hill’s Pet Nutrition to Wondercide and Petsitting.com.

“This disaster has had a devastating impact not only on the people who live there but on their pets as well,” said Jared Katz, vice president of sales for New York-based Petsitting.com. “We feel it is part of our responsibility to do whatever we can to help out using the resources at our disposal, and we encourage our partner organizations in the area to do the same.”

Petsitting.com, which matches pet owners with service providers, donated 10 percent of one week’s sales to the Pet Food Pantry of OKC. The pantry distributed dog and cat food, leashes, collars, bowls and other items to pet owners.

Also assisting were:
- ThunderWorks of Durham, N.C., the maker of ThunderShirt anti-anxiety pet wraps. The company donated nearly 100 ThunderShirts to the Central Oklahoma Humane Society (OK Humane) and other shelters. “We are committed to supporting recovery efforts however we can,” said Phil Blizzard, founder of ThunderShirt.
- Wondercide LLC of Austin, Texas, a manufacturer of organic pest control and natural products for pets, people and property. The company donated enough Evolv flea-and-tick products to help 300 Oklahoma pets. The donation was made to the Animal Resource Center in Oklahoma City.
- Planet Dog Foundation, the nonprofit grant-making arm of Portland, Maine, manufacturer Planet Dog. The organization donated $1,000 to the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation to support teams deployed to the recovery zone.
- Hill’s Pet Nutrition of Topeka, Kan., whose new Disaster Relief Network was called into action less than a month after its unveiling. (See story on page 10.)
- AiKiou of Terrebonne, Quebec, Canada, which makes interactive food bowls. The company teamed up with BlogPaws, Pet360 and Worlds Vets to donate 10 percent of online sales made by May 28.
- Redpaw Inc. of Franklin, Wis., which donated more than 8,000 pounds of X-Series dog food in conjunction with the boarding chain Best Friends Pet Care. Norwalk, Conn.-based Best Friends made deliveries to OK Humane, the Animal Resource Center and the Moore Animal Shelter.
- Medical products distributor Henry Schein Inc. of Melville, N.Y. The company opened a hot line for veterinarians, dentists and physicians who suffered operational, logistical or financial problems because of the tornado. “When this kind of natural disaster occurs, it is imperative that we do all we can to help those impacted by such a tragedy,” said Stanley Bergman, chairman and CEO of Henry Schein. The company also donated health care packages to the Central Oklahoma Humane Society.