

# ALL HAZARDS GUIDE

**2010 -2011 Edition**

**HIGHLANDS COUNTY**

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

**This is when you should  
Plan  
Prepare  
Participate**



**Take a look inside.**





**HIGHLANDS COUNTY**  
**DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**

6850 West George Blvd.  
Sebring, FL 33875  
863-385-1112

Dear Residents and Visitors,

Highlands County is a beautiful place for work or play. We are very fortunate to have mild and sunny weather that is ideal for outdoor activities. Our County has an abundance of lakes for fishing and water sports, golf courses, parks, and many other opportunities that enhance our lifestyle. However, Florida has potential for dramatic weather changes, and natural and man-made hazards can threaten this State with serious implications. Potential threats to our Community include hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfire, lightning, flooding, hazardous materials incidents, and terrorism.

Most of us realize the importance of preparing for the more significant hazards such as hurricanes. When these events occur, the consequences can be devastating if we have not prepared to protect our lives and property. Many of these preparations are universal for all of the above threats, including a family disaster supplies kit, and a family emergency plan.

This All Hazards Guide is published to help you prepare your family and your property for a number of potentially significant hazards. It is designed to answer many questions you might ask in preparing to deal with these natural and man-made disasters. You can use it as a guide in making your plan to survive the threats posed by these hazards.

Please take time to read this guide and take the advice to heart. Keep it in a convenient location where you can find it easily throughout the year. Prepare yourself, your family, and your property before we are affected by one of these events.

Planning for a safe tomorrow,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Nichols".

Bill Nichols, Director  
Highlands County Emergency Management

# El Niño Brings Wind Shear, Late Start to Hurricane Season

By Wayne P. Sallade', Director  
Charlotte County Emergency Management

With a building El Niño and it's accompanying wind shear across the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean, the 2009 hurricane season was a virtual non-event for most of the U.S. mainland. The first named storm (Ana) did not form until August 12. It wasn't until the season's final month (November), when Hurricane Ida formed off Costa Rica and tracked north, eventually becoming a strong Category 2 hurricane in the southern Gulf, that anything of consequence would threaten the U.S. It transitioned to an extra-tropical storm just before landfall near Mobile, Alabama on November 10th.

The 2009 hurricane season produced just nine named storms and only three hurricanes. The strongest storm by far was Hurricane Bill, which reached Category 4 strength in the central Atlantic. It was one of the largest hurricanes (in terms of gale diameter) ever seen in the Atlantic Basin. The 460 mile wide system churned up the shipping lanes and briefly threatened Bermuda, before turning northeast into the open ocean.

Just one storm struck the United States, when Tropical Storm Claudette (one of three active storms on August 16) hit Florida's Santa Rosa Island on August 17. Florida's worst damage caused by the storm occurred in Southwest Florida as an EF-0 tornado in one of the storm's feeder bands hit Cape Coral, leaving damages totaling \$103,000 to 11 homes.

All in all we saw the least active hurricane season since 1997. With a very active first decade in the new millennium, the 2009 season has most certainly lulled many into a false sense of security and a mindset that just maybe the very active 15-year period of tropical weather is winding down. Not so fast my friends! Most experts are in agreement that the recent cycle of above normal activity in the tropical Atlantic will resume in 2010. The El Niño pattern that has produced record cold and above normal rainfall to the state is expected to relax as hurricane season approaches. That will in turn lessen the wind shear, allowing storms to more easily develop and grow in intensity.

The National Hurricane Center will make major changes to storm warnings and watches during the hurricane season ahead. With significant progress over the past twenty years in terms of track forecasting, the tropical meteorologists have greater confidence in their ability to discern where storms may go. Starting with the first tropical system to threaten the U.S. (or its territories), the watches (issued first) and warnings will be issued at 48 and 36 hours respectively.

While hurricane season was far less active than normal and very much less than recent years, wildfires became headline news once again in Southwest Florida. On Saturday March 28, with winds gusting over 40 mph, a wildfire of suspicious origin ripped across South Punta Gorda Heights. Walls of flame more than 30 feet high quickly overwhelmed available resources and mutual aid responses came from nearby fire departments and Florida Forestry units. More than 200 homes were hastily evacuated and despite valiant efforts by the firefighters, three homes were lost in the conflagration. Just as that fire was winding down, another large wildfire broke out in North Cape Coral, requiring the relocation of many units and firefighters that were already exhausted.

At this writing, the world's focus is on Haiti, where on January 12 of this year (2010), a 7.0 magnitude earthquake struck in the late afternoon just miles west of the capital city of Port-au-Prince. The death toll may never be fully known, but it is clear that it will exceed any other natural disaster in the Western Hemisphere in modern times. Aid and humanitarian assistance came from across the globe. International Red Cross, Salvation Army, UNICEF, Save the Children and numerous other relief organizations banded together in an effort to bring support to the more than 3 million Haitians affected. A country in great disarray after being impacted by four hurricanes as recently as 2008, Haiti was ill prepared to do anything to help its people when the quake hit. It is thought that it will take as long as ten years to even begin to see a recovery take hold in the impoverished nation.

As always, your County Emergency Manager urges you to invest in a Weather Alert Radio and take the time to develop or revisit your Family Action Plan. Those people that embrace the attitude that disasters can never impact them are the first ones who call for help when something unforeseen happens. Think about the many hazards that could impact our region including: hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding rains, wildfires, hazardous materials spills or releases and yes, even terrorism. You could be completely on your own for several days, which is why a 3-5 day disaster supplies kit is recommended for every family.

This All-Hazards Guide is your blueprint to be prepared when disaster strikes. Should you need more information or specific guidance, contact your local Emergency Management Office or the American Red Cross.

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### All Emergencies

Dial 911

### Cellular Phones

Crimestop \*99

Crimewatch \*11

Photos Courtesy of the USGS,  
Local Emergency Management Agencies &  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration (NOAA).

# The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a one to five categorization based on the hurricane's intensity at the indicated time. The scale provides examples of the type of damages and impacts in the United States associated with winds of the indicated intensity. Generally, damages rise by about a factor of four for every category increase. Historical examples (for the Gulf and Atlantic Coast) are provided in for each category that corresponds with the intensity of the hurricane at the time of landfall in the location experiencing the strongest winds, which does not necessarily correspond with the peak intensity reached by the system during its lifetime. The scale does not address the potential for such other hurricane-related impacts, as storm surge, rainfall-induced floods, and tornadoes. These wind-caused impacts are to apply to the worst winds reaching the coast and the damage would be less elsewhere. Wind-caused damage descriptions are to some degree dependent upon the local building codes in effect and how well and how long they have been enforced. For example, recently enacted building codes in Florida, North Carolina and South Carolina are likely to somewhat reduce the damage to newer structures from that described below. Wind damage is also dependent upon other factors like duration of high winds, change of direction, amount of accompanying rainfall, and age of structures.

Previous versions of the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale - used central pressure and storm surge as components of the categories. The central pressure was utilized during the 1970s and 1980s as a proxy for the winds as accurate wind speed intensity measurements from aircraft were not routinely available for hurricanes until 1990. Storm surge was also quantified by category in the earliest published versions

of the scale. However, the extent of hurricane force winds, the depth of near-shore waters, and topographic forcing can also be important in forecasting storm surge. Moreover, other aspects of hurricanes - such as the system's forward speed and angle to the coast - also impact the storm surge that is produced. For example, Hurricane Ike (with hurricane force winds extending as much as 125 mi from the center) in 2008 made landfall in Texas as a Category 2 hurricane and had peak storm surge values of 15-20 ft. In contrast, tiny Hurricane Charley struck Florida in 2004 as a Category 4 hurricane and produced a peak storm surge of only 6-7 ft. These storm surge values were substantially outside of the ranges suggested in the original scale. Thus to help reduce public confusion about the impacts associated with the various hurricane categories as well as to provide a more scientifically defensible scale, the storm surge ranges, flooding impact and central pressure statements are being removed from the scale and only peak winds are employed in this revised version - the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale.

## **Category One Hurricane:**

Sustained winds of 74-95 mph. *Damaging winds are expected.* Some damage to building structures could occur, primarily to unanchored mobile homes (mainly pre-1994 construction). Some damage is likely to poorly constructed signs. Loose outdoor items will become projectiles, causing additional damage. Persons struck by windborne debris risk injury and death. Numerous large branches of healthy trees will snap. Some trees will be uprooted, especially where the ground is saturated. Many areas will experience power outages with some downed power poles. Hurricane Cindy (2005, 75 mph winds at landfall in Louisiana) and Hurricane Gaston (2004, 75 mph winds at landfall in South

Carolina) are examples of Category One hurricanes.

## **Category Two Hurricane:**

Sustained winds of 96-110 mph. *Very strong winds will produce widespread damage.* Some roofing material, door, and window damage of buildings will occur. Considerable damage to mobile homes (mainly pre-1994 construction) and poorly constructed signs is likely. A number of glass windows in high rise buildings will be dislodged. Loose outdoor items will become projectiles, causing additional damage. Persons struck by windborne debris risk injury and death. Numerous large branches will break. Many trees will be uprooted or snapped. Extensive damage to power lines and poles will result in widespread power outages that can last a few to several days. Hurricane Erin (1995, 100 mph at landfall in northwest Florida) and Hurricane Isabel (2003, 105 mph at landfall in North Carolina) are examples of Category Two hurricanes.

## **Category Three Hurricane:**

Sustained winds of 111-130 mph. *Dangerous winds will cause extensive damage.* Some structural damage to houses and buildings will occur with a minor amount of wall failures. Mobile homes (mainly pre-1994 construction) and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Many windows in high rise buildings will be dislodged. Persons struck by windborne debris risk injury and possible death. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks. Hurricane Rita (2005, 115 mph landfall in east Texas/Louisiana) and Hurricane Jeanne (2004, 120 mph landfall in southeast Florida) are examples of Category Three hurricanes.

## **Category Four Hurricane:**

Sustained winds of 131-155 mph. *Extremely dangerous winds causing devastating damage are expected.* Some wall failures and complete roof structure failures on houses will occur. All signs are blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes (primarily pre-1994 construction). Extensive damage to doors and windows is likely. Numerous windows in high rise buildings will be dislodged. Windborne debris will cause extensive damage and persons struck by the wind-blown debris will be injured or killed. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted. Fallen trees could cut off residential areas for days to weeks. Electricity will be unavailable for weeks after the hurricane. Hurricane Charley (2004, 145 mph at landfall in southwest Florida) and Hurricane Hugo (1989, 140 mph at landfall in South Carolina) are examples of Category Four hurricanes.

## **Category Five Hurricane:**

Sustained winds greater than 155 mph. *Catastrophic damage is expected. Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings will occur.* Some complete building failures with small buildings blown over or away are likely. All signs blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes (built in any year). Extensive window and door damage will occur. Nearly all windows in high rise buildings will be dislodged. Severe injury or death is likely for persons struck by debris. Nearly all trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Hurricane Camille (1969, 190 mph at landfall in Mississippi) and Hurricane Andrew (1992, 165 mph at landfall in Southeast Florida) are examples of Category Five hurricanes at landfall.

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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
833-4000

**COLLIER**  
311

**DESOTO**  
(863)  
993-4831

**GLADES**  
(863)  
946-6020

**HARDEE**  
(863)  
773-6373

# Hurricane Hazards

Every year there is the possibility that a hurricane will disrupt our lives, living in Southwest Florida. Just because 2009 was a very quiet season for us does not mean we should not prepare for this year's season like any other.

## Wind

Hurricanes are categorized by sustained winds of 74 mph to 200 mph. Refer to page 1 of this guide for a more detailed list of what wind can do during a storm.

## Tornados

Tornados may form in the rain bands of a hurricane and cause significant damage. Tornados are commonly found in the right front quadrant of the storm. These tornados are not as intense as those in the Midwest tornado belt, but they can inflict tremendous damage with little or no warning.

## Storm Surge

Storm surge is a dome of water that moves ashore near the hurricane eyewall. It has the potential to be a major killer if evacuation is inadequate. As the storm makes landfall, tide levels of 4 to 25 feet may occur along the coastal areas and major rivers of Southwest Florida. This is enough to inundate most populated areas. Damage amounts depend on the hurricane's intensity, size, forward speed and its direction of movement. Storm surge causes salt water flooding which cripples communications, causes sewers and storm water basins to

back up and contaminates drinking water supplies. Storm surge flooding washes out roads, leaving streets filled with sand and debris.

## Heavy Rain

Over the past 30 years, freshwater flooding has caused more drowning deaths than storm surge flooding. Torrential rains associated with slow moving or stationary tropical weather systems can produce more than 40 inches of rain over a two-day time period. In addition to flooding residences and businesses, heavy rain can have a disastrous effect on agriculture interests by drowning crops and increasing the probability of disease and pest infestations in surviving crops. Insects, dead animals and sewage polluted water can create massive health problems.

## HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN A HURRICANE OR TROPICAL STORM POSES A THREAT TO SOUTHWEST FLORIDA?

Emergency Management personnel closely monitor tropical weather and are in frequent contact with the National Hurricane Center and local Weather Forecast Office of the National Weather Service. The local media provides frequent updates on the storm, as well as emergency protective actions recommended by your county Emergency Operations Center. As a hurricane or tropical storm moves closer to Southwest Florida, your county Emergency

Operations Center will be activated. The National Weather Service also broadcasts continually over NOAA Weather Radio. Check with your local Emergency Management Office for the frequency that serves your area. Alarm activated NOAA Weather Radios with a battery back-up are inexpensive and can be purchased locally. NOAA Weather Broadcasts are invaluable sources of "real-time" information during severe weather conditions. For emergency action statements affecting your county, listen to local radio and TV broadcasts. Please consult the "Emergency Information" on page 28 for media outlets and the NOAA FIPS code for your county.

## WHAT AREAS ARE SUSCEPTIBLE TO HIGH WATER LEVELS CAUSED BY STORM SURGE?

Storm surge can rise over 25 feet above normal tide levels in the Gulf of Mexico. Except for the areas of Immokalee, Lehigh Acres, eastern Sarasota County and the inland counties, a large percentage of Southwest Florida coastal residents live in areas just a few feet above sea level. Should a major landfalling hurricane strike Southwest Florida, many low-lying coastal areas would be flooded to varying depths by the storm surge and wave action that accompany the storm. Tides of 3 to 4 feet above normal could occur as many as 12 hours before the "eye" of the storm reaches the coastline. Many of our coastal

roads used as evacuation routes could be underwater well in advance of the storm, thus restricting their use as evacuation routes. People living or working in coastal or flood prone areas should be prepared to evacuate and seek shelter inland as soon as a Hurricane Warning is announced. Evacuations should be completed early to avoid the high winds and heavy rain, which precede the arrival of the storm. If you live in an area that is prone to flooding, either along the coast or inland, you may be stranded without fire, law enforcement or medical support until the floodwaters subside.

## HURRICANE NAMES FOR YEAR 2010

Alex	Lisa
Bonnie	Matthew
Colin	Nichole
Danielle	Otto
Earl	Paula
Fiona	Richard
Gaston	Shary
Hermine	Tomas
Igor	Virginie
Julia	Walter
Karl	

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
612-4700

**HIGHLANDS**  
(863)  
385-1112

**LEE**  
(239)  
533-3622

**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# Preparing Yourself and Your Family

It is time to put the early stages of your hurricane plan into effect when a Hurricane Watch is issued. Review checklists and plans with your family. Advise out-of-area relatives or friends of your plans. Ask them to wait to hear from you after the storm and then to spread the word to other relatives and friends. Consider your options. If an evacuation of your area is likely, complete these necessary steps before you leave.

- Fill your vehicle's gas tanks.
- Pick up loose items from your home and yard.
- Fill sterile containers with drinking water.
- Install window protection.
- Evacuate early. When winds reach 40 mph, bridges may close and high profile vehicles such as RV's and trailers will not be allowed on evacuation routes.

A **Hurricane Warning** means you should rush your plans to completion. Tropical storm force winds and heavy rain could reach your area soon. Evacuate if you live in a mobile or manufactured home or in an area threatened by rising water.

If you decide to stay, look for alternatives. If part of the building is damaged, where will you go? What will you do if flooding is worse than expected? If you stay, there will come a time when you are "on your own" without emergency response.

Review what you need to do to prepare and protect you, your family and your property. The follow-

ing options will help you make the correct choice:

**Option A** – Stay at home. If your home can withstand the expected winds, is away from the coast and not in a flood prone area consider staying at home. Newer homes are constructed to withstand 110 mph winds. Homes built after March 1, 2002 must meet even more stringent wind requirements. Remember, fire, law enforcement and ambulances will be unavailable once the winds reach 40 mph.

**Option B** – Stay with a relative or friend or in a hotel outside the evacuation area. If you expect to stay at someone else's home or a hotel, make advance arrangements. If staying at a friend or relative's home, be certain it is adequately prepared and is located in a safe area. Consider where you will go if the friend or relative is out of town.

**Option C** – Relocate out of the area. Emergency Management officials have developed hurricane evacuation policies. Officials will issue local statements to inform you of recommended evacuation routes. Because you may have to travel considerable distances on unfamiliar roads, include a current road map as a part of your disaster supply kit. Know the best route to where you are going and plan alternate routes also. If possible, leave early to avoid heavy traffic, flooding and high winds. If you wait until the Hurricane Warning

to leave, you will find unreserved hotel rooms extremely scarce throughout Florida. If your household includes an ill or disabled person, check with their doctor for advice on needed accommodations.

**Option D** – Evacuate to a public shelters. A Public shelter should be your last option and used only if you have no other safe place to go. Local radio and television will announce which shelters will be open and opening times. Do not report to a shelter until it is open. Familiarize yourself and family with the locations and routes from your home to the shelters listed on page 13. If an evacuation order is given, move quickly but without panic.

## **12 questions to ask if Your Family Member resides in an Assisted Living Facility, or Nursing Home.**

1. Does the facility have a currently approved Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan? If yes, may I see a copy of the approval letter? If no, ask them why, as it is required.
2. Do you maintain a minimum 72-hour supply of food, water, medications, etc. for each resident?
3. Do you have an emergency generator? If yes, to what does it supply power during an blackout?
4. Under what circumstances, would my family member be evacuated?

5. Can my family member be released to me for the purpose of evacuation?

6. Who will notify me of the impending evacuation of my family member?

7. Whom should I call to receive current information on my family member?

8. How will my family member be transported to another facility?

9. What facilities might my family member be evacuated to? Where are they located?

10. How will my family member be transported back to this facility, once it is deemed safe?

11. Who will notify me that my family member is returning to this facility?

12. If my family member evacuated with me, who do I contact to determine when it is safe for them to return?

**Knowledge about hurricanes is not enough to protect you and your family. You must put this information to work. If you have questions about your situation and your plan, ask now! Don't wait until the storm is nearly here, or it may be too late to get an answer!**

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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
833-4000

**COLLIER**  
311

**DESOTO**  
(863)  
993-4831

**GLADES**  
(863)  
946-6020

**HARDEE**  
(863)  
773-6373

# Protecting Your Home and Recommended Supplies For An Emergency

The best time to plan to protect a building is during design and construction. Roof pitch, structural fasteners, window size and placement all have an effect on potential storm damage. However, most of us are not dealing with construction plans. We are protecting existing buildings. A “handy” homeowner can do many of these, but they must be done before a storm threatens. Contact a building supply company or qualified contractor if you need help.

- **Garage door**—often the largest opening in the home so must be braced for protection. Reputable garage door companies can install bracing usually for less than half the cost of a new garage door.
- **Roof trusses and gable ends**—Proper bracing of roof trusses/rafters allows the roof sheathing and trusses to work as a system to resist collapse. Structures built during the last 20 years are required to have straps or clips to attach the trusses/rafters to the joists and top part of the roof. Adding straps where none exist or verifying that the existing straps/clips are properly installed is advised.
- **Windows—Protection systems**, ranging from impact rated glass to plywood panels, are available to fit any budget. If you use plywood, a minimum thickness of 5/8 inch is recommended. Reinforce large

panels and mark each board for its specific location. Have fasteners on hand! Homes with storm panels require practice installing them to be sure you understand the process and to be sure everything fits. If you have accordion or roll down shutters, inspect them and make needed repairs before hurricane season starts. Windows are extremely vulnerable to wind and flying debris. Tape does not protect windows, and should never be used on windows covered with solar film. Window protection is critical to protecting your family and home.

- **Maintenance--Replace** rotted wood siding, eaves and soffits. Seal cracks in concrete block and other exterior openings caused by wear. If replacing your roof, replace any deteriorated sheathing and re-nail all sheathing to comply with current codes. This is relatively inexpensive and will improve the structural stability of older roof systems.
- **Removable equipment**—Window air conditioners and roof turbines may be removed quickly and the openings secured.
- **Utilities**—Know how to turn off water, natural or bottled gas and electricity at the main panel.
- **Yard**--Cut back dead vegetation and remove dead coconuts. Lo-

cate a safe place to store gas grills and propane or LP gas tanks and tie them down. Any object outside should be considered a storm threat; move it inside, tie it down or find another way to secure it. Stock other supplies such as masking tape, duct tape, bleach, rope caulk, canned fuel and plastic sheeting for protection against rain and immediate repairs in your emergency kit.

## Emergency Supply Kit:

- **Water**, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days (72 hrs), for drinking and sanitation
- **Food**, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- **Battery-powered or hand crank radio** and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- **Flashlight and extra batteries**
- **First aid kit**
- **Whistle** to signal for help
- **Dust mask**, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- **Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties** for personal sanitation
- **Wrench or pliers** to turn off utilities
- **Can opener** for food (if kit contains canned food)
- **Local maps**
- **Cash** or traveler’s checks and change
- **Important family documents** such as copies of insurance poli-

cies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container

## Additional Items if Pertinent:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners for disinfecting drinking water.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

Website: [www.ready.gov/](http://www.ready.gov/)

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
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**HIGHLANDS**  
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**LEE**  
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**OKEECHOBEE**  
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763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# 🌀 Preparing Your Boat For The Storm

## Precautions for Boat Owners

The key to protecting your boat from hurricanes or any severe, threatening weather is planning, preparation, and timely action. The following precautions and checklists are meant as guidelines only. Each boat owner needs a plan unique to the type of boat, local boating environment, the severe weather conditions likely to occur in that region, and the characteristics of safe havens and/or plans for protection. While these suggestions may not be applicable to everyone in all instances, it is hoped that common sense and good judgment will prevail.

**Should even one of the suggestions save a life, prevent an injury, or reduce property damage, the purpose of these suggestions will have been served.**

- Prior to the hurricane season, develop a detailed plan of action to secure your vessel in the marina. If permitted, remove your boat from the threatened area, or take your boat to a previously identified hurricane refuge. Specifically, identify and assemble needed equipment and supplies. Keep them together. Before hurricane season, practice your plan to ensure that it works.
- Arrange for a friend to carry out your plans if you are out of town.
- Check your lease or storage rental agreement. Know your responsibilities and liabilities as well as those of the marina.
- Consolidate all records, including insurance policies, a recent photo of your vessel, boat registration, equipment inventory, lease agreement with the marina or storage area, and telephone numbers of appropriate authorities (i.e., harbor master, Coast Guard, insurance agent, National Weather Service, etc.) and keep them in your possession. They may be

needed when you check on your boat after the hurricane.

- Maintain an inventory of items removed and those left on board. Items of value should be marked so that they can be readily identified, if dispersed by the storm.
- Before a hurricane threatens, analyze how you will remove equipment from the boat and how long it will take, so you will have an accurate estimate of the time and work involved. When a hurricane is approaching, and after you have made anchoring or mooring provisions, remove all moveable equipment such as canvas, sails, dinghies, radios, cushions, biminis and roller furling sails. Lash down everything you cannot remove such as tillers, wheels, booms, etc. Make sure the electrical system is cut off unless you plan to leave the boat in the water, and remove the battery to eliminate the risk of fire or other damage.

**NOTE:** When wind and seas warrant, marine agencies remove their boats from service and will not be able to rescue foolish boaters. In addition to these general steps, the following specific steps should be taken depending on your situation and the option you select.

## Trailerable Boats

- Determine the requirement to load and haul your boat to a safer area. Be sure your tow vehicle is capable of properly and adequately moving the boat. Check your trailer: tires, bearings and axle. Too often a flat tire, frozen bearings or a broken axle prevents the owner from moving a boat.
- Once at a “safe” place, lash your boat to the trailer and place blocks between the frame members and the axle inside each wheel. Owners of light weight boats, after

consulting with the manufacturer, may wish to consider letting about half the air out of the tires, then filling the boat one-third full of water to help hold it down. (The blocks will prevent damage to the springs from the additional weight of the water.)

- Secure your boat with heavy lines to fixed objects. Try to pick a location that allows you to secure it from all four directions, because hurricane winds rotate and change direction. It can be tied down to screw anchors secured into the ground. Remember that trees are often blown over during a hurricane.

## Non-Trailerable Boats In Dry Storage

- Determine the safest, most realistic, obtainable haven for your boat, and make arrangements to move your boat there. When selecting a “safe” location, be sure to consider whether storm surge could rise into the area. Wherever you choose to locate your boat for the duration of the hurricane, lash the boat to its cradle with heavy lines and consider, based on the weight of the boat, adding water to the bilge to help hold it down.
- Never leave a boat on davits or on a hydro-lift.

## Non-Trailerable Boats In Wet Storage

The owner of a large boat, usually, has three options:

- Secure the boat in the marina berth.
- Moor the boat in a previously identified safe area.
- Haul the boat.

Each action requires a separate strategy. Another alternative, running from the storm, is not encouraged except for large commercial vessels—unless there is enough time to get your boat beyond the storm’s projected path.

## Boats Remaining in Marina Berth

- Double all lines. Rig crossing spring lines fore and aft. Attach lines high on pilings to allow for tidal rise or surge. Make sure lines will not slip off pilings. Inspect pilings and choose those that seem strongest and tallest and are properly installed. The longer the dock lines, the better a boat will be at coping with high tides. It is also essential to double up on all lines and use chafe protectors at any potential chafe points.
- Cover all lines at rough points to prevent chafing. Wrap with tape, rags, and rubber hoses, etc. Install fenders to protect the boat from rubbing against the pier, pilings and other boats.
- Assess the attachment of cleats, winches and chocks. These should have substantial back plates and adequate stainless steel bolt sizes.
- Batteries should be fully charged and checked to ensure their capability to run automatic bilge pumps for the duration of the storm. Consider backup batteries. Cut off all devices consuming electricity except bilge pumps.
- **Do Not Stay Aboard.** Winds during any hurricane can exceed 100 M.P.H., and tornados are often associated with these storms. First and foremost, safeguard human life.



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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
833-4000

**COLLIER**  
311

**DESOTO**  
(863)  
993-4831

**GLADES**  
(863)  
946-6020

**HARDEE**  
(863)  
773-6373

# Local Shelter Issues

There is a substantial shelter space deficit throughout Southwest Florida. So, if you have a safe place to go, plan to use that location instead of a Public Shelter. But, if you have no safe place to go, shelters will be open. Here are some important points to remember if you choose to go to a public shelter:

When you arrive, give your name and address to the shelter manager so you can be located, if necessary. If you leave the shelter, check out with the shelter manager. Accountability is important for your safety.

Shelters are not able to provide any conveniences or luxuries. They are not hotels! Food and water will be available, but there may be a slight delay in initial service. If you want or need special food items, bring them with you! Bring your families' disaster survival kit to ensure proper provisions. Below are some items you should consider bringing when going to a shelter:

- Drinking Water (Initially)
- Snacks or special foods
- Lawn chair or bed roll
- Book or electronic entertainment

item with headphones

- Change of clothing

Remember weapons and alcoholic beverages are not permitted. The only animals allowed are documented service animals. Your county may have pet friendly shelters. Contact your local Animal Services Division for their location.

## People with Special Needs

Some people have medical issues that cannot be accommodated in a regular public shelter. For those people whose health would quickly and dramatically deteriorate in a public shelter and have no other safe place to go, there are Special Care shelters available. You must com-

plete an application to see if your medical issues qualify for a Special Care shelter. There are specific criteria and requirements to be eligible for the Special Care shelter, which may vary somewhat from county to county. You must have a caregiver with you during your stay at the Special Care shelter.

During an emergency we have very limited staff working in the shelters, so your caregiver is critically important for your health and safety. There is limited hospital sheltering for people who are extremely high risk and cannot survive outside a hospital environment. Your physician must recommend hospital sheltering and give specific details of your medical situation. You may be responsible for fees associated with hospital sheltering. As at any other shelter, you must bring your emergency supplies with you. In any emergency situation you should have a plan for where you will go if you cannot return to your home because of damage. Your local Emergency Management office can help you register and answer any questions.

## People with Disabilities

Estimates vary, but as many as one in four people live with some type of disability. Sometimes signs are obvious, a wheelchair, a guide dog or a cane. However, many times, a disability is not obvious. Whether obvious or not, awareness and sensitivity toward persons with disabilities makes good sense. Practicing disability etiquette is an easy way to help people with disabilities feel more welcome and comfortable. Here are a few things anyone can do to make a person with a disability feel more at ease in any situation. Remember, a person with a disability is a person first.

**Ask before you help.** Don't assume a person with a disability needs your help

with a task. If you are asked for help, be sure to ask what kind of assistance is needed.

**Be sensitive regarding personal space and physical contact.** Respect personal space and remember that people often consider their equipment part of their person.

**Think before you speak.** Speak to the person, not their aide or companion. Converse with a person with a disability as you would any other person. Get permission from a parent or guardian before interacting with children.

People with disabilities must assume personal responsibility and be prepared for an emergency. The basic steps of a personal safety plan are the same for everyone. Where will you go? How will you get there? What will you take? How much time will you need? How will you communicate with those who need to know?

With minor modifications, the information in this Guide is applicable to everyone. You must take responsibility for yourself in an emergency. Part of any plan is to identify and use all available resources. If you need help or have questions, contact your local Emergency Management agency. There are people and tools to help you become better prepared.

*For more information, visit:*

<http://www.floridadisaster.org/Disability/video/index.htm>

## Protect your pets

In a hurricane, pets are subject to the same hazards as we are and have many of the same needs. Remember, Public Shelters do not permit pets! The best plan is to identify a safer location that allows pets (e.g. a friend's home or hotel). That way, you can keep your pets with you when you evacuate. Check the Internet to

help locate hotels that accept pets.

You should also have a supply kit for your pets. Include non-perishable food, water and medications. Keep a sturdy cage or carrier to comfortably hold your pet and/or a collar and leash. Make sure all vaccinations are up-to-date and keep a copy of the records. Also keep several good photos to help identify your pet should you become separated. Place identification on your pet's collar or consider using a microchip to identify your pet. Consult your veterinarian for more details.

## ITEMS TO REMEMBER:

- Never leave your pet(s) outside during a storm
- Never leave a cat with a dog, even if the two are friends
- Confine and keep small pets (birds, hamsters, etc.) away from cats and dogs
- Dangerous animals should be secured in special crates or cages
- Any animals posing a danger will be at risk of being destroyed

## Local Animal Services Number:

Charlotte: (941) 764-4320

Collier: (239) 530-7387

Desoto: (863) 993-4855

Glades: (863) 947-6000

Hardee: (863) 735-9531

Hendry: (863) 675-3381

Highlands: (863) 655-1522

Lee: (239) 533-7387

Okeechobee: (941) 357-3225

Sarasota: (941) 861-9500

All animal facilities in the path of a hurricane are subject to some degree of damage or flooding. Keep in mind, boarding kennels may be without electricity or potable water and have limited personnel and supplies for days to weeks following a disaster.

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
612-4700

**HIGHLANDS**  
(863)  
385-1112

**LEE**  
(239)  
533-3622

**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# Utility Tips

## WATER

Locate the emergency water shut-off valve for your residence and remove any shrubbery or obstructions. Test the water shut-off valve to be sure that it is operational. If the shut-off valve is not operational, have it repaired or replaced.

Turn the emergency water shut-off valve to the off position if you are leaving your residence prior to a storm. This will help minimize damage to the interior of your home should a pipe burst inside.

Follow the manufacturer's recommendations on turning off your hot water heater and unplug it. Some hot water heaters may be damaged if the water supply is turned off for an extended period of time.

Locate your sewer clean-out lid and remove any shrubbery or obstructions in case the clean-out needs to be accessed.

Due to power outages, water treatment plants will be operating under limited conditions. Water pressures will be reduced!

Because of reduced pressures and the limited operations of lift stations, **WATER CONSERVATION IS A MUST!** Just because power has been restored to your home, does

not mean that power has been restored to all lift stations or water and wastewater treatment plants.

Turn off all sprinklers. Remember to reset your irrigation timer once power has been restored.

Abstain from running dishwashers and clothes washers.

Limit the amount of water used during a shower or the amount to fill the bathtub.

Limit the amount of toilet flushing.

**Abstain from any other outdoor use of water that is not absolutely necessary.**

## ELECTRICITY

A strong storm or hurricane can cause significant damage, resulting in widespread power outages. Restoration efforts must be prioritized, starting with facilities that provide the most critical services:

- Damaged power plants and power lines from the plants, since these must be fixed before service can be restored anywhere.
- Organizations that provide critical infrastructure functions to the community, such as hospitals, police, and fire stations.
- Major power lines that serve large numbers of customers.
- Smaller power lines such as

service to a single street.

- Individual homes or businesses still without power.

## KEEPING SAFE DURING A POWER OUTAGE

When a power outage occurs, safety is a very important concern. Here are some basic tips that will keep you, your family and your employees safe while the power is out:

- Assume all cables and wires are energized and stay away.
- Keep away from flooded and debris-laden areas because they may be hiding downed lines.
- Run your portable generator outside your house or building, and connect appliances or equipment directly to it.
- If you leave your home, turn off appliances that may have been on when the power went out, or turn off your main breaker.
- Avoid driving in damaged areas. You might interfere with rescue or restoration efforts, as well as jeopardize your own safety.

Help keep telephone lines clear for emergency calls. Only call to report downed power lines, or if your neighbors' power has been restored and you are without electricity.

Don't trim trees or remove debris located near downed

power lines. If you must remove debris from your home, don't pile it under or near electrical lines or equipment.

Any damage to your home's electric system must be repaired by a licensed electrician and inspected by a designated agency before power can be restored.

Check your weather-head (located on the roof where your service connects to the pole) and your meter box to make sure they are not damaged.

If you suspect there is water in the walls or ceiling, stay away from electrical outlets and contact a licensed electrician to repair the damage.

If you need to live in temporary quarters on your property, a licensed electrician can install a temporary service pole. After the pole is inspected by a designated agency, your electric utility can provide power.



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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

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**HARDEE**  
(863)  
773-6373

# After The Storm

After major hurricanes like Charley, Frances, Ivan, Jeanne, Katrina, Rita and Wilma, our lives can change drastically. These disasters affect everyone to some extent. Relief supplies and other aid will be arriving as quickly as possible, but it may take several days. Try to remain calm, patient and understanding. Your attitude affects you and everyone around you. Remember that the longest and hardest part of dealing with a hurricane is the recovery. There may be residual flooding and roads may be blocked for days or weeks, making damaged areas inaccessible. This may mean that you will not be allowed back to your home for days, or possibly weeks. Emergency workers want your return home to be as safe as possible and need time to clear safe access and secure hazards. Listen to local media for reentry information and do not go into unsafe areas. Drive only if absolutely necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges. Do not go sight seeing. If you evacuated out of the area, consider staying away for a few extra days. Before you decide to return, consider the following. Even in the best of conditions, it is possible, if not probable, that:

Power will be out for an undetermined period of time. This means no air conditioning, no lights, no refrigeration, no water pump and in many cases no stove. Telephone service will be out or

limited. This includes 911 calling. Lack of power and damaged facilities will affect both landline telephones and cellular telephone service. Even if your phone works, use it only for emergencies.

Municipal water supplies may be unsafe to drink without boiling or chemical treatment. Treat all water as unsafe until you are notified that it is safe.

Sewer lift stations will not work, meaning toilets will not flush and sinks not drain, and they may backup into your home or property.

When you do return, some damage may not be readily apparent, so here are some things to keep in mind for your safety. Inspect your home for damage. Check for water and sewer line damage. Check the electrical system. Turn off the main breaker until you are sure the system is safe. Check for natural gas and/or bottled gas leaks. Do not enter or stay in a structure if you smell gas.

Be careful when you go outside and pay attention to where you walk and stand. Avoid any downed wires or standing water. Report downed wires to your utility company or to emergency services.

Check above you for low hanging objects or loose things that could fall.

Beware of wild animals that might

be dangerous. Fire ants, bees, wasps, snakes, rodents and wild animals will be seeking high ground. They can create health and safety hazards.

Be careful of domestic animals, even ones you know. They may be frightened or injured and more dangerous than you expect.

Do not connect generators to your house wiring! Service personnel can be killed, or fires started elsewhere. Use your generator only in a well-ventilated area and shut it down during re-fueling.

**REMEMBER:** Insurance companies will send special disaster assistance teams, as will the state and federal governments. Still, it may be more than a week before those teams are able to get into operation.

Take pictures of the damage, both to the house and its contents for insurance claims.

Have all your insurance documents ready and be patient!

When help does arrive, some may be in the form of the unscrupulous fortune seekers. Do not sign repair contracts until you have checked out the contractor. Do not pay for any services until the work has been completed. Ask for a valid county contractor's license. Is the contractor bonded? Does the price seem fair? Are high-pressure tactics being used? Report the suspicious contractor to authorities to be checked out! If you see unfairly high prices being charged, report it! Local authorities want to help our residents by requiring competence and fairness.

## **Blood Donor Centers**

### ***Charlotte***

Florida's Blood Centers  
23080 Harborview Rd.  
Port Charlotte (941) 625-1874

### ***Collier***

Naples Community Blood Bank  
311 9th Street, #108,  
Naples (239) 436-5455

### ***DeSoto***

Suncoast Communities  
Blood Bank  
710 N. Brevard Ave.  
Arcadia (863) 993-9366

### ***Hardee & Highlands***

Florida's Blood Centers  
6550 U.S. 27 North  
Sebring (863) 382-4499

### ***Lee, Glades & Hendry***

Lee Memorial Blood Center  
(239) 334-5333  
Health Park (239) 432-3604  
Cape Coral (239) 573-5400  
Florida's Blood Center's  
601 N. Del Prado Blvd., Unit 6  
Cape Coral (239) 574-3170  
6810 Shoppes Plantation, Ste. 8  
Fort Myers (239) 768-9823

### ***Okeechobee***

Florida's Blood Centers  
2229 S.E. Ocean Blvd.  
Stuart (772) 287-3111

### ***Sarasota***

Florida's Blood Centers  
333 S. Tamiami Trail, #169  
Venice (941) 492-9202

or

**“to find a center in your area”  
call 1 (888) 9-DONATE**

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
612-4700

**HIGHLANDS**  
(863)  
385-1112

**LEE**  
(239)  
533-3622

**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# Generator Safety

When the power goes off, many residents turn to emergency generators to power refrigerators, freezers, lights, fans and other appliances. If you use a generator, extreme caution is required. While convenient and useful, generators can create hazards for homeowners and electric utility workers.

**Always read and follow the manufacturer's safety and operating instructions.**

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is a colorless, odorless and tasteless poison gas. It is a component of the exhaust from the generator engine. The symptoms of exposure are subtle, but deadly. Never run your generator inside your home or garage on in any other enclosed space. Inexpensive CO detectors, similar to smoke alarms, are readily available and recommended as an added safety precaution.

After Hurricane Charley, the Cape Coral Fire Department conducted

over 400 safety inspections of households in the City using generators. **One-fourth of the homes had potent dangerous levels of Carbon Monoxide in their houses, and ten people required hospital treatment.**

To avoid Carbon Monoxide poisoning, never use a generator indoors or in attached garages. Only operate the generator outdoors in a well-ventilated, dry area away from air intakes to the home.

To avoid electrocution, plug individual appliances into the generator using heavy duty, outdoor rated cords with a wire gauge adequate for the appliance load. Do not operate more appliances and equipment than the output rating of the generator. This will overload and damage the generator and possibly create a fire hazard.

If a generator is connected to the house wiring, the home must have a

transfer switch installed by a licensed electrician. A transfer switch connects your house to the generator and disconnects it from the utility power. This prevents **backfeeding**, or energizing circuits outside your home. Backfeeding most commonly occurs when a generator is connected directly to the electric panel or circuit in a home. Feeding power back into the utility system during an outage will energize the transformer serving the house and could pose a serious threat to crews working to restore power in the area who may not know they are working with an energized line.

**Do not store fuel indoors or try to refuel a generator while it's running.** Gasoline (and other flammable liquids) should be stored outside of living areas in properly labeled, non-glass safety containers. They should not be stored in a garage if a fuel-burning appliance is

in the garage. The vapor from gasoline can travel invisibly along the ground and be ignited by pilot lights or electric arcs caused by turning on the lights. Avoid spilling fuel on hot components. Put out all flames or cigarettes when handling gasoline. Always have a fully charged, approved fire extinguisher located near the generator. Never attempt to refuel a portable generator while it's running.



Use this guide to help determine which generator is right for you.

## Wattage Requirement Guide

Amps x Volts = Watts

Item	Running Wattage	Starting Wattage	Item	Running Wattage	Starting Wattage
Dishwasher			Garage Door Opener		
Hot Dry	1450	1400	1/2 hp	725	1400
Coffee Maker	1750	0	Hair Dryers	300 to 1200	0
Electric Fry Pan	1300	0	Lights	As indicated on bulb	
Refrigerator or Freezer	700	2200	Radio	50 to 200	0
Dehumidifier	650	800	Well Pump		
Clothes Dryer Electric	5750	1800	1/3 hp	750	1400
Toaster 4 Slice	1650	0	1/2 hp	1400	2100
Automatic Washer	1150	2300	Sump Pump		
Microwave Oven			1/3 hp	800	1300
625 Watts	625	800	1/2 hp	1050	2150
Electric Range			Television, Color	300	0
6-inch Element	1500		Vacuum Cleaner	800	0
Iron	1200	0	Air Conditioner		
Computer	720	720	10,000 BTU	1500	2200
Water Heater	4500	4500	20,000 BTU	2500	3300
Fan 1/8 hp	400	600	24,000 BTU	3800	4950
Fan 1/4 hp	650	1200	32,000 BTU	5000	6500
Fan 1/2 hp	1100	2400	40,000 BTU	6000	7800

# Storm Debris Cleanup

## When your county has been included in a Disaster Declaration

Hurricanes in 2004 and 2005 inundated Southwest Florida with millions of tons of debris, including normal household garbage, household chemical waste, appliances, construction/demolition, and yard debris. Segregating this debris is critical in assisting in the recovery efforts for your community. To help ensure that debris is collected in the most efficient, safe, and timely manner, we recommend that you follow these simple guidelines when clearing debris from your property after the next big storm hits.

Normal Household Garbage is defined as:  
Materials that would normally be placed out for collection in your normal trash cart/container. These materials include things that rot quickly and your everyday household trash items.

### **YARD DEBRIS, CONSTRUCTION DEBRIS AND APPLIANCES (i.e. WHITE GOODS) ARE NOT CONSIDERED NORMAL HOUSEHOLD GARBAGE.**

Normal Household Recyclables are defined as:  
Materials which are capable of being recycled, including newspapers, cardboard, plastic containers labeled #1 through #7 and containers made of glass, steel and aluminum.

Yard Debris (Yard Trash) is defined as:

Vegetative matter including shrubs, palm fronds, tree trimmings, grass clippings, bushes, leaves, twigs or cut up tree branches.

Construction/Demolition Debris (C&D) is defined as:

Any materials directly relating to construction or demolition of buildings such as: cement, glass, dry-wall, insulation, concrete block, etc.

White Goods are defined as:

Large discarded appliances, including refrigerators, ranges, washing machines, clothes dryers, water heaters, freezers, microwave ovens, and air conditioners. All items must be empty of all contents.

**DO NOT MIX ANY OF THE ABOVE MATERIALS** – There will be separate collections for each material and they will be picked up according to priority in the immediate aftermath of the storm.

### **FIRST PRIORITY**

#### *Normal Household Garbage*

Place in your regular collection cart/container or in heavy duty plastic bags and place where you would normally locate it for your regular weekly collection.

### **SECOND PRIORITY**

#### *Yard Debris*

Small quantities should be prepared as for weekly collection, in containers, bags or bundles of less than 50 pounds. Prepare all yard debris in accordance with local collection policies and procedures. Large quantities of storm related yard debris should be placed alongside the curb, with trees and branches prepared into easily manageable lengths. Do not place near low hanging objects or around mail boxes, water meters or fire hydrants. Large quantities of storm related yard debris may be collected using a mechanical grab that will require room to operate.

Only yard debris directly generated from the storm event will be collected. Land clearing and landscape improvement activities are not eligible for collection. Debris from these activities will require removal and disposal to be arranged by the property owner at their expense. There will be no collection of large quantities of yard debris on private

roads or in gated communities unless properties in these locations are included in a FEMA declaration or where an immediate threat to health and safety exists.

### **THIRD PRIORITY**

#### *Construction Debris, Recyclables, White Goods, Bulk Items, Electronic Equipment, Tires and Lead Acid Batteries*

You will be notified through media notices when collection of these items will take place.

Disposal rules for small quantities of C&D materials vary by location so look for media notices for specific guidance as to how best to dispose of these materials in your respective areas.

#### *Small quantities of C&D:*

In many areas, small quantities of C&D materials (less than 2 cubic yards) may be allowed to be placed at the curb alongside of normal household garbage. These materials would generally be containerized and/or bundled, weighing less than 50 pounds each and not exceeding (6) feet in length. These materials may be collected with the normal household garbage provided that the materials are appropriate with your local collection policies.

*White goods:*

Refrigerators, freezers and other appliances **MUST** be emptied of their contents prior to collection. Refrigerators and or freezers containing food waste or other rotting wastes will not be collected.

### **STORM DEBRIS INFORMATION**

As the storm approaches and in the immediate aftermath, look out for special notices in the local newspapers, special bulletins on your local Government web-site, local radio and television channels, and other communications media.

During the first 72 hours after the storm has passed, FEMA, Solid Waste management and the Sheriff's Office will be assessing the damage and road conditions to determine when collections can resume.

*Should you have any questions please contact your local solid waste management customer service office:*

**Charlotte: (941) 764-4360**

**Englewood: 697-4000 x 4360**

**Collier: (239) 252-2380**

**DeSoto: (863) 993-4800**

**Glades: (863) 675-0124**

**Hardee: (863) 773-5089**

**Hendry: (863) 675-5252**

**Highlands: (863) 655-6483**

**Lee: (239) 533-8000**

**Okeechobee: (863) 357-0111**

**Sarasota: (941) 861-5000**



# Picking Up The Pieces

## WATER PRECAUTIONS

After a natural disaster, damaged water pipes can cause pressure to drop, possibly letting in contaminated ground water. The concern with the water is bacterial contamination. The most common offenders, shigella and salmonella, can cause severe diarrhea. If not treated with antibiotics, these diseases can lead to life threatening dehydration. Here are some tips for coping with water problems.

- Disinfect tap water you use for anything, including for your pets. Boil it for at least ten minutes, or use chemicals: eight drops of chlorine bleach (without scent or other additives) or tincture of iodine per gallon. Let the water sit at least 10 minutes before drinking.
- If you wash dishes in tap water, rinse them in extra-chlorinated water. Use about 15 drops of chlorine on the dishes to keep them clean until next use.

- Showering or bathing in tap water is fine. If you cut yourself shaving, apply an antibiotic cream.

## FOOD SAFETY RULES

Without refrigeration, items such as fresh milk, custards and creamed foods, cream cheese, cheese spread and cottage cheese, hamburger, pork, fish and poultry spoil rapidly and should be discarded if they have been without cooling for several hours. Don't trust your sense of smell.

- Clean out the refrigerator if power has been off for more than two days. Throw away perishables. Wipe the interior with baking soda and water.
- Fill your freezer with plastic jugs of water. A full freezer stays cold longer.
- Keep the freezer door closed as much as possible. Foods will stay frozen longer.
- Meats and solid items stay frozen

longer than baked goods.

- Refreezing partially thawed food is risky. Generally, if the foods still contain ice crystals, they're OK to re-freeze although their quality may suffer.
- Dry ice keeps food frozen for approximately 1 to 4 days.
- Without air conditioning, food waste will start to smell rapidly. Use small plastic garbage bags; tie or seal and place in a larger bag or can outdoors.

## MAKESHIFT KITCHEN AND POWER SUBSTITUTES

A garage, carport or roofed patio would be an ideal spot for a temporary kitchen. This is what you'll need:

- A surface to prepare food. A small table or improvised table.
- A large cooler and bags of ice to keep food fresh. Buy only the amount of fresh food your family

can consume in one meal. Rely on canned foods for safety's sake.

- Use a charcoal or propane grill or a camp stove for cooking. Do not bring these grills inside; a fire could start or fumes could generate.
- Use kitchen cabinets or sturdy boxes for storage.
- For lighting use fuel-based lanterns or candles.

## CLOTHING AND FURNITURE PRESERVATION

- Take down wet draperies and spread to dry.
- Take furniture outside to dry, but don't put in the sun. Put under a covered patio or tarp.
- Elevate wet upholstered furniture if it's resting on carpet.
- Hang comforters and blankets out to dry.
- Dry pillows outdoors, but not in direct sunlight.

# The National Flood Insurance Program

**Unfortunately**, many homeowners do not find out until it is too late that their homeowner's insurance policies do not cover flooding. National Flood Insurance protects your most valuable assets - your home and your belongings. Owners of homes, condominiums, apartments, and non-residential structures, including commercial buildings, are able to purchase insurance through the federally backed National Flood Insurance Program. Only a select few properties that lie within a protected area referred to as part of the Coastal Barrier Resource System are prohib-

ited from purchasing Flood Insurance. Even if you live in an area that is not flood prone, it is advisable to have Flood Insurance because between 20 and 25 percent of Flood Insurance claims come from outside high flood risk areas.

**Flood Insurance** covers the overflow of inland or tidal waters (including storm surge from tropical storms and hurricanes), the unusual and rapid accumulation of runoff or surface water from any source, mudslides caused by flooding that could be described as a river of liquid and flowing mud, and the collapse or

destabilization of land along a lake or other body of water resulting from wave action or water currents exceeding normal levels.

**Mortgaged properties** that are located in designated flood hazard areas and are covered by federally backed loans are required to purchase flood insurance. Flood Insurance can be purchased through many property insurance companies just like regular homeowners insurance. If you need information regarding the flood zone designation for your area or help in any other preparedness matter, contact your

local Emergency Management office. For additional information regarding the National Flood Insurance Program you may access the official website at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).

Remember, flooding is the most common and widespread of all natural disasters with the exception of fires. Few people question the necessity of having insurance that protects their property from loss caused by a fire. The same consideration should be given to flood insurance, especially by residents in an area with the natural characteristics of southwest Florida.

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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
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# ☉ Roof Repair Tips

While waiting for licensed contractors, there are two temporary remedies for leaks you can use. Before climbing onto the roof of your home, know this: It is easy to slip, particularly on wet tile *and* there is danger from tree branches, power lines and ladders. Repairs are made from the outside. On the inside, set up buckets under leaky areas to relieve the water pressure. On the outside of the roof, you can use plastic sheeting or tar paper. The smallest holes may be patched by using a trowel to spread roofing cement over them.

## Plastic Sheeting

This is the most temporary measure. Take heavy plastic sheets - a brand name is Visqueen - and use roofing nails to fasten them around the hole.

If you can find 2 by 4's, square off the hole with the wood first. Then wrap the plastic around the wood and nail down the wood. If you can't get wood or nails, use bricks, cement blocks or sandbags to hold down the plastic.

## Roofing Paper

This is known as tar paper or roofing felt. Find it in the

building materials sections of stores. It is applied with trowel-grade roofing cement and a trowel.

The paper generally is sold in rolls by weight (15-, 30- and 90- weight paper are common) per 100 square feet.

The paper is best applied in overlapping layers - alternating the cement and paper - from the bottom of the roof upward.

## Contractor Tips

The National Roofing Contractors Association can help you find reputable roofing contractors. The Web site is [www.nrca.net](http://www.nrca.net).

## The NRCA offers these tips:

- Check for a permanent place of business, telephone number, tax identification number and occupational license. A professional will have these readily available.
- Check for a company with a good track record.
- Ask the contractor for proof of insurance. Insist on seeing copies of both liability coverage and workers' compensation certificates.
- Find out if the contractor is bonded and licensed.
- Be sure the contractor can provide a manufacturer's warranty. Beware of unrealistic, long-term warranties.
- Ask for a list of references

and completed projects.

Check with past customers to see if they were satisfied with the materials and workmanship.

- Call the Department of Business and Professional Regulation to check for complaints against a contractor. The DPR can be reached at (850) 487-1395.
- Insist on a written proposal and examine it carefully before signing or paying any money.

## Spotting Roof Problems

Resist the urge to get up on a ladder to take a closer look at your damaged roof. Leave that to a professional. Here's some inspection advice.

## From the Ground

If you need a closer look, use binoculars. Look for torn or missing shingles and problems in the valleys - where two sloping sections join at an angle. Because water flows heavily in the valleys, they are especially vulnerable.

## A Closer Look

If you can't see from a distance, wear non-slip, rubber-soled shoes and use a firmly braced or tied-off ladder equipped with rubber safety feet.

## Don't Walk on the Roof

You could dislodge the protective surface granules, diminishing waterproofing effectiveness. You also could fall off or through a weak, damaged roof.

If you find large accumulations of shingle surface granules in the gutters, it doesn't necessarily mean the roof needs to be replaced. A contractor should inspect the roof, however.

Tile roofs should be checked for cracked, missing or loose pieces of roofing material. For asphalt or wood-shingle roofs, look for protruding nails.

On flat roofs, look for bare spots in the gravel surface and check for standing water.

Take a close look at the flashing on chimneys, vents, skylights, wall/roof junctions and other areas where the integrity of the roof may be compromised.

Check television antennas and other add-ons to see if there are leaks that are a result of improper sealing of openings made in the roof.



For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
612-4700

**HIGHLANDS**  
(863)  
385-1112

**LEE**  
(239)  
533-3622

**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

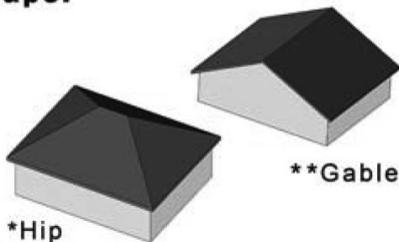


# How well will your home withstand hurricane force winds?

## STORM READY ASSESSMENT

(Circle the number value that corresponds with your answer to each question)

<b>When was your home built?:</b>	<b>(Circle One)</b>	<b>Type of Roof-Wall Connection:</b>	<b>(Circle One)</b>
Prior to 1980	0	Single/Double Wraps	6
1981-1994	4	Clips	4
1995-2002	6	Toe Nails	2
2003 or newer	10	Unknown	2
<b>Where is your home or business located?:</b>		<b>Type of Roof Cover:</b>	
On a barrier Island	1	Metal Panel	3
Less than 5 miles from the coast	2	Shingle	2
Between 5 & 20 miles from the coast	3	Tile	4
More than 20 miles from the coast	4	Unknown	1
<b>Select number of stories?:</b>		<b>Is your structure CBS or wood frame?:</b>	
One story	4	CBS/ Concrete	10
Two or more stories	2	Wood frame	5
		Combination of above	8
<b>Select roof deck type:</b>		<b>Openings currently protected:</b>	
Plywood/OSB	3	Some openings	10
Dimensional Lumber	2	All openings	20
Concrete	4	No openings	0
<b>Select roof shape:</b>		<b>Type of Opening Protection:</b>	
Hip*	6	Hurricane (Meets FL Building Code)	30
Gable**	1	Ordinary (Does NOT meet FL Building Code)	20
Other	3	None	0
		<b>Is your structure mobile or conventional?:</b>	
		Mobile	1
		Conventional	2



### Explanation of score results:

#### **Above 85:**

Means you have done well to protect your home and family from the threat of hurricane force winds

#### **Between 75 and 85++:**

There is an opportunity to improve the chances of your home surviving hurricane force winds

#### **Between 60 and 75++:**

Indicates you need to take action to protect your home from high winds and flying debris

#### **Less than 60++:**

Suggests the envelope of your home is vulnerable and might fail to withstand hurricane force winds

(Add up all of the circled values above and record the total score in the space provided below)

**Total Score:** \_\_\_\_\_

**++IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON BUILDING CODES OR TYPES OF HURRICANE PROTECTION PRODUCTS, CALL STORM SMART AT: 1 (888) 962-7283 OR VISIT: [WWW.STORMSMART.COM](http://WWW.STORMSMART.COM)**

# Important Information for manufactured and mobile home residents

## Before the Storm, Secure Your Home

### ANCHORS REQUIRED:

Mobile homes should ALWAYS be tied down. In fact, Florida law requires manufactured home owners to secure their homes using anchors and tie-downs. Homes without proper tie-downs are more vulnerable to high winds. Taking proper precautions now will ensure that your mobile home is properly secured, reducing possible damage to your home and your neighbor's property. Tie-downs should be checked at least once per year.

### Windstorm Insurance:

Florida law PROHIBITS the sale of windstorm insurance on manufactured homes not anchored in accordance with Florida law.

**Remember:** Damage caused by flooding is **NOT** covered by most homeowner's policies. You may need flood insurance even if you do not live in a flood zone. The National Flood Insurance Program makes flood insurance available for manufactured homes on foundations. See your insurance broker for details.

### Contractor's License:

Florida law requires tie-down installers to be licensed by the state. To verify a contractor's license, call the Department of Highway Safety & Motor Vehicles Bureau of Mobile

Home & RV Construction at (850) 413-7600.

**Inspections:** Have your tie-downs inspected by an installer. Most installers will inspect your home and provide a free estimate. Get estimates from three installers and ask them to explain the installation.

**Installation Rules:** Tie-down installation requirements are set forth in Florida Administration Code 15C-1. Ask your installer about the requirements of that code. For detailed information about mobile home installation, contact the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, Bureau of Mobile Home and Recreational Vehicle Construction at (850) 413-7600.

**Time & Cost:** A typical tie-down installation costs less than \$2000 and takes less than a day.

### Alternative Anchoring

**Systems:** When a contractor inspects for tie-downs, ask if there are dependable, state approved anchoring systems available for your home.

**Other structures:** Also ask about recommended methods to secure storage/utility sheds, carports, and other vulnerable structures.

**Group Estimates:** Most contractors provide discounts for group installations. Meet with your neighbors to plan a group inspection and/or installation.

**Utilities:** Learn how and when to turn off gas, water, &

electricity.

### Safety Tips

- Check for loose straps.
- Make sure straps are properly aligned and not on an angle.
- Check to be sure the proper number of tie-downs have been installed.
- Verify that ground anchors and stabilizer plates have been installed properly.
- Be sure support piers are in contact with the frame.
- Replace straps or ground anchors that show signs of corrosion or damage.
- For additional protection, you may want to consider installing a longitudinal tie-down system located at the front and rear of your home.

### Develop an Evacuation Plan

- **Host Homes:** Emergency management agencies recommend you arrange a "Host Home" outside the evacuation zone. A host home is the home of a friend or family member who has agreed to provide temporary shelter for you and your family.
- **Communication Plan:** Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.
- **Public Shelters:** Public Emergency Shelters should be your LAST RESORT in an evacuation. You will have no

privacy, limited space, and meal service may be delayed. Your temporary "home" will be a gymnasium floor or public hallway, and local officials must give you permission to leave! If you MUST use a public shelter, identify two shelters nearby, preferably in different directions from your home.

• **Evacuation Routes:** See the enclosed map for evacuation routes. Be prepared to drive 20 to 50 miles to reach a safe place.

**Safety is the most important part of storm preparedness. Please remember that no matter how good your tie-downs are or how complete your insurance coverage is, EVACUATION is the best plan to save your life!**



### During a Hurricane WARNING

#### Evacuate!

- If an evacuation order is issued, ALL MANUFACTURED HOME RESIDENTS MUST EVACUATE. BEGIN PREPARATIONS IMMEDIATELY!
- Notify your host home(s) and your family contact that you ARE evacuating.
- Bring pre-assembled "Evacuation Kit."
- Bring address book and list of important phone numbers (*include family contact information*).
- Bring driver's license, photo I.D. and proof of address.
- Lock up and leave. Avoid flooded roads and watch for washed-out bridges. Standing water may be deeper than you think, and shallow moving water can carry away your vehicle (*with YOU inside!*).
- Go to predetermined "Host Home" (or public shelter if absolutely necessary).
- Notify your prearranged family contact when you arrive at a storm-safe location.

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

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Most property owners have Homeowners Insurance coverage insuring them from catastrophic loss. However a Homeowners policy does not protect you from loss in flooding or rising water. To insure your home from Flood (rising water) you must have a separate Flood Insurance policy. Our county qualifies and participates in the National Flood Insurance Program. We qualify by making building requirements stringent and in accordance with the Florida Building Code and local flood damage prevention ordinances. If you don't have a Flood Insurance policy, check with your insurance agent for a price quote on your home and your personal property. Don't wait until the hurricane warning has been issued. There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance becomes effective, unless you are purchasing a new home with a mortgage.

Additional information can be obtained from your county Emergency Management office.

## **BEFORE THE STORM** **Make Sure That You Know Your Coverage**

Property values have increased markedly over the past few years. Also, you may have made some improvements that have increased the value of your home. Make sure that you review your insurance policy carefully with your agent and know your coverage limits as well as your deductibles. Consider changing your coverage, if it is not adequate.

## **Check your policy for Flood and Windstorm Coverage**

Remember a homeowners policy does not cover flood damage caused by rising water. If you live in a flood prone, or designated flood zone area, you should talk to your representative to obtain flood insurance.

Homeowners policies usually cover windstorm damage caused directly from the wind, wind driven water or hail.



Review your policy to be sure windstorm exclusion has not been written into your policy. If you have any questions about whether your policy covers windstorm damage, contact your insurance agent or your Insurance Company. Your Agent or your Insurance Company can assist you in making changes and determining what the cost of those changes would be.

## **Know What Your Current Policy Does and Does Not Cover**

Standard homeowner policies usually limit coverage on items such as valuable jewelry, art, antiques, and money. You may need additional coverage for these items.

If you have an older home, you will need coverage for "law and Ordinance". This will cover all of the code changes that may have occurred since your home was built.

Most homeowners' policies do not cover backup of septic tanks, wells or sewers into your home unless you have added a "rider" to your policy covering this type of loss.

## **Update Your List of Personal Belongings**

Make an itemized list of your personal property, their cost, dates of purchase, and serial numbers, if appropriate. Your insurance company will probably require proof of the cost of any item for which a claim is made. Photographs and/or videotapes are also good ideas that you may wish to consider. Keeping this list updated yearly and as you add items is extremely important.

## **Safeguard Your Records**

Keep a copy of your important papers, such as insurance policies, mortgages, title, auto and health insurance and inventory records in a convenient place. Make a list of phone numbers of people and companies that you will need to talk to if you have damage. If your property is damaged, it will be to your advantage to have access to this information or if you have to evacuate you will need to be able to take this information with you when you go.

## **AFTER THE STORM**

### **Report Damage to Your Insurance Agent or Insurance Company Immediately**

Your Agent or Company will need to provide you with a claim number. You will need to keep this number and have it available in case you need to contact your company again. Also make sure that if your company is setting up a "Claims Phone Number" that you keep that as well. You will next be contacted by an adjuster representing the company that will want to come and inspect your damage. Make sure that you have taken pictures of your damage before you have made any temporary repairs. Keep these pictures as a record just in case you have to mediate your damages with the Insurance Company.

### **Make and Document Emergency Repairs**

Your policy probably requires that you make emergency repairs to prevent further damage to your home or contents. Keep all receipts and take photographs of the damage before and after emergency repairs. Your adjuster will advise you as to how to handle reimbursement for the temporary repairs. Make copies of anything that is given to the adjuster or sent to the Insurance Company.

### **Take Precautions if the Damages Require You to Leave Your Home**

Secure your property. Remove valuable items. Lock windows and doors.

Contact your insurance agent and leave a phone number where you can be reached. These same precautions should be taken if you are required to evacuate before a storm. If you can not live in your home after the storm, your insurance company will be able to pay you for "Additional Living Expense" if you qualify. Make sure that you keep all of your receipts as you will need them to get reimbursed from the Insurance Company.

## **Looting**

Looting has occurred in many communities after a hurricane. Criminals may take advantage of the opportunity to enter evacuated homes and businesses. Local law enforcement agencies and, if necessary, the National Guard will do everything possible to minimize looting. Place jewels and valuables in a sealed freezer bag in your safe deposit box or take them with you when you evacuate. The Department of Financial Services (DFS) recommends every home owner should have an insurance check up with their agent before hurricane season starts. Do I need flood insurance, check on Windstorm coverage, do I need more coverage and what does my policy cover and exclude?

If you rent, DFS recommends that you purchase Renters Insurance to cover your contents in the home or apartment.

[www.myfloridacfo.com](http://www.myfloridacfo.com) There are free consumer guides, including homeowner's insurance information available on our website under the listing of Consumer Help. You will also find an Insurance Library available to answer your questions. Do not forget to download your Homeowner's Financial Tool Kit; helping you make informed decisions when it comes to disasters

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**1-877-693-5236 and our storm number is: 1-800-22-storm**

# Thunderstorms & Lightning



On September 10, 2007, a homeless individual was struck by lightning in Fort Myers next to the Caloosahatchee River and passed away on 12 September.

In 2006, a 13-year-old boy died after he was struck by lightning while swimming in a pond in Lehigh Acres.

On the morning of April 8, 2005, in Bonita Springs, a golfer was struck while walking on the fairway walking toward a ball. The sun was shining at the time of the strike, but isolated thunderstorms were moving onshore near the course. It doesn't have to be raining for lightning to strike. Almost all lightning will occur within 10 miles of its parent thunderstorm, but it CAN strike much farther than that. Lightning detection equipment has confirmed bolts striking almost 50 miles away, but these are very rare.

On August 18, 2005, lightning from a fast moving thunderstorm killed two roofers in Ft. Myers and injured a third as they were getting ready to take shelter from the storm. Remember, if you can hear thunder, you can be struck by

lightning. Take shelter immediately!

Thunderstorms can produce several types of hazardous weather including large hail, damaging winds, flash floods, and tornados. However, lightning is the number one cause of weather related fatalities in Florida averaging 10 fatalities and 40 injuries a year. Approximately half of the deaths and injuries occur during outdoor recreational activities. About 40% of those occur on the water.

## Where to Go

The safest location during a thunderstorm is inside a large enclosed structure with plumbing and electrical wiring. These include shopping centers, schools, office buildings, and private residences.

If lightning strikes the building, the plumbing and wiring will conduct the electricity more efficiently than a human body. If no buildings are available, then an enclosed metal vehicle such as an automobile, van, or school bus makes a decent alternative.

## Where NOT to Go

Not all types of buildings or vehicles are safe during thunderstorms. Buildings are NOT SAFE (even if they are "grounded") if they have exposed openings. These include beach shacks, metal sheds, picnic shelters/pavilions, carports, and baseball dugouts. Porches are dangerous as well.

Convertible vehicles offer no safety from lightning, even if the top is "up". Other vehicles which are NOT SAFE during lightning storms are those which have open cabs, such as golf carts, tractors, and construction equipment. Remember, it is not the rubber tires of a vehicle that protect you from lightning. The metal shell of a vehicle gives the electricity from the lightning a path to flow around you.

## What to Do

Once inside a sturdy building, stay away from electrical appliances and plumbing fixtures. You may want to unplug valuable electrical equipment so they will not be damaged. As an added safety measure, go to an interior room.

If you are inside a vehicle, roll the windows up, and avoid contact with any conducting paths leading to the outside of the vehicle such as radios, CB's, and the ignition or you could be badly burned if lightning strikes.

## What NOT to Do

Lightning can travel great distances through power lines, especially in rural areas. Do not use electrical appliances, ESPECIALLY corded telephones unless it is an emergency. Cordless and cell phones are safe to use but stay away from the windows.

Computers are also dangerous to use because they are usually connected to both phone and electrical cords. Do not take a shower or use the bathtub.



## What should I do if I am in a boat on the open water during a thunderstorm?

Thunderstorms over the coastal waters in Florida are generally unpredictable. Even with the best weather reports, boaters can still be caught in open waters when a thunderstorm develops. With or without a lightning protection system, it is critical to take additional precautions to protect yourself:

- Stay in the center of the cabin, if so designed. If there is no cabin, stay low in the boat. Don't be a stand-up lightning rod!

- Keep arms and legs in the boat. Don't dangle them over the side.

- Stop fishing, water skiing, scuba diving, swimming or other water activities when there is lightning or even when weather conditions look threatening. Lightning can strike well ahead of a storm.

- Disconnect and do not use or touch the major electronic equipment, including the radio, throughout the duration of the storm.

- Lower, remove or tie down the radio antenna and other protruding devices if they are not a part of the lightning protection system.

- To the degree possible, avoid making contact with two components connected to the system at the same time. For example, the gear levers and the spotlight may both be connected to the system. If you have a hand on both when lightning strikes, the path of the electric current could be directly through your heart—a very deadly path!

- At least one person on board should be competent in CPR and first aid. Many individuals struck by lightning can be saved with prompt first aid.

## Lightning Trivia

While west central and southwest Florida does hold the title of "Lightning Capital of North America", there are many places in the world that experience lightning even MORE frequently! The title of "Lightning Capital of the World" goes to Kampala, Uganda, a city that experiences 280 thunderstorm days annually. Our area experiences lightning 90 to 100 days annually. <http://www.lightningsafety.noaa.gov>

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
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**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# ☉ Coping with Emotions

## Plan Ahead

Whatever the crisis, some planning before the disaster can usually help family members react wisely.

Families that work together to prepare for the problem will cope better than those who do not. Consider how your children might react in a disaster. What would your own reactions be? The crisis can affect each person's emotional and physical well-being.

Plan in advance how to deal with the situation. Follow the advice in this booklet. Discuss and practice plans with family members before a disaster strikes. Work together to help everyone understand the procedures.

## Venting Feelings

Listening: In times of trouble and

crisis, many people need someone who will just listen. Talking about the experience helps the burden seem a little lighter and easier to bear. If you are feeling "blue" or "down," you may want to contact a friend or neighbor, a family member, your pastor or rabbi, or someone else you feel you can really talk to as a friend.

If you find yourself called upon to listen to a friend or neighbor who just wants to talk, please listen. Some people will feel very much alone and afraid; others will blame themselves and wonder, "Why Me?" They are not really looking for an answer to that question, but rather are saying, "How can I endure this?" "How can I go on?" Solutions, answers, and advice aren't necessary. Just listen

and let the troubled person talk.

## Providing Support

Sometimes people, who are very upset or frightened, later are embarrassed about expressing those feelings. They may feel "weak," or that they have "dumped" on you.

Reassure your friend by saying that his/her feelings are normal and perfectly understandable. Be sure that your friend knows you are available to listen again, if he or she needs to talk. Help her/him to look toward the future, when things will be better.

If you are concerned that someone is very depressed and you do not feel you are able to help, be sure he/she does get help from a trained professional. Suggest a counselor, member of the religious community, social

worker, or support group to help your friend through this period.

## Coping With Children's Emotions

Remember that children mirror their parent's anxieties. Be calm to reduce your children's fears. Take something familiar such as a favorite toy or book into a new situation. This helps a child feel more secure.

In a crisis situation a child may demonstrate unusually childish behavior. This is normal for a child who is frightened and who doesn't understand a situation as serious as a hurricane.

Most children are not capable of understanding the magnitude and severity of a crisis situation. Be understanding and patient

# Heat Emergencies

Heat emergencies are of three types: heat cramps (caused by loss of salt), heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration) and heat stroke (shock). Remove the victim from the heat and have him lie down. Apply cool compresses, elevate the feet, drink fluids and use a fan to blow cool air. Get medical help if needed.

Heat emergencies are easily preventable by taking precautions in hot weather. If the problem isn't addressed, heat cramps (caused by loss of salt from heavy sweating) can lead to heat exhaustion (caused by dehydration), which can progress to heatstroke. **Heatstroke, the most serious of the three, can cause shock, brain damage, organ failure, and even death.**

The early symptoms of a heat emergency include: Profuse sweating, fatigue, thirst, and muscle cramps.

Later symptoms of heat exhaustion include: Headache, dizziness and lightheadedness, weakness, nausea and vom-

iting, cool moist skin, and dark urine. The symptoms of heatstroke include: Fever, irrational behavior, confusion, dry, hot and red skin, rapid shallow breathing and pulse, seizures, and

unconsciousness.

## Call 911 if:

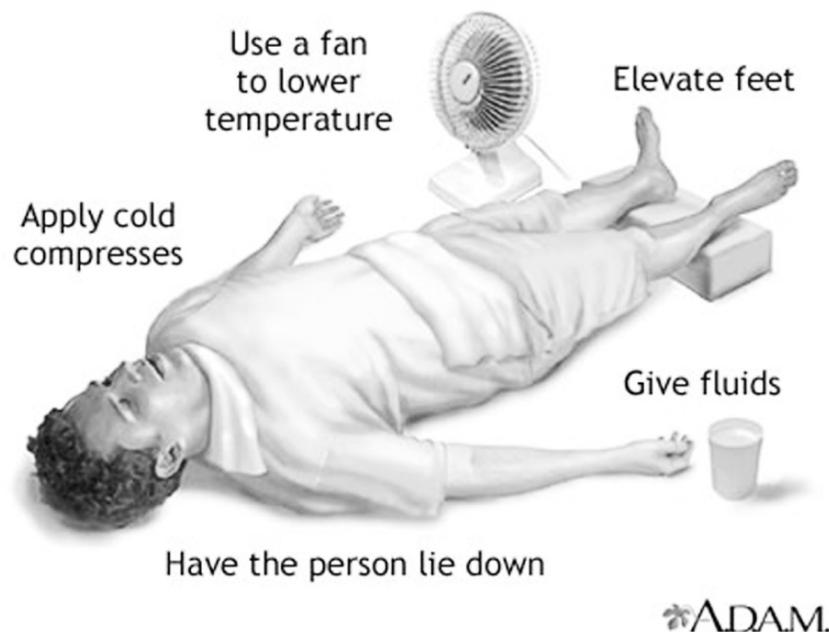
- The person loses consciousness at any time.
- There is any other change in the per-

son's alertness (for example, confusion or seizures).

- Fever (temp above 104°F)
- The person shows signs of shock (bluish lips and fingernails and decreased alertness).
- Other symptoms of heat stroke are present (like rapid pulse or rapid breathing).
- The person's condition does not improve, or worsens despite treatment.

## Prevention

- Wear loose-fitting, lightweight clothing in hot weather.
- Rest frequently and seek shade when possible.
- Avoid exercise or strenuous physical activity outside during hot or humid weather.
- Drink plenty of fluids every day. Drink more fluids before, during, and after physical activity.
- Be especially careful to avoid overheating if you are taking drugs that impair heat regulation, or if you are overweight or elderly.



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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
833-4000

**COLLIER**  
311

**DESOTO**  
(863)  
993-4831

**GLADES**  
(863)  
946-6020

**HARDEE**  
(863)  
773-6373

# © Cold Weather Recommendations

Although Southwest Florida basks in a subtropical climate most of the year, occasional arctic cold fronts can invade the area causing frosts and/or freezes. Damage to vegetable and citrus crops is the most common result. Contact County Extension Services for further

information.

- Dress in layered clothing and wear some kind of head cover.
- Keep pets inside; when necessary walk them on the grass (not the cold sidewalk).
- Protect livestock and other animals with adequate shelter, extra feed and supplemental heat.
- Bring potted plants inside.
- Cover outdoor plants with burlap or cloth. Cold will penetrate plastic.
- Check space heaters for sufficient ventilation.
- Do not refuel kerosene

heaters inside.

- Make sure fireplace flues are working properly.
- Check extension cords for breaks and/or fraying.
- Do not use charcoal or gas grills indoors. They produce deadly carbon monoxide fumes!

## Floods

### What Protective Measures Do I Need To Take For Floods?



### What Causes Flooding?

Because of the low land elevations and the high water tables over much of our area, flooding is likely to occur in some areas during summer showers and thunderstorms. A storm with a considerable amount of rain in a short period of time will cause flooding in low-lying areas throughout the county even though the canal network and drainage ditches will alleviate some flooding.

Protective measures are broken down into four stages; Preparatory

stage, Flood Warning, During the Flood and After the Flood.

#### Preparatory Stage

1. Keep a stock of food that requires no cooking.
2. Keep a first aid kit available.
3. Keep your vehicle fueled.
4. Consider purchasing flood insurance for your home and belongings (Check the insurance section of this guide for further information).
5. Turn to radio or television or NOAA Weather Radio for flood warnings.
6. Obey warnings from emergency officials; evacuate when notice is issued.
7. Know your evacuation zone and route to a place of safety.
8. Know what supplies to take with you.
9. Shut off electricity and water to your home prior to leaving.
10. Be cautious and avoid flood prone areas when evacuating.

**Steps should be taken to reduce property losses.**

- a. Move furniture to upper floors or higher locations.
- b. Sandbags can help slow down flood waters from reaching your possessions.
- c. Retrofitting, such as building floodwalls or elevating a structure is a way of minimizing loss due to flooding.
4. Don't attempt to wade across a flowing stream that is above your knees.
5. Don't allow children to play in standing water. It may be contaminated with chemicals or sewage.

Know what your current insurance policy does and does not cover. Coverage may be subject to change with certain improvements to your home and require adherence to certain regulations.

#### Flood Warning Stage

1. Store drinking water in sterile, covered containers.
2. Move valuable objects higher. Place them on shelves, tables and countertops.
3. Turn off electricity.
4. Do not handle live electrical equipment.
5. Report downed power lines to the local law enforcement authorities.
6. Keep tuned to local radio and television stations for instructions on how to obtain medical care and emergency assistance such as water, food, clothing, shelter and updated weather reports and conditions.

#### During The Flood Stage

1. Stay on higher ground.
2. Do not drive on a flooded road.
3. If your vehicle stalls, abandon it immediately and seek higher ground.

#### After The Flood Stage

1. Do not eat fresh food that has come into contact with floodwater.
2. Drink only bottled or previously stored water.
3. Stay away from disaster areas. You may hamper rescue recovery operations.
4. Do not handle live electrical equipment.
5. Report downed power lines to the local law enforcement authorities.
6. Keep tuned to local radio and television stations for instructions on how to obtain medical care and emergency assistance such as water, food, clothing, shelter and updated weather reports and conditions.

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

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# TORNADOS



## What Is A Tornado?

A Tornado is a violent storm with whirling winds of up to 300 miles per hour. It appears as a funnel shaped cloud, from gray to black in color, which extends to the ground from the base of the thunderstorm. A tornado spins like a top and may sound like the roaring of an airplane or locomotive. In Florida, summer tornados generally move at speeds less than 20 MPH and can move in any direction. Winter tornados tend to

move at speeds less than 40 MPH and generally move from the southwest to northeast. Their direction of travel can be erratic and may change suddenly. These short-lived storms are the most violent of all atmospheric phenomena and the most destructive, over a small area.

## When Can A Tornado Occur?

Most tornados in Florida are likely to occur between 3 PM to 8 PM during the months of June, July, and August; however, they can occur at any time, often with little or no warning. Fewer tornados occur in the winter and spring. Most tornadoes in Florida are considered weak with winds of 50 to 100 MPH. However, if a tornado occurs in the colder part of the year it tends to be stronger than those in the summer. In 2006 a strong summer tornado with wind speeds over 110 MPH occurred in Port Charlotte and injured 3 people and causing \$500K in property damage. On September 16th, 2007



a pair of tornados caused around \$4M in damages to Cape Coral and Fort Myers Beach, with minor injuries. Tornadoes, which form over the Gulf, are called waterspouts. Tornadoes often form in the north-east quadrant of hurricanes that move in from the Gulf of Mexico.

## Tornado Watch or Tornado Warning?

The National Weather Service broadcasts severe weather conditions over the emergency alerting system as well as NOAA Weather Radio (see page 28 for the NOAA weather station in your area). When they post a tornado watch they want the public to know that conditions are right for a tornado. When a tornado warning is posted for a given area, a tornado has been sighted or has been detected on radar. The warning will include those cities in the path of the storm.

In general, a watch means, "Caution, Watch the Sky" and a warning means "Danger, Take Cover".

## What protective actions should I take for TORNADOS?

### For Tornado Watches:

When conditions are right for a tornado, there are a few things, listed below, you should do:

1. Stay tuned to a local weather station or listen to your NOAA Weather Radio (page 28).
2. Secure any loose objects outdoors, or move them inside.
3. Survey local structures for the most suitable shelter.
4. Keep watching the sky to the south and southwest. If you see any funnel shaped clouds, report them immediately to the nearest law enforcement agency and take cover.

### For Tornado Warnings:

This means a tornado has been spotted near your area or is predicted to come your way. **TAKE SHELTER**

**IMMEDIATELY!!** Do not leave shelter until you are sure no further danger exists. Remember, there is no guaranteed safe place during a tornado. Here are some examples of places you may be in:

1. **In a Motor Vehicle:** The least desirable place to be during a tornado is in a motor vehicle. Never try to outrun a tornado in your car. Stop your vehicle and get out. Seek shelter elsewhere. Do not get under or next to your vehicle. A ditch or ground depression will help, if a tornado shelter is not nearby.
2. **At School:** Follow the school disaster plan. Stay away from auditoriums, gymnasiums, and other areas with wide, free-span roofs. Go into center hallways and stay away from windows.
3. **Open Country:** Move away from the tornado's projected path at right

angles. Seek shelter in a ditch, ravine, or culvert. Even a low spot in the ground will give you some protection. Stay away from trees and remember to protect your head.

4. **In a Home or Condo:** The best place to go is the innermost hallway on the lowest floor. An interior closet is relatively safe. An interior bathroom is even better. The walls are close together and the bathtub, sink, and toilet help support debris in case the house collapses. **AVOID WINDOWS**, since flying debris does most of the killing. The worst kind of flying debris is broken glass. **DO NOT** open any windows to equalize pressure when a tornado approaches. If a tornado actually gets close enough for the pressure drop to be experienced, the strong winds have probably already caused the most significant damage. Opening

windows, in fact, may actually increase damage.

5. **In a Mobile or Manufactured Home:** These homes are easy to damage by flying debris and are one of the least desirable places to be during a tornado. If a tornado approaches, seek other shelter immediately. Go to a tornado shelter on foot, if possible. Do not drive your car. Do not get under your mobile home. If no other shelter is available, lie down in a ditch or a ground depression.



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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
833-4000

**COLLIER**  
311

**DESOTO**  
(863)  
993-4831

**GLADES**  
(863)  
946-6020

**HARDEE**  
(863)  
773-6373

# Wild Fires

## What is the Problem?

- Hurricane winds caused widespread destruction of vegetation in our area.
- Trees were uprooted and broken, and left in large tangled piles to dry.
- This dried fuel creates an ideal environment for dangerous wildfires.
- Both the size of the downed trees and the way they were entangled will make fire suppression dangerous.
- Fires can be expected to be more intense, increasing the danger to homes and residents not properly prepared.



## Additional Information

- Everyone in the area will be affected by increased wildfire activity.
- Downed vegetation can prevent firefighter access to your property.



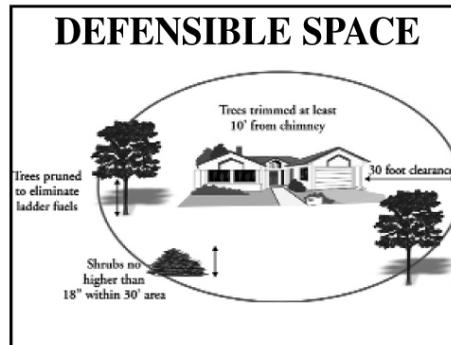
- Available firefighting equipment can be tied up for extended periods, slowing response times to additional fires.
- Main roadways which now provide avenues of escape can be blocked by wildfires burning close to the roadside.
- Smoke can aggravate health problems and create unsafe travel conditions.
- Roofing and siding that has been damaged by the wind can allow fire to enter your home.
- Increased fire intensity can break windows that are not tempered glass or double paned.

**Arson  
Alert  
Hotline**  
**1-800-342-5869**  
Up to a  
**\$5,000 Reward for  
Information leading  
to an arrest!**

## Make your home **FIREWISE!**

### What can you do?

- When repairing storm damage to your home, use only non-flammable materials.
- Have at least 30 feet of defensible space around structures. This area should be kept well mowed and irrigated (within limits of any existing water restrictions.) If you do not have 30 feet, clear as much as you can.



- Use FIREWISE plants for landscaping and keep highly flammable plants such as palmetto away from structures.
- Roofs and gutters should be clear of leaves, pine needles, twigs, and branches.
- Eliminate all combustibles, such as wood, propane tanks, gas grills, motor homes, boats, ATV's, or cars, from under or near structures.
- Trim all branches up to 10' and remove all vines climbing trees.

- Install spark arresters on chimney.
- Driveway should be at least 12 feet wide.
- Use gravel for mulch or keep combustible mulch products moist.



## When fire threatens **Be prepared!**

- Follow directions of emergency personnel and evacuate immediately if requested.
- Have an evacuation plan for you and your family.
- Have all your evacuation needs (papers, medications, etc.) together.
- Plan for your pets.

### **If time allows:**

- Close all windows and doors.
- Close heavy drapes, blinds or hurricane shutters.
- Remove lightweight curtains.
- Move flammable furniture away from windows and glass doors.
- Back the car into garage.
- Disconnect the automatic garage door opener.
- Turn off fuel supplies at the connection.
- Connect a garden hose with a nozzle to an outside tap.

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
612-4700

**HIGHLANDS**  
(863)  
385-1112

**LEE**  
(239)  
533-3622

**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# © Pandemic Outbreaks

What if you and your entire family become bedridden, hospitals turn away patients, and schools, businesses, even houses of worship, close and become off-limits?

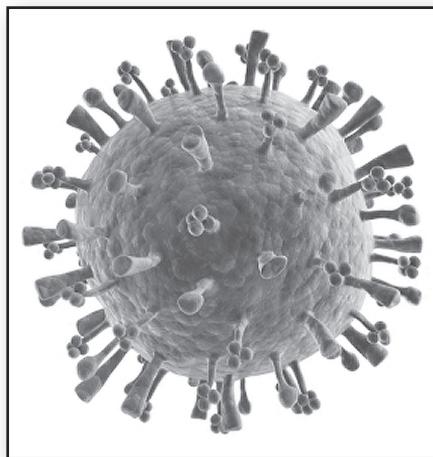
It's entirely possible. And according to scientists, it's even probable.

**Pandemics** – worldwide disease episodes – have occurred throughout recorded history, the most recent being the influenza pandemics of 1918 (Spanish flu), 1957 (Asian flu) and 1968 (Hong Kong) flu.

While the Asian and Hong Kong illnesses were relatively mild, the Spanish flu devastated the planet, killing between 20 and 40 million people – more than the death toll from World War I. At one time, one-quarter of the United States and one-fifth of the world were infected with this strain of influenza. It was impossible to escape from the illness. And so it could be again.

Have you given any thought to how a situation such as this would affect you personally? Your preparedness now will impact how your family “weathers the storm” of a national or global surge of sickness.

**Consider this possible – probable - scenario:** To begin with, any effective vaccine will not be available for about six months after the pandemic begins, and it's likely that there won't be enough to treat the entire population. Children and young adults may be affected disproportionately, and most probably will have to remain and be treated in the home. Everyone will be forced to take on greater responsibility, both for themselves and others, since sickness will overwhelm the capabilities of healthcare professionals. Even food delivery and other services could be disrupted. And finally, there will be a much higher death rate than normal, with many victims being workers in important services such



*H1N1 Flu Virus*

as communication, medicine and transportation, among others.

Now, all of this may seem to be a bit heavy on the “gloom and doom,” but to paint a different picture would be unfair to all of us. As individuals, as a community, and as a nation, we must prepare ourselves for such an eventuality.

Given the above, what can the individual person do? Well, we can educate ourselves, and we can also take solid, practical steps. Some may seem small, or even trivial, yet may be among the most important steps available:

- Get a yearly flu shot and if over 50 a pneumovax (pneumonia) shot.
- Get into the habit of washing your hands for 20 seconds in hot water with soap or ethanol hand sanitizer; carry antiseptic wipes.
- Get into the habit of coughing/sneezing into the crook of your arm/sleeve, or better yet, use tissue.
- Exercise regularly in order to strengthen your heart and

lungs; taking care of your health now will benefit you later.

- If you smoke, stop now.
- Learn basic first aid and nursing procedures, so that you can care for yourself and your loved ones.
- Stay home if you become ill or if you feel you might have been exposed to a virus.
- Always keep a three to seven day supply of food that is non-perishable and easy to prepare.

Remember water, medicines, basic household necessities (toilet paper, paper towels, plastic bags, tissues, plain bleach, soaps and detergents, batteries, masks, latex gloves, sugar, salt, multivitamins, and other staples).

Learn how to purify water (rolling boil for 1 minute, or add bleach as directed on label; if unknown, use 10 drops per quart).

*Learn more at*  
<http://www.pandemicflu.gov>.

**23** For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

<b>CHARLOTTE</b> (941) 833-4000	<b>COLLIER</b> 311	<b>DESOTO</b> (863) 993-4831	<b>GLADES</b> (863) 946-6020	<b>HARDEE</b> (863) 773-6373
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# Hazardous Materials



## CHEMICAL

... the very word brings a vivid vision to mind in most people. Many of the visions are unpleasant, centering on the latest news story of an accident or lingering environmental damage from improper storage, use or disposal of chemicals. However, many aspects of modern life are made possible or improved by responsible use and handling of chemicals.

## AROUND THE HOUSE

When we think of hazardous chemicals, we tend to think of manufacturing plants with billowing smoke stacks, or train cars or big trucks on the highway. While these are all valid, we should also think of our kitchen cabinets, our garage, our pool and a number of other places in our home where potentially harmful chemicals are a part of our everyday life. We are familiar with these items and have come to trust them. We may have even forgotten that they can injure or even kill us. When was the last time you read the label on your drain cleaner, window cleaner, weed killer or insecticide?

### Here are a few common household chemicals and their potential hazards.

- *Chlorine (pool)* – toxic fumes, corrosive and highly reactive
- *Muriatic Acid (pool)* – corrosive, toxic by inhalation and highly reactive
- *Ammonia* – toxic fumes and very reactive with other common cleaners
- *Lighter Fluid* – flammable

- *Propane (grill)* – highly flammable
- *Gasoline* – flammable with vapors that are heavier than air and can travel to an ignition source
- *Motor Oil* – combustible
- *Weed Killer* – toxic by ingestion or absorption through skin
- *Bug Killer* – toxic by inhalation or absorption
- *Drain Cleaner* – toxic, caustic, and corrosive
- *Nail Polish Remover* – flammable
- *Paint* – flammable
- *Fertilizer* – toxic, possibly flammable or explosive

### No matter how comfortable you are with a product, here are some important safety reminders:

- ALWAYS read and follow all label directions
- Never mix chemicals
- Use only for approved purposes and in approved concentrations
- Store and dispose of safely and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- Keep away from children and never store in containers that could be confused as food or drink
- Pay attention to first aid directions
- Keep the number of your local poison control center handy

If you suspect someone has been exposed to a chemical, consult your physician or call

### The Florida Poison Information Network at: 1-800-222-1222

If the injuries appear serious or the victim has trouble breathing, call 911!

## TRANSPORTATION

Hazardous materials are substances which can be harmful to human health, or the environment.

Everyday shipments of hazardous materials are handled safely, without accident, by highway, rail, air and sea. However, there are occasional accidents. The materials, the containers and the people who handle and transport them are highly regulated to ensure our safety. Also, because of the design and construction

of chemical transportation containers, significant releases are rare. However, in an accident you can still be affected either at home or on the highway. If you are at home you will be notified through the media or local public safety agencies. Follow instructions quickly and carefully. You may be ordered to evacuate or to “shelter in place” depending on the chemicals involved. If ordered to evacuate do so immediately.

Shelter in Place means to stay inside where you are. If you are directed to shelter in place, close all windows and doors and turn off the air conditioner. Duct tape and plastic sheeting can be used to seal around doors, windows and other openings. If this is not available, use damp towels or blankets to seal around doors and windows. The goal is to

prevent outside air from entering your home. Do not go outside or open doors or windows, until local authorities tell you it is safe. Once the all clear is given you should ventilate your home by opening doors and windows to purge any possible contaminants from the event. If you see or are involved in a traffic accident, take special care to avoid exposure to hazardous chemicals. Do not walk or drive through a vapor cloud or spilled product. Pay attention to any placards – diamond shaped panels with numbers and/or symbols on them. Provide the placard number to authorities when they arrive or if you call 911. Small quantities of hazardous material may not be placarded. The most important safety step in protecting yourself and others is to avoid or reduce exposure to the chemical. If able, evacuate the area. Move crosswind to safety and keep other people from entering the area.

## Nuclear Power Plants

There are three nuclear power plants in Florida: Crystal River, north of Tampa; St. Lucie, north of Palm Beach; and Turkey Point, south of Miami. Even under worst-case conditions, an accidental

release at any of these plants should not spread dangerous radioactivity over Southwest Florida. However, we might receive evacuees from other counties. Evacuees pose no health risk. However, agricultural products from those areas would not be permitted to enter into our county.

## Radioactive Materials

It is possible that a transportation accident could involve a radioactive substance. These materials are packed in limited quantities in very durable, well marked containers that are heavily over-packed. If you see a marked package, or suspect radioactive material may be involved in an accident, simply move away from the area. Advise emergency responders of its presence. Do not attempt to move it yourself.

## Biohazardous Material

Another hazardous material often seen in transit is biohazard material. Healthcare facilities generate and dispose of large quantities of this material, which may at first glance appear to be ordinary garbage. Biohazardous material could expose you to disease causing agents. As with other hazardous materials, you can usually avoid exposure by not contacting or handling the material or container. Call the authorities and explain the situation. They will



# Preparing for Acts of Terrorism

## What is Terrorism?

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) defines terrorism as “the unlawful use of force against persons or property to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in the furtherance of political or social objectives.”

Terrorist acts are intended to:

- Cause mass casualties & panic
- Produce a loss of critical resources
- Disrupt vital services and the economy

## What are the most likely targets?

- Public assembly areas
- Public and government buildings
- Mass transit
- Places of high economic impact
- Telecommunications facilities
- Historic or symbolic places
- Amusement parks
- Special events
- Large structures and bridges

Visiting these places is part of our way of life. You should not avoid them, but have a heightened sense of awareness when you visit them.

The United States is in the midst of numerous terror related issues which include:

- Christmas Day Underwear Bombing
- Five Americans held in Pakistan
- Chicago Businessman charged with planning the attacks in Mumbai
- Denver man charged with terror plot
- American Somali Terrorist Connec-

tions

- Radicalized Americans such as the Fort Hood attacker
- And the possibility of Guantanamo detainees being brought to the United States

Many attacks have been thwarted by alert citizens and law enforcement such as:

- Plot to bomb the Islamic Center of Pinellas Park, Fl. by Robert J. Goldstein in retaliation for Palestinian suicide bombings of Isreal (2002)
- Plot to blow up the Transcontinental Pipeline (Gulf Coast to NY) by Michael C. Reynolds (2005)
- Plot to blow up the Sears Tower, by Nasreal Batiste of Miami, Fl (2005)
- Plot to blow up Fort Dix, NJ. US military base by six radical Islamist (2007)
- Plot to blow up a jet fuel artery at JFK Airport by 4 Islamist extremist, led by Russell Defraites of Brooklyn, NY (2007)

## What is the State of Florida doing to prepare for Acts of Terrorism?

According to state statue the Florida Department of Law Enforcement has established 7 Regional Domestic Security Task Forces throughout Florida. It is the job of these task forces to perform the following functions:

- Assist in assessing, defining and monitoring the State’s vulnerability to the impacts of a terrorist event.
- Assist in determining state and local government ongoing needs (personnel, materials, planning and training) to

effectively respond to a major terrorist incident.

- Work with local emergency management to develop safe and efficient response plans for regional resources and conduct exercises to test and refine the capability of the task force to deploy regional response assets.

## How can I help ?

Law Enforcement, Public Safety and Public Health officials have plans and procedures for responding to all types of hazardous situations. It is critical to be well informed and remain watchful of things around you. Report anything that appear suspicious or out of the ordinary by calling 911 or your local FBI office.

## How can I prepare?

Learn shelter-in-place procedures and prepare a sheltering kit. Shelter-in-place procedures are used for chemical or biological attacks (or even a hazardous spill)! Procedures for sheltering in place during include:

- Identify a safe room in the home where with as few doors and windows possible. Bring/store your disaster supply kit in the safe room.
- Shutting off the ventilation system and latching all doors and windows to reduce airflow from the outside.
- Using precut plastic sheeting to cover openings where air can enter the room, including doors, windows, vents, and electrical outlets.
- Tape plastic sheeting around all doors and windows using duct tape to ensure a good seal.

- Listen to a battery-powered radio for the all clear. Chemicals used in an attack will be carried on the wind and will dissipate over time.

## If there is an explosion:

- Take cover if heavy debris is falling. Leave the building as quickly as possible.
- NEVER take an elevator if there is a fire or if you question the structural integrity of the building.
- Use fire escapes and assist individuals with physical disabilities to evacuate.

## When you travel:

- If you are traveling to a foreign country, check the U.S. Department of State web page at <http://travel.state.gov/> for any travel advisories or procedure changes. Keep your identification papers in a secure place at all times.
- Check with the airlines in advance for any special safety procedures in place.
- Cooperate with officials who are responsible for security inspections.

*To learn more about counterterrorism efforts in the United States visit the Department of Homeland Security web page at <http://www.dhs.gov/files/counterterrorism.shtm>*

**As always.....if you see something that does not look right, report it to proper authorities!**

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For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**CHARLOTTE**  
(941)  
833-4000

**COLLIER**  
311

**DESOTO**  
(863)  
993-4831

**GLADES**  
(863)  
946-6020

**HARDEE**  
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773-6373



The **Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)** concept was initially developed and implemented by the Los Angeles City Fire Department in 1985, and was created to: educate people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area, and train them in basic disaster response skills.

To become a CERT member, individuals must undergo the classroom-delivered CERT training where they will acquire basic knowledge and skills in:

- Disaster preparedness
- Team organization
- Fire safety and suppression

- Disaster medical operations
- Light search and rescue
- Disaster psychology
- Terrorism awareness/prevention

At the culmination of the training (training is typically covered in 7 or 8 sessions), course participants will undergo a course review and participate in a disaster simulation/exercise. CERT training is presented in a hands-on fashion and is delivered by first responders and subject matter experts who have the requisite knowledge and skills to instruct the sessions.

CERT members can also maintain and refine their skills by par-

ticipating in exercises and activities, or by attending supplemental training opportunities offered by sponsoring agencies. Finally, CERT members can volunteer for projects that improve community emergency preparedness.

**The CERT program makes good sense and helps citizens understand their responsibility in preparing for and responding to a disaster or emergency.** It increases their ability to safely help themselves, their family and their neighbors. CERT also promotes a partnering effort between emergency services and the people that they serve. Both the

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) recognize the benefits of the CERT program and the importance of preparing citizens – CERT is now a nationwide, federally sponsored program.

If you are interested in joining the hundreds of CERT communities nationwide, please contact your local Emergency Management Office.

For more information on the CERT program, visit <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/index.shtm> or [www.Leecert.org](http://www.Leecert.org)

In 1998, NOAA's National Weather Service created StormReady, which is a voluntary program aimed at preparing communities to help protect residents from the hazards of severe weather. StormReady provides clear-cut advice to political leaders, emergency managers and the media can help improve local hazardous weather operations. A StormReady County, Community or Supporter must meet the following criteria:

- Establish a 24-hour warning point and emergency operations center
- Have more than one method of receiving severe weather forecasts and warnings and alerting



the public

- Create a system that monitors local weather conditions
- Promote public readiness through community seminars
- Develop a hazardous weather plan, which includes training severe weather spotters (Skywarn Training) and holding training exercises

The following Counties, Communities, Universities and Supporters are in Southwest Florida:

- Every County is StormReady Certified
- City of Sanibel, Community (Lee)
- Captiva Island, Community (Lee)
- FSU Ringling Center, University (Sarasota)
- Bonita Bay subdivision, Supporter (Lee)
- The Brooks, Supporter (Lee)
- Pelican Landing, Supporter (Lee)
- Mediterra Subdivision, Supporter (Collier)

• Twin Eagles, Supporter (Collier)  
The StormReady Certification Process An advisory board comprised of NWS meteorologists and state and local emergency managers, review applications and visits locations to verify the steps in the process to become StormReady. After the board approves certification, the community will receive a formal letter and StormReady signs that can be displayed along major roadways. StormReady designation is valid for three years and is typically awarded on a County basis. For more information about the StormReady program, please visit the StormReady Website: [www.stormready.noaa.gov](http://www.stormready.noaa.gov)

For more information contact the Emergency Management Office in your county

**HENDRY**  
(863)  
612-4700

**HIGHLANDS**  
(863)  
385-1112

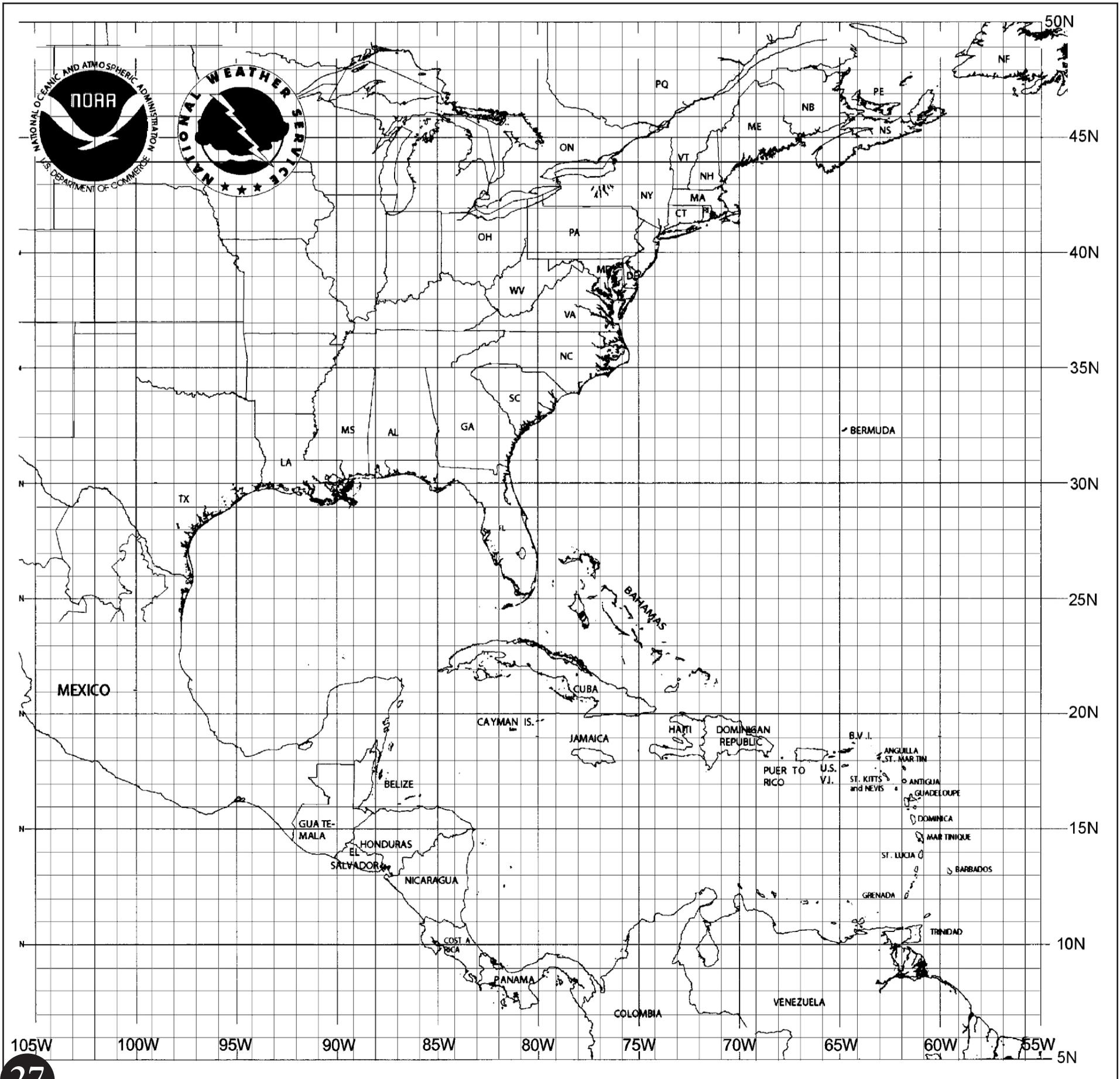
**LEE**  
(239)  
533-3622

**OKEECHOBEE**  
(863)  
763-3212

**SARASOTA**  
(941)  
861-5000

# Atlantic Basin Hurricane Tracking Chart

NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER • MIAMI, FLORIDA



# Highlands County Emergency Information

## COMMON TERMS USED IN STORM SEASON

Small Craft Warnings . . . . .	25-38 MPH Winds
Gale . . . . .	39-54 MPH Winds
Whole Gale . . . . .	55-73 MPH Winds
Tropical Depression . . . . .	< 38 MPH Winds
Tropical Storm . . . . .	39-73 MPH Winds
Hurricane Category One . . . . .	74-95 MPH Winds
Hurricane Category Two . . . . .	96-110 MPH Winds
Hurricane Category Three . . . . .	111-130 MPH Winds
Hurricane Category Four . . . . .	131-155 MPH Winds
Hurricane Category Five . . . . .	> 155 MPH Winds

**A HURRICANE WATCH** issued for your location indicates the possibility that you could experience hurricane conditions within 36 hours. This watch should trigger your family's disaster plan, and protective measures should be initiated, especially those actions that require

extra time such as securing your home with shutters.

**A HURRICANE WARNING** issued for your location indicates that sustained winds of at least 74 mph are expected within 24 hours or less. Once this warning has been issued, your family should be in the process of completing protective actions and deciding the safest location to be during the storm.

### What is a Hurricane?

A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone, which is a generic term for a low pressure system that generally forms in the tropics. The cyclone is accompanied by thunderstorms and, in the Northern Hemisphere, a counter-clockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface. Tropical cyclones are classified as follows:

### Tropical Storm

An organized system of strong thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 39-73 mph (34-63 kt)

### Hurricane

An intense tropical weather system of strong thunderstorms with a well-defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds of 74 mph (64 kt) or higher

### \* Sustained winds

A 1-minute average wind measured at about 33 ft (10 meters) above the surface.

\*\* 1 knot = 1 nautical mile per hour or 1.15 statute miles per hour. Abbreviated as "kt".

### Tropical Depression

An organized system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and maximum sustained winds\* of 38 mph (33 kt\*\*) or less

## HIGHLANDS COUNTY EMERGENCY INFORMATION BROADCASTS

### TELEVISION

- LOCAL TELEVISION WHRT CHANNEL 17
- LOCAL TELEVISION COMCAST CABLE WHRT CHANNEL 12
- FORT MYERS TELEVISION WINK CHANNEL 11
- ORLANDO TELEVISION WFTV CHANNEL 9
- TAMPA TELEVISION WFLA CHANNEL 8
- TAMPA TELEVISION WFTS CHANNEL 28
- TAMPA TELEVISION WTOG CHANNEL 44
- TAMPA TELEVISION WTVT CHANNEL 13

### RADIO

- WWTK (AM) 730
- WITS (AM) 1340
- WWOJ (FM) 99.1
- WJCM (AM) 1050
- WWLL (FM) WWLL

### NEWSPAPERS

- NEWS SUN
- LAKE PLACID JOURNAL
- HIGHLANDS TODAY
- TAMPA TRIBUNE

## WEBSITES FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

### HURRICANES

- [www.hceoc.org](http://www.hceoc.org)
- [www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)
- [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- [www.srh.noaa.gov](http://www.srh.noaa.gov)
- [www.floridadisaster.com](http://www.floridadisaster.com)
- [www.disasterhelp.gov](http://www.disasterhelp.gov)
- [www.disastercenter.com](http://www.disastercenter.com)
- [www.hurricane.weather-center.com](http://www.hurricane.weather-center.com)
- [www.hurricanes.noaa.gov](http://www.hurricanes.noaa.gov)
- [www.nws.noaa.gov](http://www.nws.noaa.gov)

### TERRORISM

- [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)
- [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)
- [www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/](http://www.dhs.gov/dhspublic/)
- [www.whitehouse.com](http://www.whitehouse.com)
- [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- [www.disasterhelp.gov](http://www.disasterhelp.gov)
- [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)
- [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)
- [www.terrorism.com](http://www.terrorism.com)
- [www.emergency.com](http://www.emergency.com)

### WILDFIRES

- [www.nifc.gov](http://www.nifc.gov)
- [www.fl-dof.com](http://www.fl-dof.com)
- [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)
- [www.dca.state.fl.us](http://www.dca.state.fl.us)
- [www.forestry.about.com](http://www.forestry.about.com)
- [www.na.fs.fed.us](http://www.na.fs.fed.us)
- [www.fireplan.gov](http://www.fireplan.gov)
- [www.flame.doacs.state.fl.us](http://www.flame.doacs.state.fl.us)

## HIGHLANDS COUNTY EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBERS

EMERGENCY DIAL 9-1-1

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT . . . . .	.863-385-1112
EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES . . . . .	.863-402-6630
FIRE SERVICES . . . . .	.863-385-1112
HIGHLANDS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE . . . . .	.863-402-7200
HIGHLANDS COUNTY ANIMAL CONTROL . . . . .	.863-655-6475
HIGHLANDS COUNTY PUBLIC INFORMATION . . . . .	.863-402-6833
AVON PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT . . . . .	.863-453-6622
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