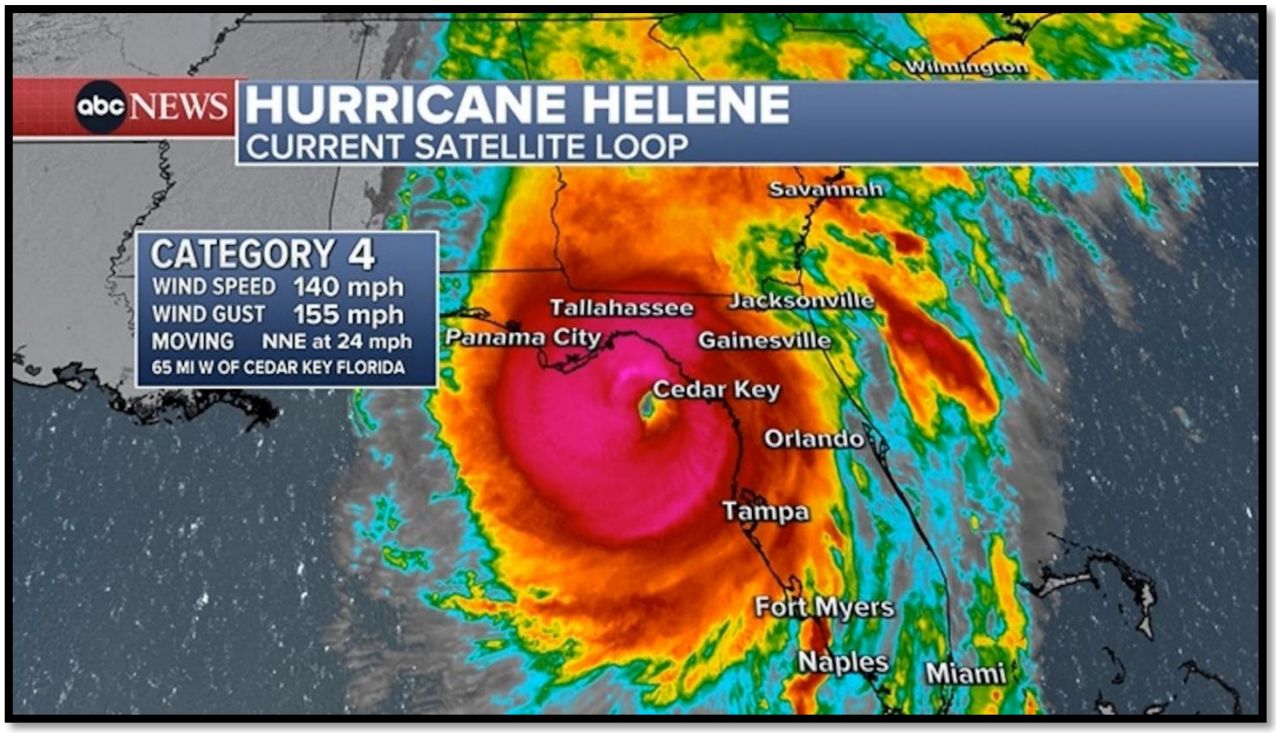



# Disaster Preparedness Manual

## 2026-2027

# TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | |
|---|---|
| **Disaster Preparedness Committee** | 3 |
| **Statement of Understanding** | 4 |
| **Risks** | 5 |
| **Hurricane Watch Vs. Warning** | 6 |
| **Severe Weather Terms** | 7 |
| **Hurricane Plan** | 7-12 |
| **Hurricane Check List for Posts on the Ocean** | 13 |
| **Tips for Boat Owners** | 14-15 |
| **Protect your Pets** | 15 |
| **People with Special Needs** | 15-16 |
| **During & After the Disaster Period** | 16-19 |
| **Generator Safety** | 19-20 |
| **Weather Websites** | 20-21 |
| **Hurricane Resources** | 21-24 |
| **Emergency Reference Information Sheet** | 25 |
| **Emergency Household Reference Card** | 26 |
| **Hurricane Tracking Chart** | 27 |

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# STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

In the event of a significant disaster, this statement pertains to the role of the state and national organization in assisting Posts as a community service center following a disaster.

The American Legion, Department of Florida has certain supplies and equipment that are available for Posts to use. These items include generators, coolers, water containers, flashlights, batteries, etc. The Department of Florida will provide these items to Florida American Legion Posts for the purposes of the Post being a community disaster center.

This would include serving food and providing shelter to survivors and rescue personnel. American Legion equipment will not be used for discretionary purposes such as social quarters, lounges, etc.

With approval of the Department Disaster Preparedness Chair Joe Humet, the above supplies (expendables) may be distributed to individual Legionnaires. Items such as coolers, gas cans, and generators will be considered accountable items and are expected to be returned to the Department for future use. The Department of Florida has provided and will continue to provide as much assistance as possible to the members of The American Legion in the event of a natural disaster.

# RISKS

In Florida, any geographical area is a target for natural disaster. Along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts, hurricanes can occur from June-November and tropical storms can occur at any time. Along rivers, flooding can occur in the springtime or after periods of heavy rain. The center of the state is susceptible to sink holes. Tornadoes can occur at any time with inclement weather. Any of these naturally occurring conditions can happen with little warning and can create sudden disaster in anyone's life.

# WHAT ARE RISK AREAS

- Coastal areas are the most vulnerable to hurricanes.
- People living on the waterfront or island properties are particularly at risk because of storm surges.
- Rivers and lakes.
- Portable housing, like trailers and mobile homes.
- Living in sub-standard housing.

# WHO IS AT RISK?

Those who live alone or are unable to rely on friends and family support must take special precautions in the event of an emergency situation. Sometimes, disaster situations require the use of more exertion than usual, such as climbing stairs or lifting heavy objects. Elders should test their endurance and capabilities for these situations well in advance.

People new to an area may need assistance from neighbors and should introduce themselves in advance of any incident. Neighbors can help board up windows, discuss evacuation plans, or become friends in a crisis.

Knowing what to do can save lives and avert damage to the loss of personal property. This information is about what to do, how to be prepared before the unforeseen occurs, what to do when a disaster is about to happen, and how to cope during and after hurricanes, floods, or tornadoes. These simple principles can apply to other disaster situations: hotel fire, civil disturbance, or other uncontrolled situations.

The key for reducing one's risk of injury or illness during a disaster is planning. Everyone needs a plan based on the individual, the home, geographic location, and the support of others.

This information suggests how to prepare, precautions to take, and how to deal with the experience caused by the disaster. These are questions to ask yourself and guidelines of things to prepare.

# HURRICANE WATCH

A HURRICANE WATCH means that a hurricane may threaten coastal and inland areas and that hurricane conditions are a real possibility within the next 48 hours. It does not mean that hurricane conditions are imminent, but this is the time to prepare.

Stay tuned to local stations for the latest weather information. Select a partner or buddy to share your plans.

Be sure your car is fueled and ready to go or contact the person who agreed to give you a ride in an evacuation to re-confirm your arrangements.

Gather your emergency supplies, placing them in the car or near the front door if you are riding with someone else. Store away all objects on your lawn or patio which could be picked up and carried away by the wind.

Gather important papers in your home such as birth and marriage certificates, wills, insurance policies, deeds, etc. Place them in a waterproof container with your non-perishable food supply or in a safe deposit box.

# HURRICANE WARNING

A HURRICANE WARNING is issued when a hurricane is expected to strike within 36 hours. A hurricane warning may also include an assessment of flood danger in coastal and inland areas, small craft warning, gale warnings, and recommended emergency procedures.

Stay tunes to local radio and TV stations for information on where you should go and the best items to take. Call a buddy or partner and make arrangements to leave.

Don’t panic if you can’t get a ride. In a hurricane evacuation, local emergency service personnel or police usually patrol each street to warn those people who may not have a radio or TV. You can stop one of these officers and they will help you.

Leave early! Don’t wait, especially in low laying areas. Roads can flood quickly, leaving you stranded.

If the initial effects of the storm are being felt, don’t use elevators to leave your building. The electricity could cut off and leave you stranded. Do not stay in a mobile home or recreational vehicle during a storm.

# SEVERE WEATHER TERMS

**Hurricane Season** – June 1 through November 30 is officially designated as hurricane season.

**Advisory** – A message released by the Hurricane Center, usually at 6 hours intervals, updating information on the storm or hurricane, including watches and warnings whenever they are in effect. A special advisory is a message given any time there is a significant change in weather condition.

**Tropical Depression** – A circulation at the surface of the water with a sustained wind speed of 38 miles per hour or less.

**Tropical Storm** – Distinct circulation with sustained wind speed of 39-74 miles per hour.

**Hurricane** – A tropical cyclone that rotates counterclockwise with the sustained winds of 74 miles per hour or more.

**Tropical Storm Watch** – The alert given when a tropical storm poses a threat to a coastal area within 48 hours.

**Tropical Storm Warning** – A tropical storm is expected to strike within 36 hours with sustained winds of 39-73 miles per hour.

**Hurricane Watch** – The alert given when a hurricane poses a threat to a certain coastal area within 48 hours.

**Hurricane Warning** – A hurricane is expected to strike within 36 hours with sustained winds of 74 miles per hour or more, accompanied by heavy rain and high waves.

**Storm Surge** – A rise in tide caused by a hurricane as it moves over or near the coastline. It can be much higher than the normal tide rise with breaking waves on top. (Hurricane Andrew had storm surges that were 16.9 feet. During the “no name” storm of March 1993, tides were 8 feet above normal.)

# HURRICANE PLAN

- Stage a full-scale practice so everyone knows their responsibilities.
- Have a back-up plan in case a key person is not available at the time action needs to be taken.
- Determine your evacuation status. Do you live in an evacuation zone?
- If you are in an evacuation zone, where are you going to ride out the storm?
- Protect all windows, doors, and garage doors.
- Decide where you are going to park your car.
- Determine where you are going to leave your pet.
- Make a plan to secure your boat.

# HURRICANE PLANNING TIPS

1. Learn the elevation level of your property above mean sea level. Are you in a flood zone? This information is available from your local Public Works or Emergency Management Office.
2. Prepare the materials you will need to board up and protect your house
3. Become familiar with how to turn off your main electrical breaker. You may need to disconnect power during a storm or flood.
4. Prepare your home exterior.
5. Make a list of key phone numbers for family members to carry with them. This list should include relatives, family doctors, insurance agents, employers, etc.
6. Plan a system for communicating if you get separated; perhaps an out-of-town relative could be the relay point for messages.
7. Store valuables, including insurance papers, in a secure place preferably outside your home or business.
8. Review the integrity of your roof, especially in newer homes. If you have any questions, contact an architect or structural engineer.
9. Have enough water jugs to hold seven gallons of water for each person. Water is more important than anything else for your home and business.
10. It is important that every family and business formulate a plan of action well before a hurricane strikes.

# GENERAL

1. Pre-arrange care of pets.
2. Home construction inspection.
3. Notify friends, family, and senior services of your plans.
4. Send list of friends and neighbors telephone numbers to your family in other cities. You can also send them copies of your important documents.
5. Tell family, neighbors, and service agencies where you would go to stay in an emergency.
6. Have a transportation plan for emergencies.
7. If necessary, register with your county’s special needs registry.
8. Install shutters and storm doors.
9. Test the operation of shutters and doors twice a year.
10. Test your generator making sure it is operational.

# HURRICANE KIT

*Have a two-week supply of the following items to be included in your Hurricane Kit. Items with an asterisk (*) are recommended items to bring with you to shelters.*

- ☐ Water* (2 quarts to 1 gallon per person, per day)
- ☐ Baby food*, diapers, & formula
- ☐ Battery operated radio*
- ☐ Bleach (without scents or additives)
- ☐ LED or Butane lanterns and lighters
- ☐ Cameras & film
- ☐ Candles
- ☐ Cards, games, books*
- ☐ Cleaning & sanitizing supplies
- ☐ Compass
- ☐ Duct tape
- ☐ Disposable eating utensils*
- ☐ Emergency cooking utensils (grill or camp stove)
- ☐ Emergency phone numbers
- ☐ Extension cords (heavy duty, 3 pronged)
- ☐ Extra batteries*
- ☐ Extra prescription medications
- ☐ Fire extinguisher
- ☐ First-aid kit*
- ☐ Flashlights*
- ☐ Fuel for car
- ☐ Gas for grill (fill tank)
- ☐ Heavy plastic/ tarps (to cover roof if damaged)
- ☐ Ice chest/ cooler
- ☐ Inflatable raft
- ☐ Life preservers
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Directions to shelter locations
- ☐ Matches
- ☐ Mosquito netting
- ☐ Mosquito repellent
- ☐ Needles and thread
- ☐ Non-perishable canned or packaged foods & beverages
- ☐ Non-electric clock
- ☐ Pet food
- ☐ Plastic trash bags
- ☐ Rope (100ft)
- ☐ Sleeping bags
- ☐ Sterno – cooking fuel
- ☐ Personal toiletries
- ☐ Tools: crowbar, sledgehammer, leather cloves, hammer, nails
- ☐ Valuables
- ☐ Water purification tablets
- ☐ Water jugs

*If you live in an evacuation zone, make sure your hurricane kit is portable and take it with you!*

# INSIDE YOUR HOME

1. If you are going to stay at home prepare a SAFE ROOM where you will ride out the storm. Normally a large interior closet, hallway or an interior bathroom with no windows is acceptable.
2. Equip your safe room with a battery-operated radio or TV (be sure to have extra batteries), chairs, sleeping bags or cushions, snacks, drinking water, towels and fire extinguishers.
3. Put important papers in a waterproof container.
4. Have a mattress ready to move into your safe room if advised to do so by authorities. You will only have to do this in an extremely severe storm.
5. Turn your refrigerator and freezer to their coolest setting. Freeze water in plastic jugs and use them to fill empty spaces in your refrigerator and freezer to help keep food cold.
6. Fill clean, sanitary jugs with tap water for drinking. You'll need SEVEN GALLONS of water PER PERSON. Sterilize the jugs by putting a little plain chlorine bleach in some water, sloshing it around, and rinsing thoroughly.
7. Sanitize the bathtub and caulk drains before filling. Use this for bathing and sanitary purposes. Keep a bucket handy to flush the toilet in the event the water supply or water pressure is lost.
8. Plan for unusable sewage systems. Make a temporary toilet with a plastic bucket, toilet seat, plastic bags, bag tie, and disinfectant.
9. Purchase an extra supply of prescription medications, enough to last a month. Pharmacies may be closed for an extended period.
10. Purchase a manual can opener.
11. Have extra garbage bags on hand. Garbage service may not be restored for days.

# OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

1. Take down TV antennas, remove roof turbines, replace the turbines with a metal cap.
2. Fill the gas tank in your vehicle. Service stations may be out of service after the storm.
3. Prune trees of weak or dead branches. Remove fruit from trees.
4. Board up windows. If you don't have the supplies for this, simply apply duct tape or masking tape in x's on your windows. This will not stop anything from breaking the window but can help with keeping the glass from shattering. Tape windows and door edges to stop water entry.
5. Clear debris from your yard.
6. Bring in any loose furniture you may have outside. Do not drain the pool and add extra chlorine.
7. Remove tie down awnings and shutters. Keep all windows closed during the storm.

8. Brace garage door from the inside.
9. Disconnect propane gas tank and turn off the mail gas line.
10. Purchase plenty of bug repellent. Mosquitoes swarm due to the standing water that accumulates after a hurricane.

## MOBILE HOMES

1. It is impossible to make a mobile home safe to stay in during a hurricane. You should be ready to evacuate if a hurricane approaches.
2. Anchor outdoor accessories and bring any loose items like grills or garbage cans inside.
3. Tape windows and mirrors so they do not shatter.
4. Shut off fuel lines at the tank and disconnect electrical, sewer, and water lines. Leave your faucets open and shut off the gas.
5. If possible, position your mobile home with the narrow end facing the prevailing winds so the full side of your house is not being hit by the full force of wind.

## PROTECT YOUR RESIDENCE

Rinse your tub in a solution of bleach and water. Your tub can store water that can be used to flush the toilet. Don't over look the hot water heater as a source of water. Be very cautious if you decide to use this source of water. Turn off the hot water intake valve prior to the storm and be sure to fill up the tank again before turning the heater back on.

- Fill your tub and clean containers with fresh water.
- To prevent a slow leak of water, make a seal from melted wax to cover the tub drain outlet.

In the hours before leaving, turn the freezer and refrigerator to the highest settings and do not open unless necessary. Place water containers in unused freezer space to help retain cold temperatures for a longer period.

## WHEN TO LEAVE

1. Turn off your electricity at the main switch and the main gas line as well as the main water source.
2. Unplug electrical appliances.
3. If you are unable to turn off your utilities yourself, arrange for a friend or neighbor to help.
4. Cover windows and glass doors with storm shutters or plywood. If there are homes with barrel tile roofs in your neighborhood, these can fly like missiles during a storm.

5. Close curtains, blinds and shutters to help deflect broken glass and flying objects
6. Move furniture away from windows if possible.
7. Cover your furniture with plastic. Identify someone to help with these activities if you are not able due to lack of strength or mobility.
8. If you leave, lock all doors and windows. During the height of the storm, keep windows and doors tightly closed.
9. Be sure that neighbors and the agencies that provide you with services are informed about where you are going.

## INSIDE YOUR BUSINESS

*Prevent loss of income and loss from damages by being prepared*

1. Have a disaster plan on file.
2. Identify and protect vital records. Back up computer files.
3. Carefully review your insurance protection plan. Pay special attention to your business interruption coverage. Be sure you have replacement coverage. Video tape or photograph all equipment and/or inventory for permanent records.
4. Develop a hurricane staffing policy that identifies essential employees who will remain at the business as long as it is safe and necessary. Remember, if the business is in an evacuation zone, the law says it must be evacuated.
5. Let employees know in advance when they will be released from work responsibilities to handle personal hurricane preparation.
6. If possible, set up an emergency phone number out of the area (perhaps at a company branch office) that employees can call to get information on your business. Long distance calls are much easier to make than local calls after a storm.
7. Consider handling payroll before employees leave to prepare their homes. Many of them will need the money immediately after the storm.
8. Have an aggressive program that encourages each employee to have his or her own hurricane plan.
9. Prepare your facility by securing hazardous materials; turn off electricity, gas and water. Seal up windows and doors.
10. Have cash and blank checks with you in case you need money immediately after the storm.
11. Make plans for securing the business before and after the storm.
12. Check all your battery-operated equipment, including radios, flashlights, emergency lights, and communication systems. If you have a generator, check its operation before the storm.

# HURRICANE CHECK-LIST FOR POSTS ON THE OCEAN

- 100 gallons of water (can be obtained 72 hours ahead of time) or enough water for 50 people for a week
- Water purification tablets
- Blankets – enough for 50 people
- Food (nonperishable) – enough for 50 people for 5 days. When people come to the Post, ask them to bring in nonperishable food to build up your inventory
- Five 20lb bottles of LP gas grills
- Heavy plastic to cover the roof and/or windows after the storm
- Battery operated radios and extra batteries
- LED or gas lanterns and fuel for them
- Six large first aid kits
- Candles
- Duct tape
- Have as much cash on hand as is safe. After the storm ATMs may not work
- Make plans for security of the Post before and after the storm
- Cellular phones, charging cords, and portable battery chargers (if the power goes out you will want to conserve the power on your devices)
- Insurance information on Post
- Extension cords (heavy duty 3 prong)

Please try to have your Post hard wired with a standard 3 prong dyer plug on the outside of the Post in a waterproof box to a 30-amp pole breaker in your main power supply box from the power company.

## TIPS FOR BOAT OWNERS

1. Make a list of everything you might need to secure your boat. Assemble the supplies in advance.
2. Remove as much gear as possible, including electrical equipment, outboard motors, sails, awnings, and compasses.
3. Latch down anything that can be blown around and become a hazard.
4. The best precaution is to get your vessel out of the water and store it in a garage or other secure building.

## BOATS ON TRAILERS

1. Pick a safe location and then deflate the trailer tires.
2. Tie the boat to the most secure objects available or to ground anchors using one-half or five-eighths line.
3. Secure the trailer axles and tie the boat from the tow line in the bow and side cleat. Boats trailered at marinas may need to be moved to a safe location. Check your lease and consult the marina.

## BOATS OFF TRAILERS

1. Remove the outboard motor and as much electrical equipment as possible. Fill the bottom of the boat to weigh it down. Some boats may be damaged by being filled with water so be sure to check with the manufacturer or dealer if in doubt. Inboard should never be filled with water.
2. Using a one-half or five-eighths line, tie the boat from the tow line in the bow and side cleats to the most secure object available or to ground anchors.

## SECURING YOUR BOAT ON THE WATER

1. Take your boat as far inland as possible.
2. Before a storm, make a test run to make sure the water is deep enough and overhead clearances are adequate.
3. Many marinas must be evacuated during a hurricane alert so check with the dock master.
4. Fill fuel tanks. Make sure bilge pumps and all drains are in good working order. Make sure the boat is as watertight as possible.
5. Use lines of at least one-half to five-eighths of an inch in diameter.
6. Use double lines on the bow and stern to secure the boat to objects on the ground. Use spring lines (three times the boat length) at the cleats alongside of the boat. Spring lines go from the stern toward the bow and from the bow to the stern. Fasten them to secure objects on the ground.

7. Mooring and anchor lines should include plenty of slack because tides may be 10 to 20 feet above normal or more.
8. Use chafing gear on all lines.
9. Anchors should be 25 pounds or heavier and set in at three directions. They should be able to hold despite reversing winds.

## PROTECT YOUR PETS

*Many people have companion pets which they don't want to leave during an emergency. People have died during hurricanes because they would not leave their pets.*

- Pets are not allowed in evacuation shelters, except for guide dogs. Shelters have large numbers of people and limited facilities, and pets become a safety and public health concern.
- You should plan about what to do with your pet in an emergency.
- Board your pet in a kennel in a safe location. Long before a hurricane strikes, call kennels and veterinarians in several different areas to learn what emergency arrangements they offer. Some humane societies also provide emergency shelters but call to make sure. Pets housed in kennels should come with their own food.
- Update your pet's immunizations. Kennels will not except pets that are behind on shots. Keep the paperwork documenting immunization in the important papers you are collecting as part of your disaster planning.
- Take your pet with you if you do not need to go to a shelter. Have carrying cages for each pet and bring food, a toy, blanket, leash, and medications.
- Have current identifications on each pet so you can be reunited if separated. Cats and dogs wear collars, birds have bands and snakes and lizards can be tattooed.
- Exotic pets are best left with friends or relatives outside the storm threatened area. They do not do well in evacuation. If they are accidentally set free they can die or cause other problems
- Leave your pet at home alone only as a last resort. Leave it with food and water for several days in a secure area of your home, away from windows and with access to high places such as counter tops or bed in case of flooding. If this is your only option, be sure the pet is placed in an interior room. Do not leave cats and dogs together, no matter how friendly they normally are.
- Livestock, like horses, can be left in open pastures.

## PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

- Plan on taking care of yourself without electricity.

- If you are elderly, frail, or handicapped and have friends or relatives that can help, contact them NOW so that you are part of their hurricane plan.
- Make a list of any prescribed medications.
- If you stay elsewhere during the storm, discuss when you will be picked up. Allow time to gather items you will need to take along.
- If you are in a battery-operated wheelchair, transfer to a manual wheelchair before the storm. You may not be able to recharge the batteries.
- If you are elderly, frail or handicapped and normally need help with your transportation or other needs from social services agencies, contact your county Special Needs Register NOW. The registry is at each county's Office of Emergency Management. These offices provide transportation assistance to public shelters for individuals with physical or psychological limitations. Public shelters, however, are a last resort.
- If you or a family member requires electricity for life support equipment or need special supplies, discuss this NOW with your physician. You may want to consider buying a generator for the period after the storm.
- If you, a friend or relative are living in a nursing home, insist on a written hurricane plan that details: IF, WHEN, and WHERE residents will be evacuated.
- All nursing home patients should wear a bracelet indicating their name, medications, allergies, contact information.

## DURING THE DISASTER WATCH PERIOD

- Check medication supply.
- Replenish batteries.
- Fill prescriptions.
- Fill gas tank.
- Move car to a safe area.
- If you do not drive, have your transportation confirmed.
- Cash a check or have travelers checks on hand.
- Double-check your emergency suitcase.
- Clean and fill bathtub with water.
- Fill containers with clean water.
- Pick up loose objects outside.
- Move furniture away from windows, cover furniture with plastic.
- Pull curtains, blinds, shutters.
- Call family and friends and tell them your plans.
- Make hotel reservations and get confirmation number.
- Have perishable foods:
    - crackers, dry cereal, granola bars, bread.
    - nuts, peanut butter.
    - dry milk.

- Have canned or bottled juices.
- Have paper plates, napkins, and utensils.
- Get bottled water (at least two quarts of water per person per day for seven days).

# EVACUATION

*If your area is under an evacuation order – evacuate immediately*

1. Shelters will be open when the evacuation order is made.
2. If accessible, turn off gas appliances at their individual shut-off valves inside your home. Do not turn off at the outside meter.
3. Eat before leaving your home because meals may not be immediately available at the shelter.
4. You may be required to present proof of residency before re-entering an evacuation area after the storm, so be sure to bring a driver's license or utility bill with you.
5. Bring important documents and insurance papers with you.
6. Special shelters are available for people who require constant medical supervision.
7. Keep all receipts pertaining to evacuation or displacement.

# EVACUATION PERIOD

**Items to take with you:**

- Emergency suitcase.
- Personal identification (driver's license, etc.).
- Post your name, number, and the location where you will be staying and have it visible somewhere in your house.
- Plastic bags with towels, blankets, pillows, and change of clothes.
- Foldable law chair.
- Place the following items in a plastic pail:
    - Tissues, trash bags, liquid detergent and disinfectant.
- Health insurance cards.
- Flashlight.
- Batteries.
- Battery operated radio.
- Bug repellent.
- Sunscreen.
- Personal hygiene items:
    - Toothpaste and toothbrush.
    - Dentures, glasses, hearing aids.

- Deodorant.
- Soap.
- Shaving equipment.
- Washcloths and hand towels.
- Tissues, moist towelettes, and toilet paper.
- Change of clothes.
- Disposable incontinence supplies and other supplies if you will be providing care to a frail family member or friend.

**List of Numbers and important papers:**

- Insurance policies.
- Bank and savings account.
- Mortgages.
- Birth certificate.
- Identification papers.
- List of phone numbers of friends, family, physician, pharmacy, care giver, and business contacts.
- Copy of all prescriptions.
- Video, photographs and/or written record of your home's contents.
- Irreplaceable photos, videos and family heirlooms.

**Store two-week supply of food and liquid:**

- Special dietary needs.
- Small cans of meat and fish.
- Canned fruit.
- Crackers.
- Dry cereal.
- Granola bars.
- Bread.
- Canned or bottled juices.
- Nuts.
- Peanut butter.
- Dry milk.
- Paper plates, napkins, and utensils.
- Bottled water.
- Plastic bags.
- Water purification tablets.

# AFTER THE STORM PASSES

- Stay away from down power lines.
- Only re-enter evacuated areas when the authorities have said it is safe to return
- Before entering your house, check for structural damage to make sure it is not going to collapse. Turn off any outside gas at the meter or tank to let your house air out for a few minutes.
- Keep electricity off until you are certain there is no danger of electrocution, do not use appliances or motors that have gotten wet until they are checked out by a professional. Use battery operated flashlights when re-entering the house.
- Watch for snakes and other small animals that may have gotten into your house.

- Watch where you step because floors may be slippery and covered with debris.
- Do not drink tap water immediately after a hurricane.
- Use the phone only for emergencies. Dial 911 for life threatening situations only.

**Cleaning up:**

- Do not wait for the city or county to clean up the street. If possible, get able-bodied neighbors together to clear a path for traffic and emergency vehicles.
- Solid waste departments will pick up trash as soon as possible. Priority is given to household garbage, so separate it from other trash and debris. If you fail to separate your garbage you could create a health risk and attract rodents and animals.
- Make temporary repairs as soon as possible to keep further damage from occurring to your home. Make sure you document the damages with photos
- Most insurance policies will pay for these temporary repairs. Know your insurance policies and keep all receipts.
- If you hire an individual or business to help you with repairs, check to make sure that they have a current license, are properly insured, and possess a permit authorizing them to do the work. This is for your own protection.
- NEVER PAY THE ENTIRE AMOUNT BEFORE THE REPAIRS ARE COMPLETE.
- Get receipts for EVERYTHING.

# GENERATOR SAFETY

*The primary hazards to avoid when using a generator are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning from the toxic engine exhaust, electric shock or electrocution, and fire. Follow the directions supplied with the generator.*

**What size will you need:**

1. Add up the power requirements of the appliances and devices you will want to use. (Check the back and sides for a label with this info).
2. Add up the wattage od all the light bulbs you will use.
3. Find the total amps you need by dividing watts by volts.
4. Choose a generator that produces more amps than you need – some machines draw up to 3 times as much power when starting up, and other lose efficiency over time. The best option is a permanently installed stationary generator.

**Using a generator at home:**

- Keep the generator dry and do not use in the rain or wet conditions. Operate it on a dry surface under an open canopy-like structure. Do not touch the generator with wet hands.

- Turn the generator off and let it cool down before refueling. Gasoline spilled on hot engine parts could ignite.
- Store fuel for the generator in an approved safety can. Store the fuel outside in a locked shed or other protected area. Do not store near a fuel-burning appliance
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy duty, outdoor extension cord.
- Do not plug the generator into a wall outlet. Known as “back feeding,” this practice puts utility workers, your neighbors and your household at risk of electrocution.
- If necessary, stagger the operating times for various equipment to prevent overloads.

**Prevent Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning**

- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area.
- Keep these devices outdoors, away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- Opening doors and windows or using fans will not prevent CO buildup in the home. Although CO can't be seen or smelled, it can rapidly lead to full incapacitation and death. Even if you cannot smell exhaust fumes, you may still be exposed to CO. If you start to feel sick, dizzy, or weak while using a generator, get to fresh air RIGHT AWAY - DO NOT DELAY.
- Install CO alarms in central locations on every level of your home and outside sleeping areas to provide early warning of accumulating carbon monoxide. Test the batteries frequently and replace when needed.
- If the carbon monoxide alarm sounds, move quickly to a fresh air location outdoors or by an open window or door.
- Call for help from the fresh air location and remain there until emergency personnel arrive to assist you.

# WEATHER WEBSITES

- Weather Bug – Local and National Weather Forecasting

  https://www.weatherbug.com/
- AccuWeather Forecasting: https://www.accuweather.com/
- Wunder Ground Forecasting: https://www.wunderground.com/
- Weather Wiz Kids: https://www.weatherwizkids.com/
- Caribbean Hurricane Network: https://stormcarib.com/
- The Weather Channel: https://weather.com/

- National Hurricane Center: https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/
- Web Weather for Kids: https://eo.ucar.edu/webweather/
- Hurricane City: http://www.hurricanecity.com/
- Florida Disaster/ State Emergency Response Team (SERT): https://floridadisaster.org
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): https://www.fema.gov/
- The American Red Cross: https://www.redcross.org/
- American Legion, National Emergency Fund: https://www.legion.org/emergency

# HURRICANE RESOURCES

*After a natural disaster, there are federal, state, and American Legion programs available to assist you in your time of recovery. A full list of resources can be found at https://www.floridalegion.org/relief.*

**Tips for Getting Assistance:**

1. After a natural disaster, your first step should be to register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The sooner you can get on their lists, the sooner you can receive aid.
2. Contact your insurance to put in a claim. Having your insurance paperwork will come in handy when completing forms to receive assistance, such as NEF.
3. Save as many receipts as you can from the time you evacuate until you return. If you can't get receipts, bank or credit card statements can be used.
4. Take photos of your property as soon as you return home.

**National Emergency Fund (NEF):**

Eligibility:

1. Eligibility is open to Legionnaires members (up to $3,000) and Legion Posts (up to $10,000).
2. Applicant must have been under a mandatory evacuation or displaced from their primary residence due to damage sustained during a declared natural disaster.
3. Not meant to replace or repair items, only to meet most immediate needs (i.e., temporary housing, food, water, clothing, diapers, etc.) during the period immediately following the disaster.
4. Does not cover insurance compensation or monetary losses from a business, structures on your property (barns, tool sheds, etc.,) equipment or vehicles.
5. Membership must be active at time of disaster and the time of application.

Application Requirements:

1. Application must be submitted to the Department Headquarters within 90 days of disaster.
2. Disaster must be a “declared” natural disaster for Legion Family members.
3. Supporting data (photos, receipts, repair estimates, etc.) should be included or statements (testimony) from post/district/department officers attesting to damages to residence requiring displacement.
4. Only one grant per household per disaster.
5. Post grants must derive from a declared natural disaster and substantiating documentation must provide that The American Legion post will cease to perform the duties and activities in the community due to losses sustained.

How to Submit:
Please send completed applications and required supporting documentation to:
Mail: The American Legion, Department of Florida
ATTN: Hurricane Relief
P.O. Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854
Email: relief@floridalegion.org
Fax: 407-299-090

**Temporary Financial Assistance (TFA) Grants:**

Eligibility:

The minor child must not be older than 17, or 20 if still enrolled in high school or is physically handicapped. The minor child must be the biological child, stepchild, or in the legal custody of, a qualifying veteran. A qualifying veteran is defined as a member of the United States Armed Forces serving on federal orders current under Title 10 of the United States Code, inclusive of all components, OR any veteran possessing an up-to-date membership in The American Legion. Active-duty applicants can be considered without being a member of The American Legion. A single onetime non-repayable Temporary Financial Assistance grant of up to $2,500 will be permitted for the minor child(ren) of a qualifying veteran. No child can be considered eligible until a complete investigation is conducted at the post or department level, a legitimate family need is determined, and all other available assistance resources have been utilized or exhausted. For more information or to apply, members will start by contacting their local American Legion post, or Department Headquarters, or visit the website https://www.legion.org/tfa.

How to Submit:

Please send completed applications and required supporting documentation by fax, 407-299-0901, or to caseworker@floridalegion.org

**PROJECT: VetRelief Emergency Assistance:**

Eligibility:

1. Support is available for active-duty military, our veterans and their families.
2. Service members must be classified as having an honorable discharge or honorable separation, or general under honorable conditions.
3. Applicants must show income sustainability.
4. Must be a Florida resident for at least 120 days.
5. Membership in The American Legion is NOT required to receive assistance.

Application Requirements:

This abbreviated application process is just for the duration of the current natural disaster. Attach the following documents and submit with the application. The PROJECT: VetRelief Veteran Services Director will contact you to complete the application process:

1. DD-214, member 4 copy – Must show Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions for discharge
2. Driver's license or proof of residency
3. Marriage certificates and/or birth certificates (if applicable)

*Assistance for this relief effort will be given in the form of food gift cards.*

How to Submit:

Please send completed applications and required supporting documentation to:

Mail: The American Legion, Department of Florida
ATTN: Hurricane Relief
P.O. Box 547859
Orlando, FL 32854

Email: applications@projectvetrelief.org

Fax: 407-299-0901

**Auxiliary Emergency Fund:**

The Auxiliary Emergency Fund (AEF) is a national grant assistance program that provides temporary emergency assistance to eligible members of the American Legion Auxiliary who have endured a significant financial setback as the result of an act of nature or other personal crisis.

Application for Members Affected by Natural Disaster:

An Auxiliary Emergency Fund grant may provide immediate emergency assistance to American Legion Auxiliary members in areas devastated by a natural disaster, such as fire, flood, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, or other severe weather. The applicant must have received damage to the primary residence and/or been displaced or evacuated from the residence and had out-of-pocket expenses for food, clothing, and shelter. Grants may be awarded up to $2,400.

Basic criteria for qualification:
The applicant must be an American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) member. Applicant must have maintained ALA membership for three consecutive years (the current year and immediate past two years). Application must be received within 6 months of disaster. One grant per grantee in a 12-month period will be awarded.

For more information or to apply, visit the website https://alafl.org/emergency-fund/

# EMERGENCY REFERENCE INFORMATION

| Emergency Reference Card for Individuals with Medical Needs Living at home & their caregivers | | |
|---|---|---|
| Name: | DOB: | Blood Type: |
| Street Address: | | |
| City: | State: | Zip Code: |

| Personal medical information that emergency responders need to know: | | |
|---|---|---|
| Allergies I have: | | |
| Medications I take: | | |
| | | |
| Prescription Name: | Dosage (Ex. 50mg) | Frequency (Ex. Twice a day) |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| Vaccination Type: | Dose/ Units: | Date Given (month/year) |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

| Special Needs (eye glasses, hearing aids, mobility assistive devices, language translation needs, etc.) |
|---|
| |
| |

| Emergency Phone Numbers (if not 911) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Local Dept:** | **Phone #:** | **Emergency Contacts/ Name:** | | **Phone #:** |
| **Ambulance** | | **Doctor** | | |
| **Fire** | | **Doctor** | | |
| **Police** | | **Doctor** | | |
| **County Health** | | **Clinic/ Facility** | | |
| **Emergency Mgmt.** | | **Pharmacist** | | |
| **Local Red Cross** | | **Dentist** | | |
| **Local Shelter** | | **Veterinarian** | | |

| Family & Friends – Emergency Contacts | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Relationship:** | **Name:** | **Phone #:** | **Relationship:** | **Name:** | **Phone #:** |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

# Emergency Reference Card
## Household Emergency Information

| Contact information for household members. Please fill this section out and keep it up to date | |
|---|---|
| **Name:** | **Name:** |
| **DOB:** **Social Security #:** | |
| **Business/ School Evacuation Location:** | |
| **Medical Info:** | |
| **Work, School, Other Address & Phone Numbers:** | |
| | |
| | |
| **Name:** | **Name:** |
| **DOB:** **Social Security #:** | |
| **Business/ School Evacuation Location:** | |
| **Medical Info:** | |
| **Work, School, Other Address & Phone Numbers:** | |
| | |
| | |

| Medical Info: | Name: | Phone #: | Policy #: |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Doctor:** | | | |
| **Other:** | | | |
| **Pharmacist:** | | | |
| **Medical Insurance:** | | | |
| **Home Owners/ Rental Insurance:** | | | |
| **Fire House #:** | **Fire House Phone #:** | | |
| **Police Precinct #:** | **Police Precinct Phone #:** | | |

| Household Disaster Plan |
|---|
| Home Meeting Address: |
| |
| Home Meeting Phone #: |
| Neighborhood Meeting Address: |
| |
| Neighborhood Meeting Phone #: |
| (Fold Here) |
| |
| Other Info: |
| Contact Phone #: |
| |
| Contact Address: |
| Out of state Contact Name: |

| Household Disaster Plan |
|---|
| Home Meeting Address: |
| |
| Home Meeting Phone #: |
| Neighborhood Meeting Address: |
| |
| Neighborhood Meeting Phone #: |
| (Fold Here) |
| |
| Other Info: |
| Contact Phone #: |
| |
| Contact Address: |
| Out of state Contact Name: |

# Atlantic Basin Hurricane Tracking Chart

## National Hurricane Center, Miami, Florida

