

HERNANDO COUNTY

PORT AUTHORITY

PREPAREDNESS

AND

RESPONSE PLAN

The mission of this plan is to save lives and protect the property of the citizens of Hernando County.

This plan is designed as a resource to be followed prior to and immediately upon notification by the Hernando County Emergency Management Officer or designee; it utilizes the available resources directly related to and/or available to the Port Authority to be used for survival and recovery from any type of emergency or disaster. It outlines the responsibilities and duties of the Hernando County Port Authority Board in cooperation with the Hernando County Emergency Plan.

Preparation and execution of the Emergency Plan requires following the procedures as directed; the information listed is to be incorporated in the planning process.

JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

PORT AUTHORITY CHAIRPERSON

The Port Authority Chairperson will be responsible for the coordination of Board Members prior to, during, and after any emergency.

All communications with the Emergency Operations Center and coordination of resources and response by the Port Authority will be handled by the Chairperson or designee along with Hernando County support staff.

The Chairperson will assign responsibilities to each Board Member and ensure the notification of need. The Chairperson or designee will direct all Port Authority Board response activities.

BOARD MEMBERS

The Port Authority Board Members will assist in any of the duties necessary as directed by the Board Chairperson. Each Board Member will advise the Chairperson and/or designee of their availability prior to, during, and after any emergency. A log is recommended to be maintained of his/her Port Authority related actions during an emergency event.

COMMUNICATIONS

It is recommended that each Port Authority Member prepare early for a weather event and provide the Chairperson and/or designee with contact information and availability status.

At this time, all communications with the news media will be handled by the Hernando County Board of Commissioners and the Emergency Management Officer. The Port Authority Chairperson or designee will refer these calls.

Public Service announcements whether prior, during, or after an emergency need to be provided to the Public Information Officer (PIO). Do not wait for a request, provide them. Request a schedule from the PIO to provide updates for the media.

It is recommended that the Port Authority Chairperson and/or designee attend Hernando County Emergency Operations briefings, as well as provide a coastal, lakes, and rivers report.

PREPARATION FOR EVENTS

The Port Authority provides support and is a resource to Hernando County Waterways and the Emergency Management Officer and/or designee. It is recommended that the Port Authority Preparedness Liaison review and become familiar with the Hernando County Emergency Plan/Waterways Plan annually. Planning should include annual training, drills, and marine industry related events.

Training

It is recommended that the Port Authority sponsor annual Spill Response Training and other training as deemed within the Marine Industry.

It is recommended that the Port Authority participate, as warranted, in Disaster/Emergency training.

Drills

It is recommended that the Port Authority, along with Waterways, schedule an annual drill with other agencies/organizations. These drills are marine related. i.e. oil spill, floating meth lab, automobile in water.

Marine Industry Events

It is recommended that the Port Authority Members attend Florida Marine Industry conferences and trainings as warranted.

PRIOR to an EVENT

Promote preparedness actions within the marine community, as well as all communities. It is recommended that a family plan is in place and be prepared to act in advance of the notification of a weather related warning. In the event of a hurricane warning, the plan should include but not be limited to the following:

When a hurricane threatens a decision must be made whether to evacuate or whether you can ride out the storm in the safety of your home. If the local Emergency Management Officer recommends evacuation, leave. Advise the Port Authority Chairperson and/or designee of decision.

It is recommended that the following tips are published prior to weather events.

- Determine where to move your boat in an emergency
- Determine how to secure your boat for a weather event
- Check NOAA and other weather reports frequently
- Make a plan and test your plan
- Ensure bilges are clean and pumps are working, as well as batteries charged
- Fold or roll boat tops, lash them down, and stow loose gear properly

- Ensure mooring lines are in good condition and securing vessel for tidal or storm surge changes
- Check foul weather gear, flashlights, first aid kits, etc.
- Reference the Securing Your Vessel document

DURING an EVENT

Use good common sense as you would in any emergency. Do not take warnings lightly. It is extremely important that a personal, as well as organizational, plan is in place prior to an event. Life safety is number one and then comes property. Do not become a statistic, follow the direction provided by the Hernando County Emergency Operations Officer.

AFTER the EVENT

Use common sense and follow the directions provided by the Emergency Management Officer and/or Law Enforcement. Advise the Port Authority Chairperson and/or designee of location and status.

It is recommended that the Port Authority be prepared to meet and provide support, as well as technical advice and evaluations, to the Waterways staff. Waterways staff could be faced with assessment and removal of debris within our waterways, navigational aids, facilities, docks, ramps, piers, as well as vessels and equipment.

It is recommended that the Port Authority Members gather information and relay to the Hernando County support personnel after an event. If this collected information can be verified, please do so, i.e., marker 4 in the Chassahowitzka Channel is missing.

It is recommended that the Port Authority disseminate information as requested, i.e., Hernando County Board of County Commissioners or designee.

It is recommended that the Port Authority is proactive in the education and notification of members of the marine community prior to, during, and after disaster/emergency events.