



Hurricane Season is June 1st - November 30th

**YOUR NEW HURRICANE
EVACUATION MAP INSIDE**

All-Hazards Disaster Planning Guide

Do you know your **Evacuation Level**? Check the map or visit floridadisaster.org/knowyourzone

 hernandocounty.us/em

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Download this guide at tampabayprepares.org

Welcome Letter

Dear Hernando County Residents and Community Partners,

Hernando County Emergency Management is pleased to share this updated Disaster Planning Guide. Built on an all-hazards and whole community approach, it reflects our shared commitment to reducing risk, preparing effectively, and keeping Hernando County strong before, during, and after emergencies.

Disasters can occur with little warning, but preparation makes a real difference. Preparedness begins at home and is strengthened through collaboration among residents, businesses, organizations, and response partners. Whether you are caring for a family, supporting older loved ones, new to the community, or have lived here for years, taking small steps to prepare helps protect those you care about and supports the community as a whole.

This guide provides practical, easy-to-use information to help you:

- Plan ahead
- Stay informed
- Understand local procedures and resources

We encourage you to review it, talk about it with your household, and take simple steps to prepare throughout the year. Even a few actions—like signing up for alerts or building a basic supply kit—can make a meaningful difference.

Behind this guide is a dedicated Emergency Management team working year-round to plan, train, coordinate, and collaborate with public safety agencies, government partners, nonprofit organizations, the private sector, volunteers, and the community. Outreach and education are central to our mission, because informed residents are one of our greatest strengths.

We welcome and appreciate every opportunity to work together. For questions, speaker requests, or community events, please don't hesitate to contact Hernando County Emergency Management at **352-754-4083**.

All residents are strongly encouraged to register for **Alert Hernando**, the county's emergency notification system, at **alerthernando.org**, to receive timely and reliable emergency information and severe weather alerts. Individuals with electric-dependent medical equipment needs, as well as seniors and caregivers, are encouraged to complete our **Special Needs Registry** at **hernandocounty.us/em** to help emergency services better plan to support the community during large-scale incidents and disasters.



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WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES, WILL YOU BE READY?

Will your family be ready? Will your business be ready?

It takes an entire community to prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster. We need to involve everyone: our government, neighbors, faith-based organizations, volunteer and civic groups, schools, businesses, and all residents. Talk about being prepared with friends and family online and at your school, workplace, club, or place of worship.

This guide offers the most important tips to prepare for a disaster and highlights the extra things to consider for children, seniors, pets, and people with medical needs. Follow the simple steps and checklists in this guide to protect yourself, your loved ones, your home, and your business.

In the event of an emergency or disaster, **listen carefully to the direction of local and state officials** and prepare to evacuate should that become necessary. Follow the latest Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) public health and safety guidelines as you respond to disasters.



Your Disaster Plan



Prevent panic and confusion by making sure everyone knows **where to go** and **what to do** in an emergency situation, whether at home or at work.

KNOW YOUR RISK

Learn what disasters might affect your home or workplace. Are you in a **Hurricane Evacuation Level** or **FEMA Flood Zone** (visit floodsmart.gov)?

They are NOT the same thing! If you live in a mobile home, boat, or recreational vehicle (RV) you are at greater risk. NEVER stay inside a mobile home, boat, or RV if you are told to evacuate.

HOME RENTERS

Do you know if your rental property is at risk of flood or storm surge? Are you located in an area that could be required to evacuate? If your home or area is vulnerable, where will you go prior to hurricane landfall? Do you have renter's insurance?

Make a plan today!

PICK TWO MEETING PLACES IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

The first should be just outside your home or business for sudden events such as a fire. The second should be outside your neighborhood, in case you cannot get home or your household gets separated from each other.

EMERGENCY TRAINING

Prepare yourself for emergencies by taking first aid and CPR courses (redcross.org).

DISASTER COMMUNICATION

Have all family members located inside and outside of the vulnerable/impacted area communicate their locations. Send your emergency contact copies of important papers (copy of driver's license, insurance policies, etc.). Include contact information in your phone and make physical emergency contact cards.

BUSINESS OWNERS

If you own a business, follow your Business Continuity Plan. For more information on how to create a Business Continuity Plan, read pages 18-19 of this guide and visit disastersafety.org and ready.gov.



**PREPARE YOUR BUSINESS
FOR DISASTERS: PAGES 18-19**

KEEP A PAPER TRAIL

Keep important documents in a fireproof safe or box, and store a copy in a secure location away from your home or business.

- ☐ Proof of residence/ownership
- ☐ Birth and marriage certificates
- ☐ Passports
- ☐ Social Security cards
- ☐ Bank and credit card info
- ☐ Wills, deeds, and copies of recent tax returns
- ☐ Stocks and bonds
- ☐ Copy of driver's license
- ☐ Special medical information
- ☐ Insurance policies
- ☐ Property inventories or photos and videos of your home or business
- ☐ Business tax license
- ☐ Business supply/vendor lists



During the initial hours following a disaster, emergency personnel may be overwhelmed and unable to respond to every situation needing assistance. Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers are trained to assist their families, friends, neighbors, and co-workers before, during, and after a disaster event until professional responders arrive. They also report back to the Emergency Operations Center with reports of impacts to their area. Contact Emergency Management at **(352) 754-4083** for more information about the CERT program.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS & THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Please ask for help if you need it and volunteer to help those who do. People with disabilities or in poor health (either mentally or physically), or those who are without the support of family or friends, should plan ahead for an emergency. They may need special assistance from family members, friends, neighbors, or social service agencies. If an adult lives in a nursing home, assisted living facility (ALF), or residential facility, the administrator should be contacted to learn about the facility's disaster plan.

Adults who are also caregivers may require outside assistance. Excessive stress and anxiety can contribute to increased episodes of illness, particularly for persons with heart disease and other illnesses.

AT-HOME HEALTHCARE & HOMEBOUND PATIENTS

Tell your home health agency and oxygen company where you will be during a hurricane. Ask them about their plans to provide care. If you are homebound, but not under the care of a home health agency, contact your physician to determine your best plan of action. If you require respirators or other electric-dependent medical equipment, **you should make medical arrangements with your physician and register with your power company.**

If you will need assistance in an evacuation or need to go to a special needs/medically-dependent shelter/evacuation center, **register with County Emergency Management NOW.** It is important to apply in advance for this assistance.

ARE YOU COVERED? KNOW THESE INSURANCE TIPS!

1. **Know your flood risk.*** Standard homeowner insurance policies do not cover damage from rising flood waters, including storm surge from a tropical storm or hurricane.**
2. **Purchase a policy.** If you purchase a home in a FEMA Flood Zone, your mortgage company will require you to carry a flood insurance policy. Even if you do not pay a mortgage or do not live in a FEMA Flood Zone, consider the additional coverage.
3. Remember, there is a **30 day waiting period** for flood insurance to go into effect. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL A STORM IS THREATENING TO PURCHASE A FLOOD INSURANCE POLICY.**
4. Insure your property for its replacement cost, not its real estate value.
5. Get building code insurance to cover the costs associated with bringing a damaged building up-to-code, if necessary.
6. Set aside funds to pay your hurricane deductible.
7. Create an inventory and take a video survey of your property and possessions to accurately price coverage and speed up the claims process.
8. If you rent, you need **renter's insurance** to protect your personal belongings.

* FEMA Flood Zones (floodsmart.gov).

** Educational resources are available from the Insurance Information Institute (iii.org).

Disaster Safety Tips

The time to prepare is **now!**

Knowing what hazards can affect your community and learning what to do before, during, and after each one will help you be safe and help you to recover quickly after a disaster.



FLOODING

1. If flooding threatens, get to higher ground. Stay away from flood-prone areas, including low spots and ditches. Take dry clothing, a flashlight, and a portable radio with you.
2. **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN.** Avoid flooded areas or those with rapid water flow. Do not attempt to cross a flowing stream or drive in water. The depth is not always obvious. It takes only six inches of fast flowing water to sweep you off your feet.
3. Do not allow children to play in or near high water, storm drains, or ditches. Flood waters may be contaminated with oil, gasoline, or raw sewage.
4. Purchase flood insurance.
5. Do not sweep or blow yard leaves, pine needles, grass clippings, or soil into the street or stormwater system. Doing so clogs pipes and prevents flood waters from draining.



LIGHTNING/THUNDERSTORMS

1. **IF THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS.** Stay inside for at least 30 minutes after thunder stops.
2. Do not use trees for cover.
3. Do not lie down in an open area.
4. Stay away from bodies of water.
5. Find a safe place to take cover, like inside a home or business, a restroom in a park, or a shelter on a beach.



TORNADOES

1. Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio and/or a battery-powered commercial radio and extra batteries.
2. Many mobile phones are capable of receiving Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs). These alerts can inform you about life-threatening weather conditions in your immediate area.
3. Know the terms used to describe tornado threats:
 - a. **"Tornado Watch"**- Tornadoes are possible. Remain alert for approaching storms.
 - b. **"Tornado Warning"**- A tornado has been sighted or indicated by a weather radar. Take shelter immediately.
4. If a tornado threatens, seek shelter in a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building.
5. **Mobile homes are not safe during tornadoes.** Abandon mobile homes and go to the nearest sturdy building immediately.
6. If you are caught outdoors, seek shelter in a sturdy building; NOT a mobile home or portable structure.
7. If you cannot quickly walk to a sturdy building, immediately get into a vehicle, buckle your seat belt, and try to drive to the closest sturdy building.
8. If flying debris occurs while you are driving, get off the road as soon as possible. It is often better to leave the road completely than to pull over to the side. Then you have the following options:

- a. Stay in your vehicle, secured into a seat belt, and put your head down below the window. Cover your head with your hands or a blanket if you have one.
- b. Or, if you can safely get lower than the level of the roadway, exit your vehicle and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.



Image Credit: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Visit **ready.gov** for more information about preparing for disasters.



FIRE SAFETY

1. **PLAN:** The time to plan for a fire emergency is now. Take a few minutes to discuss with your family or co-workers what actions you will need to take as you make your Disaster Plan for your family or business. Test smoke alarms in your home and business monthly. Collect contact information in case of information.
2. **EVACUATION PLAN:** Decide where you will go and how you will get there. Unlike evacuating for a hurricane, with fire you may only have a moment's notice. Have at least two escape routes out of your home. Have a plan for evacuating your pets or service animals.
3. **FIRE DRILLS:** Make sure everyone knows at least two escape routes from your home or business and practice regularly.



RIP CURRENTS

1. Do not swim against the current.
2. Stay calmly afloat and signal for help.
3. Escape the current by swimming parallel to the shoreline.
4. When outside of the rip current, swim at an angle away from the current toward the shore.



PANDEMIC DISEASE

1. Prevention is key. Get routine flu shots and other vaccinations.
2. Wash hands often and thoroughly with soap and water.
3. Stay home when you are ill. Employers and schools should encourage this policy.
4. Avoid contact with sick people.
5. Cover your mouth and nose with a face mask when around others.
6. Social distancing slows the spread of disease. Use masks as needed.
7. Follow guidance by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding safety protocols.



SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

1. **"See Something, Say Something."** Call local law enforcement, then Florida's toll-free hotline **1-855-352-7233 (1-855-FLA-SAFE)** to report any suspicious activity.
2. Be prepared to provide the exact location and as much detail as you can provide about the threat or danger you observed.
3. If it is an emergency, **dial 9-1-1!**



ACTIVE SHOOTER

If there is an active shooter in your vicinity:

1. Run if there is an easy escape path to evacuate the area. Leave your belongings behind. Move as quickly as you can and create as much distance between you and the threat as possible.
2. If running is not possible, find a place to hide from the shooter.
3. As a last resort, fight if you are not able to run or hide.



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

IF YOU ARE TOLD TO EVACUATE:

1. Stay calm. Quickly gather what you will need, unless you are told to leave immediately.
2. Evacuate outside of the vulnerable area. Move to a place/shelter designated by local officials.
3. Keep car windows and air vents closed. Do not use the air conditioner until you are out of the evacuation area.

IF YOU ARE TOLD TO STAY INDOORS & SHELTER-IN-PLACE:

1. Bring pets indoors. Close all doors and windows. Seal all gaps under doorways and windows with damp towels and duct tape. Turn off heating, cooling, or ventilation systems.
2. If air quality is at risk, cover your nose and mouth with a damp handkerchief or other cloth folded over several times.
3. Stay inside until local officials declare that the threat has subsided.

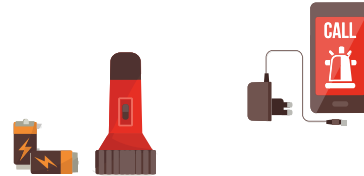
Disaster Supply Kit

Is your **supply kit** ready?

Stock up now (or a little at a time) and store these items where you can get to them quickly.

STOW UNTIL NEEDED:

- ❑ First aid kit including bandages, antiseptic, tape, compresses, aspirin and aspirin-free pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medication, antacid, and important phone numbers
- ❑ Flashlights and batteries for each family member
- ❑ Portable radio and batteries
- ❑ Mosquito repellent
- ❑ Sunscreen
- ❑ Whistle and/or distress flag
- ❑ Emergency charger for cell phones and other devices (consider a solar-powered alternative)
- ❑ An old-fashioned corded telephone that does not require electricity (i.e. a corded landline, not a cordless phone or cell phone)
- ❑ Cash (with no power, banks may be closed; checks and credit cards may not be accepted, and ATMs may not be operational)
- ❑ Charcoal, matches, and grill (do not use indoors)
- ❑ Generator and fuel
- ❑ Ice chest/cooler and ice
- ❑ Plastic tarp, window screening, tools, and nails
- ❑ Non-electric can opener
- ❑ Instant tire sealer
- ❑ Fire extinguisher (small canister, ABC type)
- ❑ Water purification kit (tablets, odorless chlorine, and iodine)
- ❑ Clean-up supplies (mop, buckets, towels, disinfectant)
- ❑ Garbage can or bucket with tight-fitting lid and cat litter (emergency toilet)
- ❑ Toilet paper, paper towels, and pre-moistened towelettes or baby wipes



Your evacuation map is inside this guide.



REPLENISH FOR FRESHNESS:

- ❑ Up-to-date list of family medicines and dosages, along with doctor and pharmacy phone numbers, and a 2-week supply of prescription medicines.
- ❑ Enough non-perishable food to feed your family and pets for at least 7 days. Special dietary foods or baby food and formula, if needed. Replenish every 6 months.
- ❑ 1 gallon of drinking water per person, per day, plus water for cooking and washing (minimum 7 days). Stock up on a few cases of bottled water at your home and/or workplace in the event that there is a "boil water" order.
- ❑ Infant items (medicine, sterile water, diapers, ready formula, bottles), if needed.
- ❑ Extra batteries (camera, flashlight, radio, portable TV, lamp).



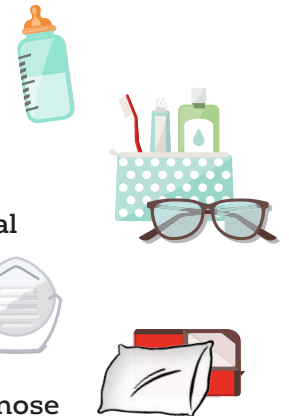
TIPS FOR PREPARING ON A BUDGET

Not only does planning ahead give you more time to make sure your hurricane checklist is completed, it can also save you money. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offers these tips for cost-conscious hurricane preparedness:

- ❑ **Look for used and discount emergency items:** Certain emergency supplies such as radios and flashlights do not necessarily need to be purchased new or at full price. Of course, make sure such supplies are in good working condition.
- ❑ **Store water:** Purchasing commercially bottled water is recommended, but not always economically feasible. Start washing out and saving 2-liter soft drink bottles and 1-gallon milk jugs now so there will be plenty on hand to fill with tap water when a storm is approaching.
- ❑ **Spread out your emergency preparedness shopping:** Buying batteries one week, a giant jar of peanut butter the next, and then canned tuna, and so on, is easier on the wallet than purchasing everything at once. Stock up on non-perishable items.
- ❑ **Check out the dollar and discount stores:** They offer items at a low cost, from cleaning products to coloring books for the kids that would come in handy if the power goes off.
- ❑ **Clean out your gutters and drains:** Make sure that water isn't collecting on the roof and around your home in rainstorms. Preparing your home now can prevent damage and costly repairs if a major storm hits.
- ❑ **Cut limbs from trees near your property.** One of the biggest end-products from a storm is debris. Preventing debris from damaging your property will save you money!
- ❑ **Purchase a generator off-season.** Once hurricane season starts, generator prices may increase.

IF YOU EVACUATE, ALSO TAKE:

- ❑ Hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, soap, hand sanitizer, etc.)
- ❑ Extra clothing, shoes, eyeglasses, hearing aids (and batteries)
- ❑ Important papers and irreplaceable keepsakes (driver's license, special medical information, insurance policies, property inventories, photographs, etc.)
- ❑ Pillows, blankets, sleeping bags, or air mattresses
- ❑ Folding chairs, lawn chairs, or cots
- ❑ Each member of the family should bring face masks to cover their mouth and nose



EVACUATION ITEMS FOR CHILDREN:

- | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|
| ❑ Baby food jars - combination of vegetables, fruits, cereals, and meats | ❑ Baby feeding spoons | ❑ Infant bathing basin, wash cloths, and towels |
| ❑ Formula (powered and/or ready-made) | ❑ Baby bottles | ❑ Infant clothes, hat, and booties |
| ❑ Oral electrolyte solution, such as Pedialyte | ❑ Nipples for baby bottles | ❑ Lightweight blankets |
| ❑ Favorite healthy snacks | ❑ Toddler potty seat | ❑ Portable crib |
| ❑ Cereal (child age-specific) | ❑ Diapers / pull-ups | ❑ Small toys that do not make noise such as books, cards, puzzles, and handheld games with extra batteries |
| ❑ Juice boxes | ❑ Diaper wipes | |
| | ❑ Diaper rash ointment | |
| | ❑ Disposable changing pads | |



Tips for the Deaf & Blind

FOR THE DEAF & HARD OF HEARING:

Stay informed

- **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA):** Sign up to receive alerts on your phone via text, vibration, or flashing light.
- **NOAA Weather Radio:** Purchase a model with a text display and a flashing light or strobe alert for your area.
- **Closed Captioning:** Find local TV stations that close-caption their emergency broadcasts and have a battery-powered television to view them.
- **National Weather Service (NWS):** Check the NWS website for ASL videos and closed-captioned safety information, such as "See a Flash, Dash Inside!"

Prepare communication and emergency supplies

- **Communication Kit:** Keep a kit with a notebook, pens, and pre-written messages (e.g., "I am deaf," "I need a sign language interpreter") readily available.
- **Emergency Kit:** Include a battery-operated lantern to help with communication in the dark. Also, make sure you have extra batteries for hearing aids.
- **Technology:** Charge all devices and have a battery bank or portable charger ready for your phone.

Make a plan

- **Neighborly Support:** Get to know your neighbors and exchange contact information so you can help each other.

FOR THE BLIND:

- **Create a support network:** Identify at least three people who can check on you, know your needs, and have the necessary keys or codes to enter your home.
- **Develop a communication plan:** Compile a contact list of emergency services, family, and friends in braille, large print, or an accessible digital format.
- **Establish alerts:** Sign up for accessible emergency alerts from local services that work with your assistive technology.
- **Practice evacuation:** Mentally and physically practice your evacuation route with a sighted guide. Know the locations of safe zones and shelters and have a backup evacuation route.

Emergency kit and supplies

- **Label everything:** Use braille or large-print labels for all items in your emergency kit, including food, water, and medical supplies.
- **Organize your kit:** Store items in distinct containers with varying shapes or textures for easier identification.

Assistive devices and technology

- **Pack spares:** Include extra batteries for all your devices and have a backup for essential equipment.
- **Store backups strategically:** Keep a spare cane in a different, accessible area of your home.
- **Ensure backup power:** Have charging cables and portable power banks to keep your phone and other crucial electronic devices powered.

Community Response Emergency Team (CERT)

A VOLUNTEER GROUP OF NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS:

- Organized under the direction of Hernando County Emergency Management to support and direct countywide training and education in disaster planning and preparedness.
- CERT volunteers receive special training which enhances their ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from an All-Hazards disaster situation.
- The residents will receive training that will help them take care of themselves, their families and their neighbors before, during, and after a disaster.
- With training and practice, CERT volunteers work together as a team. CERT members will be able to do the “greatest good for the greatest number” after a disaster, while protecting themselves from becoming victims.
- Residents will be trained on the following:
 - Disaster Preparedness
 - Fire Suppression, Hazardous Materials, Terrorism, Utility Control and Safety
 - Disaster Medical
 - Light Search and Rescue
 - Disaster Psychology, Stress Management and Basic Incident Command
- Previous emergency experience is not required and there is no cost to you. The training, materials and equipment are provided free of charge.

To register for the next free CERT class, contact: (352) 754-4083



Bracing for the Storm

Is your **home** ready?

Storms can be unpredictable. As a storm approaches, stay tuned for the latest weather updates on local radio and TV stations, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio, and your county's official social media.

THE ABCs OF SEVERE WEATHER

To withstand the forces of wind associated with severe weather remember your ABCs:

- **ANCOR ROOF**
- **COVER WINDOWS**
- **BRACE ENTRY & GARAGE DOORS**
- **SAFE ROOM**

DO NOT stay in a room which does not have shielded windows/glass doors. Find an interior room—a bathroom, hallway, or closet—which will help buffer you from the storm's winds and any flying debris.

Safe rooms can also be site-built or manufactured, and can be installed in new or existing homes. Make sure all family members know where the safe room is and be sure to take your disaster supplies with you.

MOBILE HOMES, BOATS, & RVs

Mobile homes, boats, and recreational vehicle (RV) residents must evacuate for any hurricane evacuation order given, regardless of location within the county. **NEVER** stay inside a mobile home, boat, or RV to ride out the storm. Evacuate to a friend's or relative's home, hotel, motel, or nearby designated shelter/evacuation center.

Anchor mobile homes or RVs with tie downs, and inspect tie downs annually. If your boat is on a trailer, store it in a garage or other covered facility away from the coastline. A boat in the water should only be secured in a well-protected marina. A seawall or sandy spit that normally protects a harbor may not offer any protection in a severe storm. Contact marinas in advance to learn about their hurricane plan.

Sandbags 101

Residents and businesses in flood-prone areas can use sandbags to try to protect their property when a storm hits.

HELPFUL TIPS

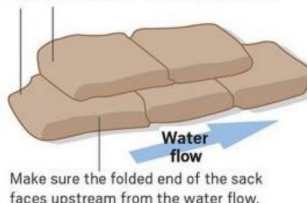
- Remove any debris from the area before laying down sandbags.
- Stamp down each bag after placing to fill any empty spaces and form a tight seal.

Only fill sandbags about half full
If ties are used tie bag near the top, not the middle.

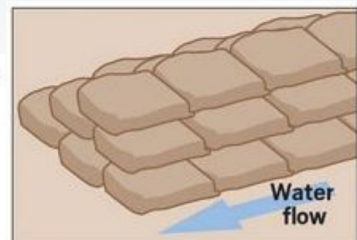


Sandbag filled too full

Stacking
Fold empty portion of sack (flap) under.



Freestanding sandbags should be stacked in a pyramid. Stagger them like bricks so they are not directly on top of each other.



Limitations

- Sandbags **WILL NOT** seal out all water.
- Sand - and soil-filled sandbags deteriorate when exposed for long periods of time and continued moisture and drying.
- Sandbags are best used for low-flow protection (around 2 feet).

Did You Know?

HURRICANE WATCH

An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible within the specified area. A hurricane watch is typically issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.



Storm ingredients

VS

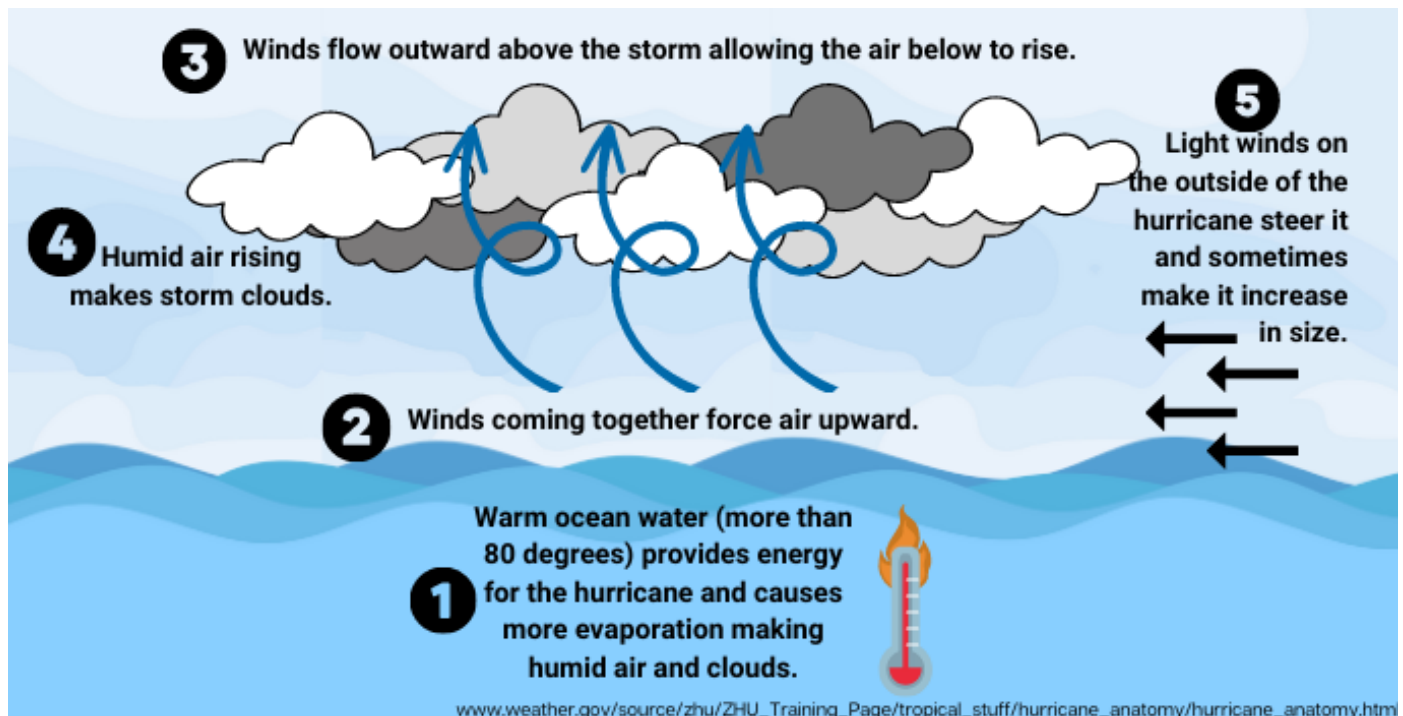
HURRICANE WARNING

An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are expected somewhere within the specified area. A hurricane warning is typically issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropicalstorm-force winds.

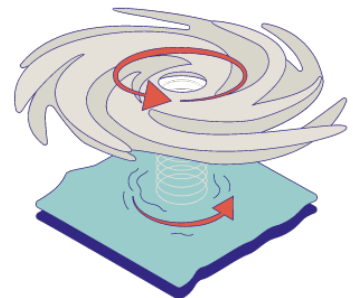


Final product

WHAT MAKES A HURRICANE?



- Hurricanes are categorized on a scale of 1 to 5, depending on wind strength and destructive power.
- The eye at a hurricane's center is relatively calm, and clear, but the eyewall surrounding the eye is composed of dense clouds that contain the highest winds in the storm.
- The right side of the hurricane is generally the most dangerous in terms of storm surge, winds, and tornadoes.
- Do not focus on the eye or the track - hurricanes are immense systems that can move in patterns that are difficult to predict.



Preparing Kids for Disasters

Emergencies and disasters can happen anywhere, but there are ways to help you stay safe. Help your family build an emergency kit, make a plan, and be prepared!



Once you know your risk, you can make a plan for what you will do if one of these hazards occur. Your plan should include everyone in your family, especially children. Disasters are scary for everyone, but even more so for young kids. Here are some ideas to help them be prepared:

- Young children should have a “go kit” with items to keep them busy and give them comfort. A favorite toy, teddy bear, or even favorite snacks should be included in the kit.
- Involve older kids in your planning, such as helping to check supplies or making a shopping list.
- Have family drills on fire, tornado, and hurricane safety, and know where to go if a disaster happens.

MAKE IT A GAME!



Look for items that should be in your emergency supply kit. Circle them in the images above. When you're done, make your own kit at home!

KID'S KIT ITEMS:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Non-perishable food | ☐ Paper plates/towels/utensils | ☐ Books |
| ☐ Can opener | ☐ Water | ☐ Games |
| ☐ First Aid kit | ☐ Battery-powered radio | ☐ Puzzles |
| ☐ Sleeping bag or blanket | ☐ Batteries | ☐ Favorite stuffed animal or blanket |
| ☐ Changes of clothes | ☐ Flashlight | ☐ Paper and pen/pencil |
| ☐ Toothbrush/toothpaste/soap | ☐ Whistle | ☐ Baby supplies |
| | | ☐ Cleaning supplies |

Additional Resources: www.ready.gov/kids/prepare-pedro

IF A STORM IS APPROACHING, THERE ARE TWO PATHS TO CONSIDER.

EVACUATE OR STAY?

WHICH PATH
SHOULD YOU TAKE?

START →

1) Do you live in a vulnerable area or home?

(Mobile home or RV, an area that floods often or is near a waterway, or a structure in need of repair or built prior to 2002).

YES

Don't roll the dice and take a chance with your life!

NO

2) Have you been ordered by County officials to evacuate?

Find your Hurricane Evacuation Level on the *inside map*. If your area is ordered to evacuate, for the safety of you, your family, and your community, you must ALWAYS evacuate.

YES

NO



EVACUATE TO A SAFE LOCATION

Do not panic. Move at a steady pace and leave enough time to get to where you will weather the storm. DO NOT take chances by staying in an unsafe location or waiting until it is too late!

1. **Assemble your Disaster Supply Kit.** Prepare enough supplies for your entire family, including pets.
2. **Select your safe place.** Determine where you will go and how you will get there. This place can be a friend's or relative's home, hotel, motel, or nearby designated shelter/evacuation shelter. Make sure your destination is NOT in an area that has been ordered to evacuate. When possible, evacuating "**tens of miles, not hundreds**" reduces your chance of being stuck in traffic and shortens your time to return home.
3. **Fill your vehicle's gas tank and check oil, fluids, and tires.** Gas pumps will not operate if the power goes out.
4. **Notify family and friends of your plans.**
5. **Bring extra cash.** Banks and ATMs will not operate during power outages. Few stores will be able to accept credit cards or personal checks.
6. **Enact your Pet Plan.** Read more about keeping animals safe on pages 16 & 17.
7. **Secure your home, pack important documents, and gather your evacuation supplies.**
8. Check on your neighbors. **Especially the elderly and people with medical needs.** Do they need transportation assistance?
9. When advised by your County, grab your family, pets, and supply kit and head to safety using your **Hurricane Evacuation Map (inside this guide)**.



SHELTER-IN-PLACE

Sheltering in place is a practical option if you live in a safe area and structure. Offer your home as a shelter to relatives or friends in harm's way.

1. **Assemble your Disaster Supply Kit.** Prepare enough supplies for your entire family, including pets.
2. **Secure your home and important documents, and stock extra supplies.**
3. **Fill your vehicle's gas tank and check oil, fluids, and tires.** Gas pumps will not operate if the power goes out.
4. **Notify family and friends of your plans.**
5. During and after a disaster, you may be without power and many of the services you rely on, including water, sewer, phone, internet, cell phone, and businesses. Emergency services may not be able to immediately respond. **Are you prepared to be self-reliant for at least 3-7 days after a storm?**
6. **Get extra cash.** Banks and ATMs will not operate during power outages. Few stores will be able to accept credit cards or personal checks.
7. **Check on your neighbors.** Especially the elderly and people with medical needs. Are they prepared?
8. **Stay alert to weather advisories.** Use a NOAA Weather Radio and follow County web and social media updates.



RIDE OUT THE STORM

Listen to local officials for the "all clear" before going outside or returning home. Florida Emergency Information Line: **1-800-342-3557**.

Hernando County Evacuation Shelters

In the event of a community emergency, Hernando County has evacuation shelters for residents and visitors available as a last resort. They are designated by Hernando County and operated in partnership between Hernando County and the Hernando County School District. These facilities provide increased protection to the public from high winds and/or storm surge. They are a place to ride out the storm that may or may not be comfortable with very limited provisions.

How do I know if I need to go to an evacuation shelter?

Local authorities will give evacuation orders for areas with significant risk of damage resulting from a high wind or surge event. If you are not in the identified areas, you can choose to remain in your home. Be sure your windows, doors, and garage door are protected. *Evacuating unnecessarily can cause overcrowded evacuation shelters and traffic jams.* Become familiar with the information provided and make sure everyone in your household knows the following information:

- Current evacuation shelter information is available from local radio and television stations, hernandocounty.us/em, and the County's social media. facebook.com/HernandoCoGov twitter.com/HernandoCoGov
- Evacuation shelters will open based on the nature and timing of the threat to the county. **Never go to an evacuation shelter unless local officials have announced it is open.** Stay tuned to local media for a listing of evacuation shelters that will be open. Openings may differ by size and intensity of a disaster. Evacuation shelters are opened for the single purpose of protecting lives and are opened based on the ability of that facility to withstand the forecasted wind effects and storm surge.
- The Hernando County evacuation shelter that allows dogs and cats is D.S. Parrott Middle School. Current vaccination records are required. Read more about keeping animals safe on pages 16 & 17.
- Evacuation shelters are public environments where people are seeking shelter from intense weather. Power loss results in no air conditioning. Evacuation shelters do not have generators and offer no services other than a very basic food provisions and water. There are no cots, pillows or blankets provided. **Evacuees must bring their own bedding and supplies.**
- Evacuation shelters provide for 20 sq. ft. per person.

General population evacuation shelters:
20 sq ft of space is available for one person and all necessary items.



* Floor mats represent the space available. Floor mats will not be provided.

Shelter-in-Place

Local authorities will give evacuation orders for areas with significant risk of damage resulting from a high wind or storm surge event. Evacuating unnecessarily can cause overcrowded shelters and traffic jams. If you live in a sound site-built structure outside of an evacuation area (especially if built since 2002 and it is not located in a flood prone zone), sheltering in place may be an option. However, listen to Emergency Management officials during the event as to the best guidance based on potential countywide storm impacts.

Your shelter-in-place location should contain enough non-perishable food, blankets, communication equipment (such as radios), alternate power sources, first aid supplies, necessary medications, and any required durable medical equipment (e.g., hearing aid batteries, catheters) to allow self-sustainment in that location for at least 5-7 days. For a detailed list of supplies recommended for home emergency supply kits, consult [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov).

Hotel or Motel Evacuation

If you plan to evacuate to a hotel or motel, you will need to check for availability and make your reservation well in advance. Some hotels/motels have standing reservation hurricane programs and some relax their pet restrictions in an emergency. Again, make sure your destination is not in an evacuation area.

Leaving Coastal Areas

If you are leaving the area, remember to take supplies with you. Move inland away from the storm surge and inland flooding; however, it is recommended that residents *evacuate "tens of miles, not hundreds"* if possible. Roads will be heavily congested. You run the risk of being caught on the highway without a safe refuge or running into the storm if it takes a different track/direction.

Special Needs Evacuation Shelters

If you will need assistance in an evacuation or need to go to a special needs evacuation shelter, **register with Hernando County Emergency Management NOW by visiting hernandocounty.us/em or by calling (352) 754-4083**. Pre-registration helps us to help you when time is limited.

Examples of qualifying medical needs include the use of oxygen or use of medical equipment that requires electricity. It is important to apply in advance for this program so, if qualified, you will be on the registry for transportation and sheltering at a special needs evacuation shelter during a disaster.

Special needs evacuation shelters do not provide hands-on medical care, only medical monitoring. You should bring one caregiver with you. Remember to pack medications, written instructions regarding your care, special equipment, and bedding.

Special needs evacuation shelters:

60 sq. ft. of space is available for one medically-dependent person, one caregiver, and all necessary items.



Advanced registration is required.

Register at hernandocounty.us/em.

* Floor mats represent the space available. Floor mats will not be provided.

Using Your Hernando County Evacuation Map

1. Locate where you live and work on the map or online at "Know Your Level" (floridadisaster.org/knowyourzone).

2. Determine whether you are in an evacuation area, and if so, what level (color).

3. If you are in an evacuation area, or live in a mobile home, boat, or RV, decide where you will go if ordered to evacuate. Your choices include:

o Home of a relative or friend outside the evacuation level.

o Hotel/motel outside the evacuation level (make arrangements early).

o Go to a public evacuation shelter.

o As a last resort, leave the area entirely.

4. If you must go to a public evacuation shelter, use your county map to decide which one is convenient. Make sure you verify that the evacuation shelter is open **before you go**.

If you live in an area ordered to evacuate, gather your family/pets and emergency supplies, secure your home, and leave the evacuated area. Failure to obey an evacuation order is a violation of state and local laws.

NOTE: All persons living in mobile homes, boats, RVs, and manufactured homes must evacuate for all evacuation orders, regardless of where you are located in the county, due to threat of tornado or high velocity winds.

Hurricane Threat

The color coded areas on the map are vulnerable to storm surge. Storm surge is produced by water being pushed towards the shore by the force of the winds moving around the storm.

Storm surge creates a path of destruction, wiping out structures as it rapidly surges inland and then recedes. This is a life threatening situation for anyone who ignores evacuation orders and stays in vulnerable areas.

Hurricanes are categorized on a scale of 1 to 5, depending on wind strength and destructive power.

Saffir Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale		
CATEGORY	WIND SPEED	DAMAGE AT LANDFALL
1	74-95 mph	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage
2	96-110 mph	Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage
3	111-129 mph	Devastating damage will occur
4	130-156 mph	Catastrophic damage will occur
5	157+ mph	Catastrophic damage will occur

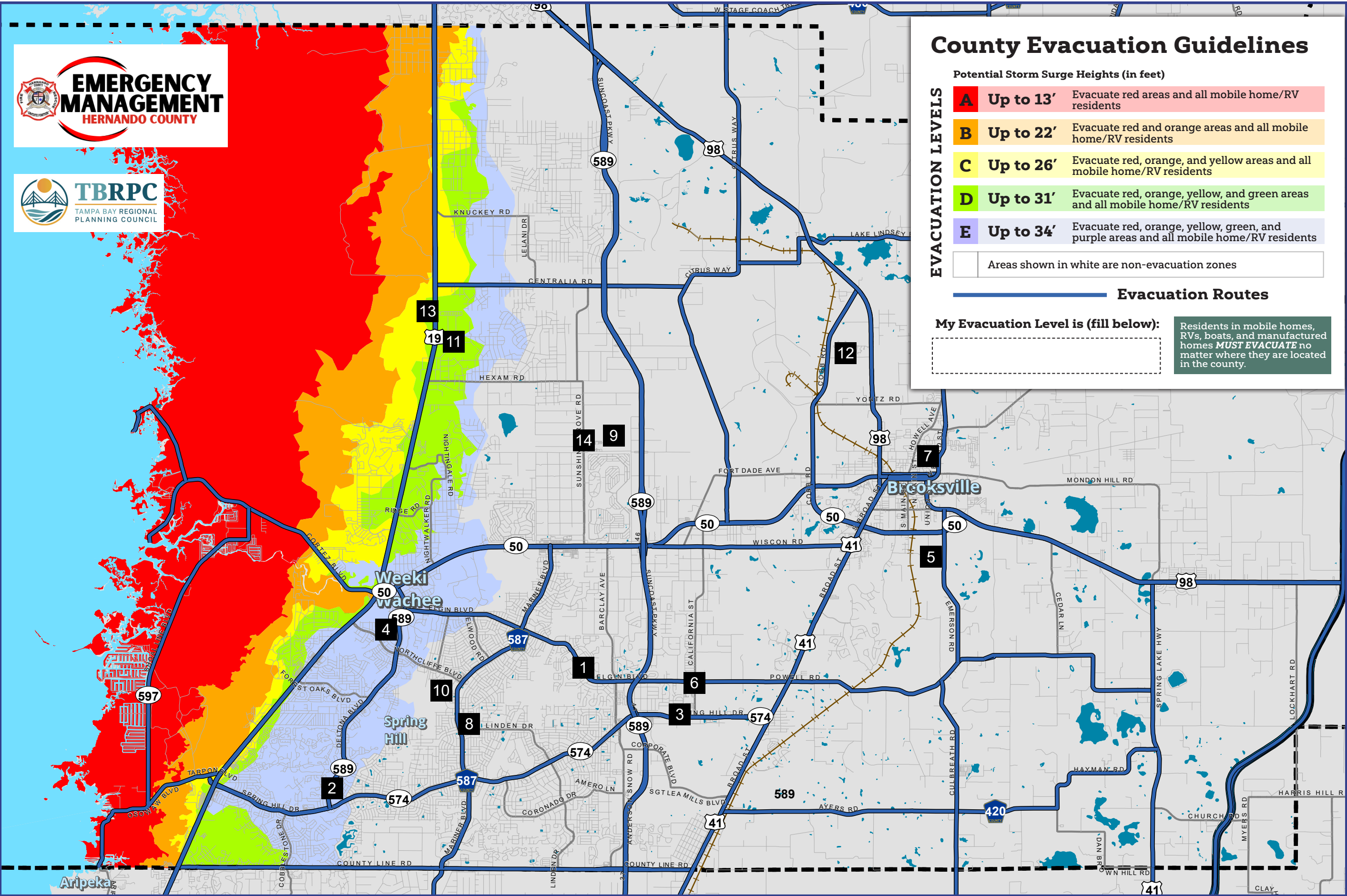
Special Needs Shelter Only

Pet-Friendly Shelter

hernandocounty.us/em
Scan this code with your smart phone's barcode reader.

Find your closest shelter on the map.

#	Shelter Name	Address
1	Challenger K-8 School	13400 Elgin Blvd., Spring Hill, 34609
2	Deltona Elementary School	2055 Deltona Blvd., Spring Hill, 34606
3	Nature Coast Technical High School	4057 California St., Brooksville, 34604
4	Fox Chapel Middle School	9412 Fox Chapel Lane, Spring Hill, 34606
5	Moton Elementary School	7175 Emerson Road, Brooksville, 34601
6	Chocachatti Elementary School	4135 California St., Brooksville, 34604
7	Hernando High School	700 Bell Ave., Brooksville, 34601
8	Springstead High School	3300 Mariner Blvd., Spring Hill, 34609
9	West Hernando Middle School	14325 Ken Austin Prkwy, Brooksville, 34613
10	Explorer K-8 School	10252 Northcliffe Blvd., Spring Hill, 34608
11	Weeki Wachee High School	12150 Vespa Way, Weeki Wachee, 34614
12	D.S. Parrott Middle School	19220 Youth Drive, Brooksville, 34601
13	Winding Waters K-8 School	12240 Vespa Way, Weeki Wachee, 34614
14	Central High School	14075 Ken Austin Prkwy, Brooksville, 34613



IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO.

ANIMAL SERVICES	352-796-5062
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT	352-754-4083
EOC RECORDED INFORMATION LINE	352-754-4111
FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL	352-251-4020
DUKE ENERGY	800-700-8744
PUBLIC INFORMATION CENTER	352-754-4083
HERNANDO COUNTY SHERIFF	352-754-6830
HERNANDO COUNTY FIRE & EMERGENCY SERVICES	352-540-4353
BROOKSVILLE FIRE DEPARTMENT	352-540-3840
SOLID WASTE	352-754-4112
WITHLACOOCHEE RIVER ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE	352-596-4000
AMERICAN RED CROSS	800-733-2767
CATHOLIC CHARITIES	352-686-9897
SALVATION ARMY	352-796-1186
UNITED WAY	352-688-2026
TAMPA BAY CARES, INC	2-1-1
S.A.M.E. CODE (Specific Area Message Encoder)	FIPS Code 012053
FOR EMERGENCIES, DIAL 9-1-1	
DO NOT CALL 9-1-1 FOR DISASTER INFORMATION	
For current emergency information and live EOC updates, tune in to Hernando County Government Broadcast Cable Channel 644 or the web stream at hernandocounty.us/em .	



HERNANDO COUNTY EMERGENCY ALERT PROGRAM

Receive automated emergency weather alerts and other important messages from Hernando County.

REGISTER TODAY AT:

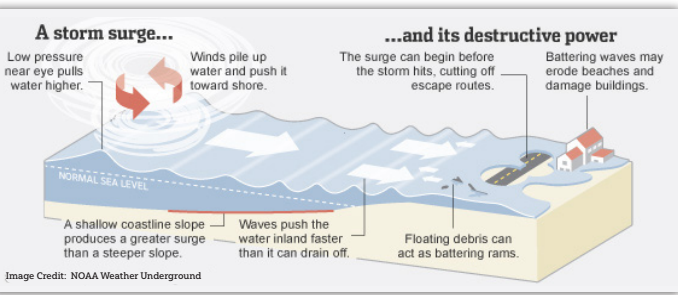
AlertHernando.org

If you are unable to register online, please call Hernando County Emergency Management at 352-754-4083.

Social Media Accounts

facebook.com/HernandoCoGov
 twitter.com/HernandoCoGov

Follow Hernando County's social media for the latest updates during a disaster event.



KNOW YOUR ZONE

Do you live in an evacuation zone?

Do you live in a flood prone or low-lying area?

Do you know your evacuation route?

KNOW YOUR HOME

Do you live in a mobile home?

What year was your home constructed?

Can your home withstand heavy rain?

EVACUATION PLAN

Can you safely shelter in your home?

Can you safely shelter with friends and family?

Do you need to travel to an emergency shelter?

Visit <https://bit.ly/34vtLBV> to learn more about how to answer these questions ahead of an emergency!

HOPING FOR THE BEST IS NOT A PLAN

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

- ☐ **Build an emergency supply kit.**
Go to hernandocounty.us/em for more information.
- ☐ **Assemble important documents.**
ID, insurance, legal documents.
- ☐ **Check insurance coverage.**
Homeowners and automobile insurance.
- ☐ **Purchase flood insurance.**
Go to floodsmart.gov for more information.

Keeping Animals Safe

Prepare your **entire** family.

The safety of your family's animals depends on you, especially in an emergency. During severe weather or other emergency situations, if it is unsafe for you to stay in your home, it is also unsafe for your animals. Do not leave your animals behind or use them as an excuse not to evacuate.

DISASTER PLANNING FOR DOMESTIC AND RURAL ANIMALS

Nearly 80% of pets displaced by a storm are never reunited with their owners. If you are ordered to evacuate, take your pet evacuation supplies with you to a safe location. Many shelters/evacuation centers may allow pets; however, as a pet owner, **you must plan ahead**. The best plan is to identify a safe location that allows household pets. **Pet-friendly shelters/evacuation centers and boarding facilities will require proof of vaccinations.** Make sure your pets have had all of their shots within the past 12 months.

Assemble a household pet evacuation kit using the checklist below. Keep in mind that boarding kennels may be without electricity or potable water and have limited personnel and supplies for days to weeks following a disaster. Research your options for evacuating with pets. If you plan to go to a hotel or motel, visit petswelcome.com. Schedule an appointment to talk to your veterinarian about disaster planning. Call your local SPCA, Animal Control, or Humane Society for more information.

After the storm has passed, **be careful allowing animals back outdoors**. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and pets could easily be confused and become lost. Downed power lines, other animals, and insects brought in with high water could present dangers to pets.

IDENTIFICATION

Having identification on your animals, including rabies and license tags, if applicable, may help reunite you with your animal(s) in the event you are separated. Identification should provide your name, home address, phone number(s), and the phone number of someone out-of-state with whom you will be in contact during or soon after the disaster/evacuation. Include a photo of you with your animals. If possible, include your veterinarian's name, location, and phone number. **Microchipping your pet is strongly recommended.**



EVACUATION SUPPLIES FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD PETS

FOR EACH PET: A collapsible cage or airline approved carrier with proper bedding is essential. This can be used for transportation and housing purposes. Owning enough carriers to accommodate your pets facilitates a speedy evacuation and **may mean the difference between the life or death of your pets.**

- ☐ Proper identification - collar & rabies tag/license
- ☐ Proper identification on all belongings (including emergency contact information if you evacuate)
- ☐ Vaccination paperwork and proof of ownership
- ☐ Photos of you with your pet
- ☐ Leash/harness/muzzle to restrain the animal
- ☐ Carrier or crate large enough for your pet to move around and contain a litter box if needed
- ☐ Newspapers, cat litter, scoop, and plastic trash bags for handling waste
- ☐ Ample food supply (at least 2 weeks)
- ☐ Ample water supply (at least 2 weeks)
- ☐ Non-electric can opener for wet food
- ☐ Water/food bowls
- ☐ Indoor pee pads
- ☐ Necessary medications
- ☐ Specific care instruction
- ☐ A comfort item such as a favorite toy or blanket

IN CASE YOU'RE NOT HOME DURING A DISASTER, DO THIS TODAY!

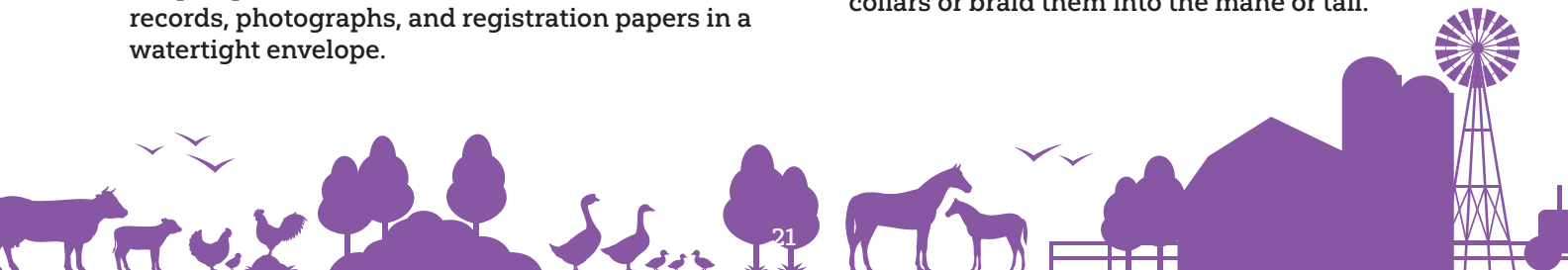
The following tips are recommended by the American Veterinary Medical Association:

1. Make copies of registration information, adoption papers, proof of purchase, and microchip information and store them in your evacuation kit.
2. Keep current photographs of your animals in your evacuation kit for identification purposes. Include some photos of you with your animals to help you reclaim your animal(s) if you are separated. Consider preparing waterproof "Lost Pet" signs with your animal's photo, your name, and your contact information to use in case your animal is lost. If your pet has a microchip, call the company to register your pet's information and make sure to keep that information updated.
3. Place stickers on front and back house doors, barn doors, and pasture entrances to notify neighbors, fire fighters, police, and other rescue personnel of animals on your property and the location of your evacuation supplies. If you live in an apartment, make sure your animals are on record with management.
4. Keep a list of the species, number and locations of your animals near your evacuation supplies and note animals' favorite hiding spots. This will save precious rescue time.
5. Keep muzzles, handling gloves, catch nets, and animal restraints where rescue personnel can find them. Remember that animals may become unpredictable when frightened.
6. Designate a willing neighbor to tend to your animals in the event a disaster occurs when you are not at home. This person should have a key to your home, be familiar with your animals, and know your evacuation procedures and where your evacuation supplies are kept.
7. Include a letter signed by you in your evacuation kit that releases your neighbor from responsibility if an animal is injured during an evacuation. You may also want to have a signed veterinary medical treatment authorization with your evacuation kit— this will aid your veterinarian in providing care if your animal must be treated during your absence.

U PREPARE YOUR LIVESTOCK BEFORE A STORM

The decision to evacuate your livestock depends on many factors. If they are in a storm surge area, flood plain, small pasture or urban area where they will be unable to avoid debris or will be in danger of collapsing buildings, you should consider evacuation.

1. The key to a successful evacuation is to do it early. Know where you can take your livestock in an emergency evacuation. Large vehicles can become difficult and unsafe to drive when winds reach 40 mph so prepare to evacuate early.
2. Practice loading and unloading your livestock in a trailer. Stressed animals will be harder to handle (and may negatively react to your own stress) during an actual disaster.
3. Pack a box with extra halters and leads for each animal, blankets, brushes, wire cutters, medications, bandages, fly spray, and other first-aid supplies.
4. Keep important documents such as medical records, photographs, and registration papers in a watertight envelope.
5. A 2-week supply of animal feed for each animal should be stored in waterproof containers.
6. Be prepared to treat contaminated water (add two drops of chlorine bleach per quart and let stand for 30 minutes).
7. If you are forced to evacuate and leave your animals behind, inform friends and neighbors of your evacuation plans and post detailed instructions in several places on your property.
8. You will need to leave water for at least 3 days and access to quality hay. **DO NOT LEAVE ANIMALS WITH FREE ACCESS TO GRAIN.**
9. The safest place for large animals to weather a storm is in a large pasture.
10. Label your animals with a non-toxic grease pencil or spray paint with your phone number.
11. Label your contact information onto waterproof luggage tags and attach them to their halters/ collars or braid them into the mane or tail.



Business Preparedness

Prepare now, **\$AVE** later.

The time to think about disaster preparedness is now. In some cases, this may require a change in mindset, since small business owners are often preoccupied worrying about immediate challenges and it can be hard to think of longer-term possibilities. Being prepared will make your business more resilient when a storm arrives.



Take note of the following tips:

1. **Visit floridadisaster.biz to create or update your Business Continuity of Operations Plan.** This is an interactive website that can help you build a disaster plan tailored to your business.
2. **Create an Emergency Communication Plan.** Establish points of contact so employees can receive information as the situation evolves. Collect email addresses and cell phone numbers so the company can send out email blasts and texts.
3. **A "single voice" is crucial during disaster recovery.** One voice that receives information, vets information, and disseminates information to all parties that need to be contacted is paramount. Remember, inaccurate communication is just as bad as no communication. Also, consider the communication needs of employees with disabilities and employees who have limited proficiency in English.
4. **Know how the company will evacuate if needed.** The overall emergency plan should include plans for evacuating both employees and essential equipment if necessary, with suggested routes for leaving the area.
5. **Make sure your company's supply chain can withstand a disaster.** Focus your planning on the key products and services your company would need immediately before and after a disaster. Identify potential points of failure within the supply chain, and secure secondary suppliers as backups if needed. Implementing a "Service Level Agreement" (SLA) defines an agreed level of service that you can expect as a customer (from your supplier) in terms of communication, quality, and rectified action if problems arise.
6. **Identify any single points of failure (weak links) in your business that could cripple you if they fail.** You will want these issues corrected prior to entering a situation of peril. Build redundancy within your organization.
7. **Cross-train your staff well in advance of a disaster so the business can function with key staff missing in action.**
8. **Consider "buddying up" with another business to be ready.** Having a similar business as a "buddy" can pay off in difficult situations, whether it is by borrowing staff, exchanging information, or sharing inventory.
9. **Review your business insurance coverages on an annual basis regardless of the situation.** If you receive a claim denial, get the denial in writing. If the settlement offered by the insurance company seems unfair, contact the Florida Office of Insurance Regulation by visiting flor.com.
10. **Make sure your business insurance is up-to-date.** Does your insurance policy have current details about your company's assets? Do you have up-to-date contact information for your insurer so you can reach someone quickly if needed? And does your policy accurately reflect your operations, with the best coverage in place for covering loss of business?
11. **Have a "nest egg" ready in case your business needs short-term cash.** Getting insurance claims paid may take time, and there may be damages that are not covered by insurance. Small business owners should work with their accountants and bankers to prepare a disaster fund that can be used if needed.
12. **Have a backup location in mind if possible.** Certainly, this will not be possible for all types of businesses; but for many companies, having a potential backup space identified with strong internet and other key amenities for employees can help maintain operations after a disaster while keeping up employee morale.
13. **Keep all your key business documents in a safe place.** Create online backups and keep paper versions of your important corporate documents in a portable fire-safe and waterproof container.

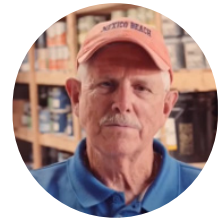
For more disaster preparedness tips for businesses visit: disastersafety.org and ready.gov

HURRICANE PHOENIX

If a Category 5 hurricane made a direct hit in the Tampa Bay Region, it's estimated that **as many as 40% of the area's small businesses would permanently close**. This estimate, which was derived from the "Hurricane Phoenix" Category 5 Hurricane simulation, reflects how such a storm would damage or destroy much of the infrastructure needed for small companies to survive, from roads to power sources to technology.

To help businesses in the Tampa Bay area prepare, the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council created Project Phoenix 2.0, a training exercise for small businesses and emergency management agencies. Included are videos that simulate a Category 5 storm hitting the Tampa Bay Region and interviews from business owners in Mexico Beach, Florida who are recovering from the impacts of Category 5 Hurricane Michael in 2018. For more information visit tbrpc.org/phoenix.

PROJECT PHOENIX 2.0



"You're going to be exposed to considerable damage or loss,"

said Al Cathey of Cathey's Hardware & Tackle, which rebuilt its structure after major damage from Hurricane Michael in 2018.

"Don't let that entrepreneurial spirit be a casualty of the hurricane."

Visit floridadisaster.biz/DisasterPlanningToolkit to prepare your Business Disaster Plan.

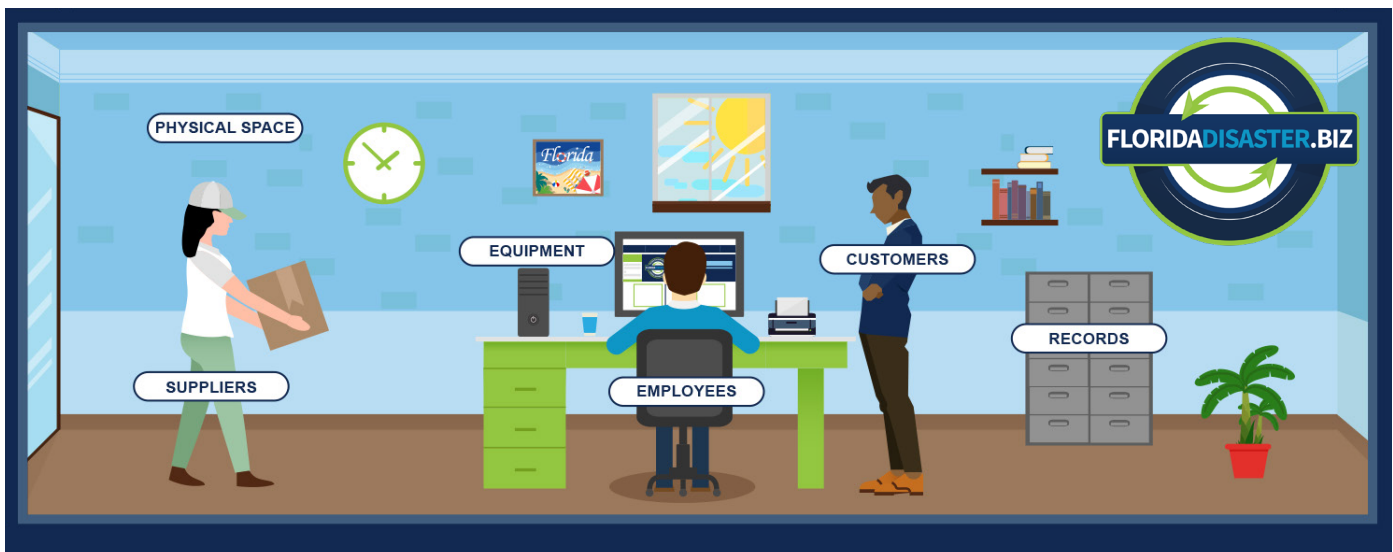


Image Credit: floridadisaster.biz



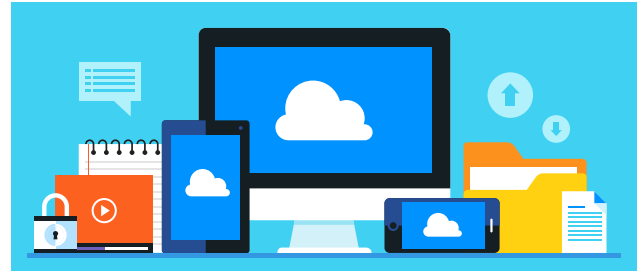
BUSINESS PREPAREDNESS & RECOVERY RESOURCES

1. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) provides low-interest disaster loans to help businesses recover from declared disasters. Video guide to SBA's Disaster Assistance Program: youtube.com/watch?v=Xm_ss5QmBAE.

The SBA advises that if immediate assistance is required, small businesses should call the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or the SBA in its local community. FEMA can be reached at 1-800-621-3362 and contact SBA's Disaster Assistance team at 1-800-659-2955.
2. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) provides assistance to Florida workers, businesses, and communities after a disaster. Learn more at floridajobs.org.
3. U.S. Chamber Foundation's "Resilience in a Box" workbook guides companies toward addressing preparedness issues while building in flexibility to handle potential business interruptions. Visit the following websites for more information:
 - 1) uschamberfoundation.org/resilience-box
 - 2) uschamberfoundation.org/node/43155

Securing Electronic Devices & Data

Think about the electronic devices you use at home and in the office, which may include a phone, tablet, laptop, desktop computer, television, or security system. These technologies help us receive the latest news, speak to our loved ones, and call for help. Data inside these devices operate businesses, monitor properties, and store important records.



Without question, it is much more difficult to return to a normal home and work life after a storm has passed if these technologies have failed and if important records have been lost. Do not leave your data and devices to chance.

The following tips can help you secure electronic devices and digital information for hurricanes and other disasters:

1. **Schedule your personal and workplace data and devices to be backed up regularly.** Hurricane season should not be your cue to prepare data and devices for a disaster, as anything could happen to your home or office throughout the year. However, the start of hurricane season can be a reminder to confirm that automatic backups are regularly scheduled and working properly. This is extremely important for those who own a business and who may rely on the files and data saved on a computer to operate that business after the storm has passed.
2. **Scan important paperwork and documents into a digital format.** This can be done using a scanner, a handheld camera, or with a free app on a smart phone that digitizes documents using the phone's camera (such as TurboScan).
3. **Take before and after photos and videos** of your home, business, furniture, and valuables. These records will be important if an insurance claim needs to be made.
4. Once your key information is saved digitally, **back up your data and files to an external hard drive or USB flash drive.** When updated frequently, these backup drives become a portable copy of the data in your computer or device. If the call is made to evacuate, do not forget to take your backup drives with you.
5. **Back up your data and files to a cloud-based server.** Uploading "to the cloud" provides an added layer of protection in case something happens to your phone, computer, or backup drives. With cloud-based protection, your information is secured online and can be easily restored to the original device or to a replacement device.
6. After everything is backed up digitally, **it is wise to store all important documents and keepsakes in a fire-safe, waterproof container that is easily portable.** This could involve such important items as birth certificates and passports, or irreplaceable keepsakes like family photo albums.
7. **Place electronic devices in high and dry locations away from windows.** Water is an obvious enemy of electronic technology. Even the smallest amount of water can ruin your device.
8. **Make sure electronic devices are unplugged during a storm.** Power outages and lightning strikes can occur and cause major damage to devices, including computers, servers, and televisions. Charge portable battery packs before the storm so you can avoid having to plug in any devices.
9. **Limit the use of electronics until the storm has passed and power is stabilized.** It will be tempting to turn on your phone or computer to check for internet access and any news on the storm's path. It is important to turn off and unplug devices to prevent power surge damage and battery drain. You may need to make an emergency call during or after the storm, so you need to conserve your battery life.
10. You may be thinking, "If I can't use my device, how will I get the news?" Your disaster supply kit should contain a **battery-powered radio with plenty of extra batteries.** This will allow you to tune in to radio broadcasts for storm tracking and important safety updates from your local emergency management agency and NOAA Weather Radio. Important local radio station channels are listed on the [inside of this guide](#).

When Time Has Run Out

It's no longer safe to leave; it's time to shelter in place.

IF YOUR HOME IS BEING DAMAGED BY STRONG WINDS/ TORNADOES:

- Close interior door(s) to reduce pressure in your home.
- Go to a safe room: an interior room, closet, or hallway away from windows on the lowest level of your home.
- Lie on the floor under a table or other sturdy object, or in a bathtub, if you cannot make it to a safe room.
- Curl up and cover your head with a mattress, helmet, or other protective item.
- Do not leave your safe room until you are sure the storm has completely passed.
- It will seem calm as the center, or eye, of the storm passes. Be ready for severe weather to return once the eye passes.

IF FLOOD WATER IS RISING IN YOUR HOME:

- Stay inside.
- Before you lose power, report your location to an emergency contact who is out of the area so they can help first responders locate you after the storm.
- Shut off water, gas service, and electricity if possible.
- Move to the second floor or higher if needed.
- Stand on top of a counter or substantial piece of furniture to stay above rising water.
- As a last resort, break a hole in your roof with an axe and climb onto the roof.

Wait until the storm has passed to tend to any damage.



During the Storm

There will be a point in time when all evacuations will be over. Winds will continue to gain strength. Once they reach 35-45 mph conditions, Fire and Emergency Medical Services will not be able to respond to emergencies. It will be time for everyone to shelter in place.

IF FLOODWATER STARTS COMING INTO YOUR HOME:

Do not go outside and wade through the water. Floodwater and storm surge can move quickly, and live power lines could be in the water outside. Remain inside and stand or sit on something that is elevated off the floor, such as a bed or table. If necessary evacuate vertically, getting onto your roof as a last resort.

IF THERE IS A TORNADO OR HIGH SUSTAINED WINDS:

Take refuge in an interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level of your home. The center of your house is the safest. Lie on the floor, under a table or other sturdy object if you cannot make it to an interior room. Curl up and cover your head with a mattress or other item if available.

IF THERE IS A SEWER OUTAGE:

If a sewer outage is announced, do not flush your toilet. Powered sewer lift stations may be down, which could cause a sewage backup in your home. Use a portable toilet, like one used on your boat or camper, or set up one by using one of the following methods:

- Five-gallon bucket - Line with heavy duty trash bag and use household bleach as a disinfectant. Make sure it has a tight lid.
- Toilet bowl - Turn off your outside water supply
- first, and flush once to empty before lining with a trash bag.
- DO NOT USE CAT LITTER. It should not be put into toilets or flushed - it may clog your pipes.

Once given the OK by officials, dispose of the emergency toilet's contents into your household commode. Thoroughly sanitize your emergency toilet with bleach before storing or disposing.

IF THE POWER GOES OUT FOR SIX HOURS:

If there is food in the refrigerator, move perishable foods into an ice-filled cooler. Put a thermometer in the cooler to make sure it stays below 40 degrees. Meat and other perishable foods can stay about 40 degrees for two hours without spoiling.

IF THE POWER STAYS OUT FOR TWO DAYS:

If there is food in the freezer, it can be stored safely for two days - if you keep the freezer door shut. Once the storm passes, cook any unspoiled food outside, and consider sharing with your neighbors. From this point forward you will need non-perishable food.

IF THE WATER SUPPLY IS AFFECTED:

It is always possible that the drinking water supply could be affected during a disaster. Monitor the news for boil water advisories, which mean there is a possibility of contamination. In this case you should be prepared to disinfect the water. You can disinfect the water by:

- Boil - boil water at a rolling boil for one minute.
- Bleach - add 1/8 teaspoon of unscented bleach per gallon of water, and let stand for 30 minutes. This is less effective than boiling, but will work if there is no way to boil water.
- If water is out, use your emergency supplies.

IF PHONE, CABLE, AND CELL SERVICE ARE DOWN:

- Use a battery - Solar or crank-powered radio. Radio broadcasts are usually the last communication source to go down, and AM stations can broadcast longer than FM. Severe weather alerts are also transmitted through the NOAA Weather Alert Radio.
- Mobile text messaging - Texting often works when other services do not. If your phone's digital clock works, then you can send and receive texts. Social media and mobile apps may be working as well.
- Keep your phone and other devices charged. Use your back-up battery charger and solar-battery chargers. Use a vehicle to charge your devices.

For more information go to:
www.hernandocounty.us/em
www.hernandocounty.us/utills
www.hernandocounty.us/dpw

Hurricane Myth or Fact

MYTH

VS

FACT

I'm not in the track
"cone of uncertainty,"
so I'm OK.

The cone shows the POSSIBLE path of the center of a storm. It doesn't show potentially destructive weather that can extend beyond the cone.

Wind is the deadliest part of a hurricane.

Water is the deadliest part. 1/2 of hurricane related deaths in the US are due to storm surge. Flooding due to rain is also a major killer.

It can't happen where I live.

Tropical Cyclones follow weather patterns, steering winds and depth of the lower atmosphere. All coastal areas need to remain cautious and prepare for a storm, regardless of previous storm paths.

After a storm passes, you're safe.

After a storm passes, other dangers present themselves. Cleaning up debris brings safety concerns that can cause injuries and death.

Your homeowners insurance has you covered.

Most policies do not pay for repairs or losses due to floodwater. Check your insurance policy prior to storm season.

Placing tape on windows helps to prevent glass from breaking in high winds.

Tape may hold together larger pieces of glass that are more dangerous than smaller shards. Tape cannot hold up wind-driven debris. Utilize shutters or plywood instead.

What to Expect After a Storm



After a disaster, you may be without power and many of the services you rely on, including water, sewer, phone, cell phone, businesses, etc. Immediate response may not be possible, so you must prepare to be self-reliant for at least 7 days after the storm.



RE-ENTRY AFTER THE STORM

1. **BE PATIENT.** You will not be able to return to your home or business until search and rescue operations are complete and safety hazards, such as downed power lines, are cleared. It may take time for emergency crews to reach your neighborhood.
2. **Residents:** Have valid ID with your current address.
3. **Businesses:** Have a valid picture ID, documents showing proof of ownership/rental, County business tax license, and names of individuals authorized to be given access on a business letterhead.
4. **Avoid driving, especially through water.** Roads may have debris which can puncture your tires! Until power is restored, traffic signals may be inoperable for an extended period of time. Treat any intersection where traffic signals are out as a 4-way stop.
5. Once you arrive back, walk around your home or business from the outside first to **survey damage and enter with caution.**
6. **Be extremely cautious with fire.** Do not light a match without first making sure that there is not a gas leak.
7. If you suspect a gas leak, **leave immediately and call 9-1-1.** Contact your natural gas provider from a safe location.
8. Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home or business.
9. If your home or business has been flooded, have a qualified licensed electrician inspect the electrical system and appliances before turning the power back on.
10. Know what your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy covers and what you will need to submit a claim. Take photographs of all damage before repairs and keep all receipts.



POST-STORM SAFETY

1. Keep grills and generators outdoors in a well-ventilated area. Carbon monoxide poisoning is a frequent killer.
2. Avoid candles. Use battery-operated flashlights and lamps instead to limit the risk of fire.
3. Stay tuned to your local media for up-to-date emergency information.
4. Let your out-of-town contact know you are safe and uninjured.
5. Avoid driving. If you drive, treat any intersection with inoperable traffic signals as a four-way stop.
6. Always supervise children.
7. **DO NOT WADE IN FLOOD WATERS.**
8. Be aware of snakes, insects, alligators, or animals driven to higher ground by floods.
9. Avoid downed or dangling power lines. Be especially careful when clearing fallen trees.
10. Make temporary repairs to correct safety hazards and minimize further damage.
11. Be extremely careful with a chainsaw and follow all safety precautions.
12. Call professionals to remove large, uprooted trees, etc.
13. **Always use proper safety equipment** such as heavy gloves, safety goggles, heavy boots, long-sleeve shirts, and long pants. Tie back long hair. Wear a hat and sunscreen.
14. Drink plenty of fluids, rest and ask for help when you need it.
15. Do not burn trash.



STORM DEBRIS CLEAN-UP: HERNANDO COUNTY REQUIREMENTS

Depending on the severity of the storm, residents should anticipate delays, and possibly suspension in their regular collection services including trash, recycling, and yard waste.

Storm debris must be separated by category for collection, for example:

- o **Vegetative:** tree limbs and trunks.
- o **Garbage:** place spoiled food in containers, or double bag it for pick-up.
- o **Household goods:** furniture, clothes, books, toys.

- o **Construction materials:** drywall, roof shingles, carpet, aluminum, vinyl, wood fencing.
- o **Appliances:** refrigerators, water heaters, televisions, computers.

TIPS: Avoid stacking debris by utility poles, under power lines, on top of water meters or other water connections, by fire hydrants, by vehicles, next to mailboxes or fences, or on storm drains.
Do not place any storm debris in the street.



GENERATORS

1. Generators can provide power to your home or business in case of a power outage or shortage. Take precautions when using a generator and store fuel safely outside in labeled approved storage containers.
2. Determine the appliance or equipment you want to use and if a portable or stationary generator is required.
3. Stationary (whole house) generators run off of gas utility lines or an LP tank and supply electrical power to pre-selected circuits. They **MUST** be professionally installed by a licensed electrician.
4. Determine if you will need multiple outlets or multiple types of outlets on your generator.
5. **NEVER connect a portable generator to building wiring.** There is an extreme danger of generator back-feed for the general public (downed wires etc.) and utility workers. Plug appliances, etc., directly into the generator.
6. Place generator outdoors and away from doors, windows, and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to enter a building. **Exhaust fumes are deadly.**
7. Before refueling your generator, turn it off and let it cool down. Do not forget to check the oil every time you add gas. Keep generators dry.
8. Conserve fuel by limiting use of appliances.



CONTRACTOR FRAUD

1. Hire only licensed contractors. Be cautious of anyone coming to your home uninvited and offering to do home repairs. You can look up a contractor's license at myfloridalicense.com.
2. Obtain a written estimate or contract. Insist on start/completion dates and payment terms in the contract. Do not pay in full before work begins and do not pay the final balance until the work is completed to your satisfaction. **NEVER pay with cash.**
3. Permits are always required for any kind of demolition or permanent repairs, reconstruction, roofing, or filling.
4. Do not pull the permits for the contractor. This may be an indication they are not properly licensed. Contact your local building department for information on required building permits.
5. If you suspect a contractor of potential fraud, contact the State of Florida Consumer Fraud hotline: **1-866-966-7226**.



HAZARD MITIGATION

Hazard mitigation is any sustained actions taken to eliminate or reduce future risk to people and property. Preventing damage in the first place is less expensive than restoring damaged property. The following hurricane-resistant construction practices and mitigation actions help reduce damage during storms:

1. **Raise the building above flood levels.** There are ways to retrofit your home to minimize flood risks, including elevation, flood barriers, and dry and wet flood proofing. An elevated building on stilts, pier foundations, or on a raised platform is a proven way to prevent damage from extreme flooding. Constructing a waterproof wall or sand bagging a home's perimeter can also mitigate damage. Elevate the building's electrical panels and air conditioners above flood levels.
2. **Tie down the building to its foundation.** Anchor manufactured homes, trailers, boats, and any detached items that could cause damage in high winds during a storm.
3. **Increase a building's impact resistance** with reinforced, impact-resistant doors, laminated windows, storm-resistant windows or hurricane shutters, pull-down PVC shutter systems, and high-impact synthetic window shades.
4. **Prevent penetration of moisture.** Sealants, waterproof membranes, house wrap, rainscreen systems, and use of mold and mildew-resistant materials can keep rain and moisture out of the home or reduce resulting damage.
5. **Make sure you are receiving all the eligible benefits from your insurance policy.** Ask your insurance agent if there are any discounts for performing mitigation measures to your home or business.
6. **Rebuild stronger.** If your home was damaged by a hurricane, consider using different building techniques or materials from those you used the first time. Research how to build back stronger to make informed decisions and be prepared for next hurricane season. Additional resources for how to make your home safer:
 - flash.org (Federal Alliance for Safe Homes)
 - Call FLASH toll-free at **877-221-SAFE (7233)**
 - mysafe florida.org
 - floodsmart.gov
 - disastersafety.org
 - fema.gov/grants/mitigation

Disaster Recovery Takes Time

Expect conditions to improve very slowly during the next few weeks. Services such as power, drinking water, sewer, cell service, and cable could be down.

WHAT TO DO:

As soon as you can get back to your home:

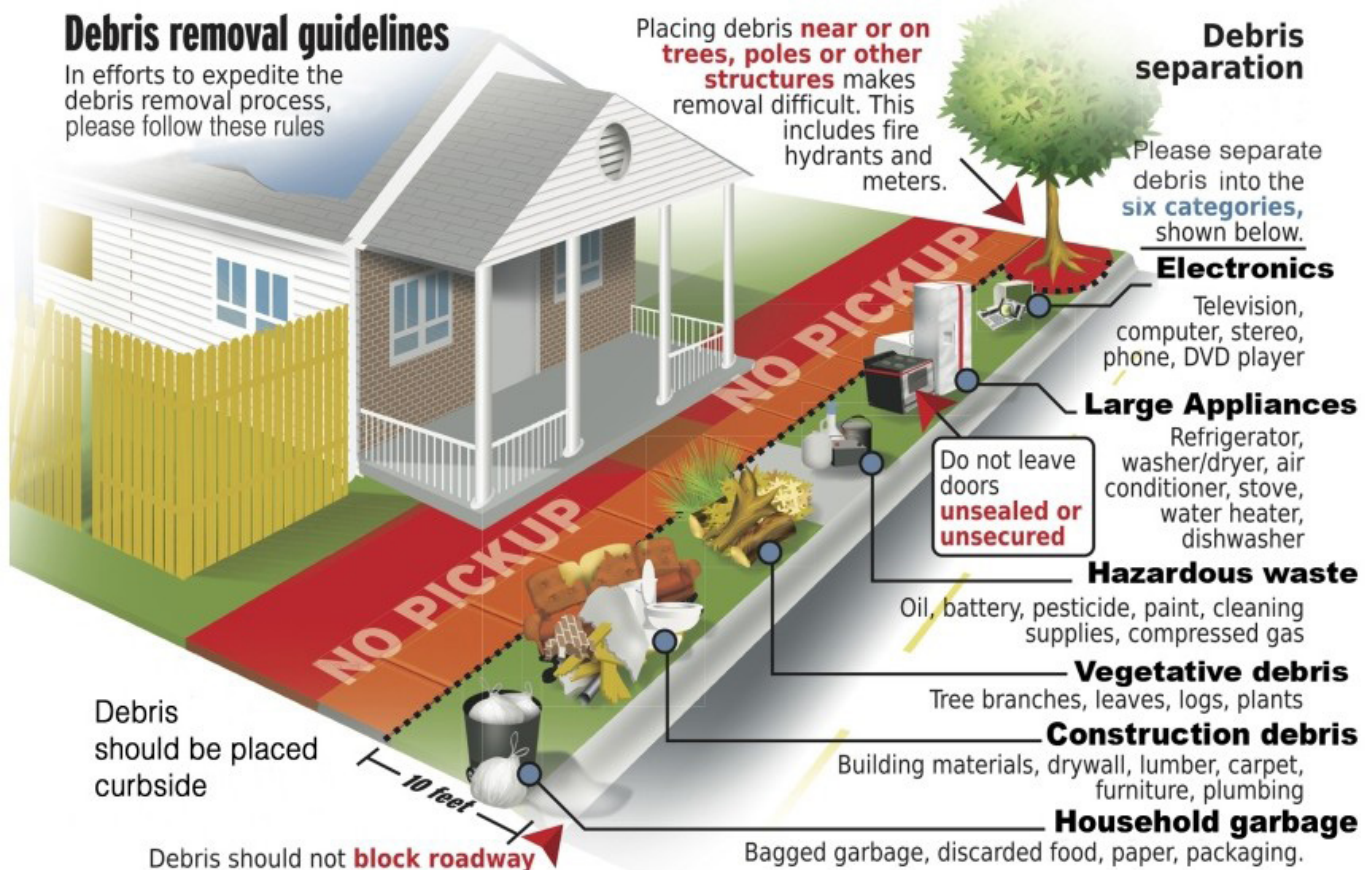
- Take photos of the damage.
- Contact your insurance agent.
- See what local assistance is available at hernandocounty.us/public-safety/emergency-management.



FEMA



US Army Corps
of Engineers®



HOME CLEANUP

Make sure wet items have been removed from your home, including rugs and drywall. Take photos of the damaged items removed. If you need help, there may be teams of disaster response volunteers that come into an area impacted by a disaster to help homeowners, such as CERT. **See page 10 for more information.**

To check which types of debris will be picked up, check with your city or visit hernandocounty.us/public-safety/emergency-management after the storm.

PERMITTING

The process of getting permits to do work on your house is a long process. It could take months. Stay in touch with your municipality for guidance.

Disaster Recovery Assistance

Successful recoveries depend upon personal and business disaster preparedness planning. When personal resources become overwhelmed, look to family, neighbors, local community resources, and faith-based organizations first for help.



INDIVIDUAL & HOUSEHOLD DISASTER ASSISTANCE

In the event of a **Presidentially Declared Disaster**, federal assistance may be available. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) **Individuals and Households Program (IHP)** provides financial and direct services to eligible individuals and households affected by a disaster, who have uninsured or under-insured necessary expenses and serious needs. Visit fema.gov/disasters for more information.

The **Small Business Administration (SBA)** provides loans to homeowners, renters, businesses, and organizations to repair or replace real estate, personal property, equipment, and business assets that have been damaged in a disaster. Through its office of Disaster Assistance, SBA provides low interest, long-term loans for physical and economic damage caused by a declared event. Visit sba.gov/disaster for more information.

People who lose their job due to the disaster and are not eligible for regular Unemployment Insurance Compensation may apply for **Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)**. Visit oui.doleta.gov/unemploy for more information.

The State of Florida Division of Emergency Management Recovery Bureau works to maximize disaster assistance to eligible public entities, individuals, and families through various state and federal disaster assistance programs. Visit floridadisaster.org/dem/recovery for more info.

The **State Assistance Information Line (SAIL)** is a toll-free hotline activated at the time of an emergency to provide an additional resource for those in Florida to receive accurate and up-to-date information regarding an emergency or disaster situation impacting the State of Florida. The SAIL hotline is: **1-800-342-3557**.

FEMA's **Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program** provides assistance to state, tribal, local governments, and certain types of private non-profit organizations. To apply for Public Assistance, all eligible applicants are required to submit a form through FloridaPA.org within 30 days of a Presidential Disaster Declaration.

Contact your local emergency management agency for information about disaster assistance that may be available in your area.



HOW DO I APPLY FOR FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE?

A number of services and special programs are available when the President signs a major disaster declaration. Call FEMA or apply online at disasterassistance.gov.

Federal Emergency Management Agency



FEMA

fema.gov

1-800-621-FEMA (3362)

(TTY: 1-800-462-7585 for the speech- or hearing-impaired)



IS CRISIS COUNSELING AVAILABLE TO ME?

The purpose of a crisis counseling program is to help relieve any grieving, stress, or mental health problems caused or aggravated by the disaster or its aftermath. These are **short-term services** provided by FEMA through supplemental funds granted to state and local mental health agencies and are available to eligible survivors of Presidentially declared major disasters. If you require this confidential service, inquire about it **while registering for disaster assistance**.

Crisis counseling services are also offered by the **American Red Cross, the Salvation Army, other voluntary agencies and places of worship**.

Update Your Disaster Plan

COMPLETE YOUR DISASTER PLANNING CHECKLIST



I have made a plan to **communicate with family members** through this out-of-state contact and have asked my family to keep this name and number with them at all times.

Name: _____

Phone number: _____

I plan **not to evacuate** and will go to a friend or family member's home in a safe area. I have notified them and made all of the appropriate arrangements.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

I plan **to evacuate** and will go to a friend's or family member's home in a safe area. I have notified them and made all of the appropriate arrangements.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

I plan to go to a **public shelter or evacuation center**.

Address: _____

I plan to stay in a **hotel/motel** in a safe area.

Name of hotel/motel: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

I have calculated the **driving time** to my safe destination at approximately four times the normal driving time to account for traffic, and it is: _____ hours.

I have studied the **evacuation route** that best suits my needs. My evacuation route will include the following:

If our family is separated and we need to regroup, the following location is where **we will meet**:

I have made plans for my **special needs** family members or myself. My plans are the following: _____

I have made plans to keep my household's **animals** safe. My plans are the following: _____

I have completed my **property inventory** and placed it in a safe fire and waterproof place. Location: _____

I have made an assessment of my **insurance needs**. I have the following:

- ____ Homeowners insurance
- ____ Flood insurance
- ____ Wind and hail insurance
- ____ Renters insurance

Insurance information. Name of company, agent, phone number, and address: _____

I have completed the necessary **precautions** for the following:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ____ Exterior windows | ____ Large windows and glass doors |
| ____ Garage doors | ____ Roof gable ends |
| ____ Roof protection | ____ Indoor hazard protection plans |
| ____ Outdoor property protection plans | ____ Trees and landscaping |
| ____ Mobile home, boat, or RV (if applicable) | |

I have identified and anticipated **extra expenses** due to a disaster, and I have calculated an approximate amount of money that will be required to see my family and myself through. That amount is: \$ _____

This guide was created by the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council in coordination with your County Emergency Management Agency.

Digital copies of this guide are available to download at tampabayprepares.org.

Contact your county to request a hard copy.