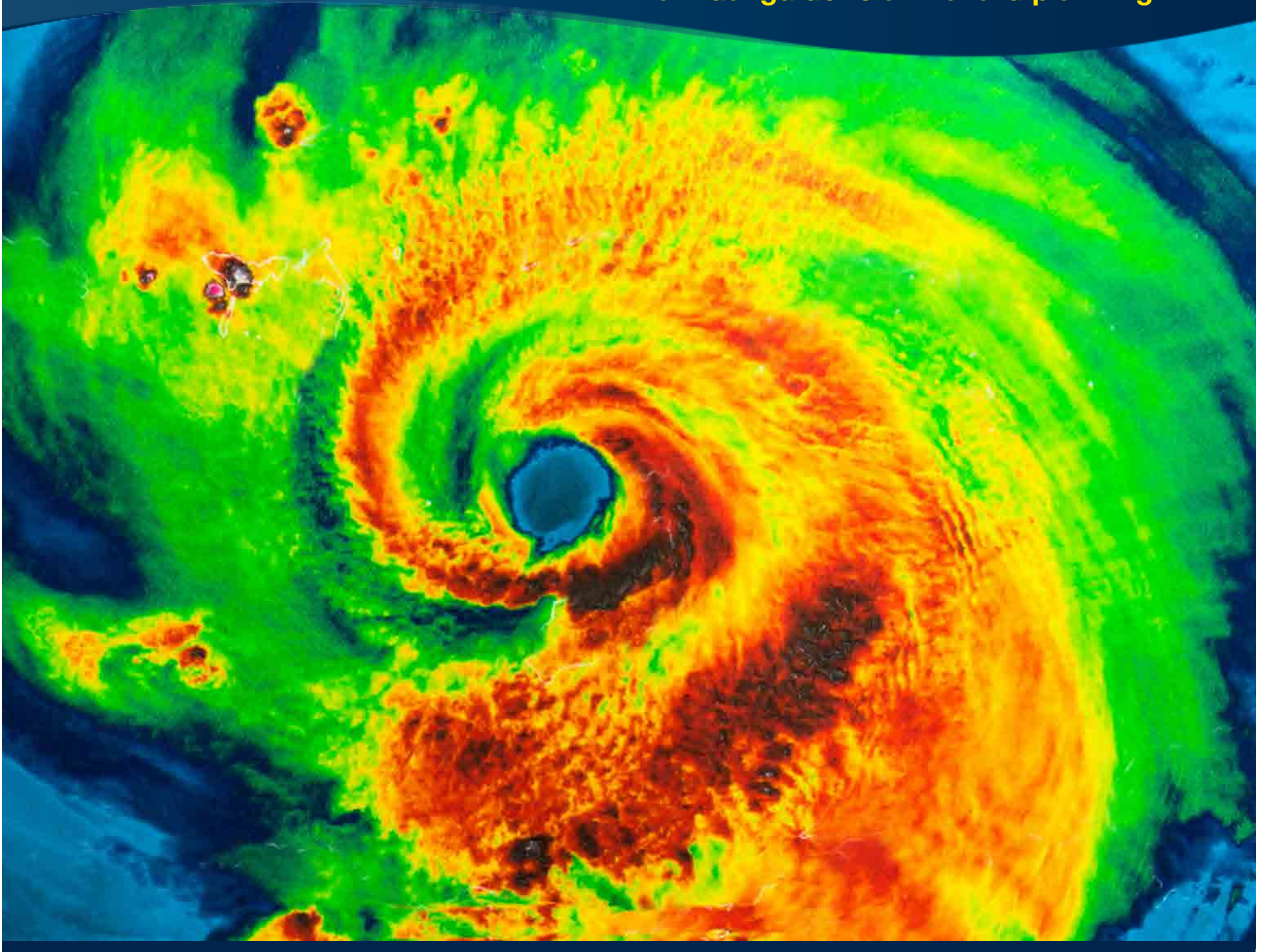




# HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE 2020

An annual guide to all-hazard planning



## Inside

Stay Informed: Connect to Emergency Information . . . . .	Page 2	Build An Emergency Preparedness Kit . . . . .	Page 10
Know Your Zone/Evacuation Map . . . . .	Page 3	Prepare Your Business . . . . .	Page 11
Flood, Wind & High-rise Buildings . . . . .	Page 4	What Does "In The Cone" Mean? . . . . .	Page 12
Evacuation . . . . .	Page 5	When The Storm Is Here, What To Expect . . . . .	Page 13
Evacuation Options . . . . .	Page 6	When The Storm Has Passed . . . . .	Page 14
Public Shelters/Special Needs . . . . .	Page 7	Other Hazard Preparations . . . . .	Page 15
Plan For Your Pets & Boat . . . . .	Page 8	Important Contacts . . . . .	Back Cover
Prepare Your Home/Rental Properties . . . . .	Page 9		

Do you need this information in Spanish or Vietnamese? Call us at (727) 464-3800, or visit: [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/allhazardguide.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/allhazardguide.htm)



# HOW DO I PREPARE TO SURVIVE A DISASTER?



## Stay informed

Due to COVID-19 evacuation zones and shelter openings may vary. Please stay informed when a storm is threatening by visiting [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)

Be sure to have at least two places where you can get alerts and dependable updates:

### Alerts

- **Alert Pinellas** - Sign up to receive emergency notifications by phone, text or email. [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas)
- **NOAA Weather Alert Radio** - Automatic alerts from the National Weather Service when dangerous weather is in your area.

### Social media

- Get county news and updates from Pinellas County Government's official Facebook and Twitter accounts.
- **Facebook** for Pinellas County Government [www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews](http://www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews)
- **Twitter** [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com) for Pinellas County Government @PinellasCoNews
- **Twitter** for Pinellas County Emergency Management @PinellasEM
  - Twitter for Pinellas Traffic @pinellastraffic
- **Nextdoor** - A private social network, where you can see news and updates from Pinellas County and other official agencies. [www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com)
- Be sure that the news you are getting from social media is from a trusted source.

### Apps

- **Ready Pinellas** - A personalized planning tool. Look up your evacuation zone, create your own emergency plan, and access checklists to prepare before a storm. Download free on your mobile device (see back page).
- **News media** - Find news, weather and get alerts from the major news outlets.

### Website

- **Pinellas County website** - Find tips on preparedness before the storm, updates throughout the storm and information after the storm. [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)

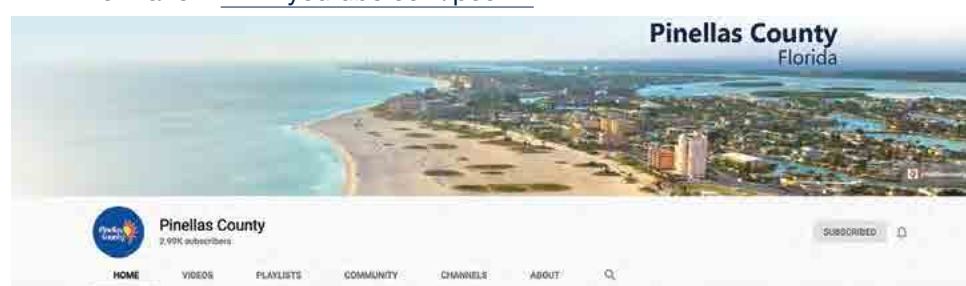
### Electronic newsletter

- **E-Lert** - Sign up to receive an electronic newsletter and learn more about preparedness. The e-Lert is emailed monthly during the Hurricane Season, June to November. [www.pinellascounty.org/news\\_subscription.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/news_subscription.htm)

### County television

- **Pinellas County Connection Television (PCC-TV)** - Info on county programs and services, general preparedness and live updates during emergencies from the Emergency Operations Center. Watch it on Spectrum 637, WOW! 18 or Frontier 44.

- **YouTube** for Pinellas County Government has videos on general hurricane information. [www.youtube.com/pcctv1](http://www.youtube.com/pcctv1)



### Our contact information

- **During emergencies, the Citizen Information Center is open. Call (727) 464-4333.**
- For more information, call Pinellas County Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800 or email [ema@pinellascounty.org](mailto:ema@pinellascounty.org).

### Other county numbers

**Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County**  
(727) 824-6900  
[www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com)

**Pinellas County Animal Services**  
(727) 582-2600  
[www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices)

**Pinellas County Consumer Protection**  
(727) 464-6200  
[www.pinellascounty.org/consumer](http://www.pinellascounty.org/consumer)

**Pinellas County Economic Development**  
(727) 464-7332  
[www.pced.org](http://www.pced.org)

**Pinellas County Information Line**  
(727) 464-3000 / V/TDD (727) 464-4062  
[www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)

**Pinellas County Schools**  
(727) 588-6000  
School Bus Info Line  
(727) 587-2020  
[www.pcsb.org](http://www.pcsb.org)

**Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (non-emergency)**  
(727) 582-6200  
[www.pcsoweb.com](http://www.pcsoweb.com)

**Pinellas County Solid Waste**  
(727) 464-7500  
[www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste](http://www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste)

**Pinellas County Utilities**  
(727) 464-4000  
[www.pinellascounty.org/utilities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities)

**Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)**  
(727) 540-1900  
[www.psta.net](http://www.psta.net)

**St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport**  
(727) 453-7800  
[www.fly2pie.com](http://www.fly2pie.com)

**Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater**  
(Hotel/motel evacuation info inside county)  
[www.visitstpeteclearwater.com](http://www.visitstpeteclearwater.com)



# Know your risk

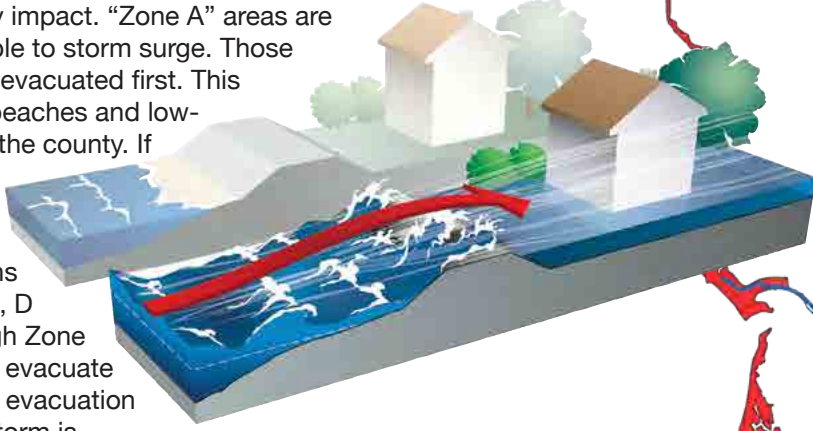
## Storm Surge

Water threats such as storm surge and flooding are life-threatening situations.

Evacuations are based on the amount of storm surge that is predicted for the approaching hurricane.

**Storm surge is water that is pushed from the Gulf of Mexico onto the land by the force of the wind.** It happens quickly and is powerful, rushing over land and overtaking everything in its path.

There are five zones for evacuation based on where the surge may impact. "Zone A" areas are most vulnerable to storm surge. Those in Zone A are evacuated first. This includes the beaches and low-lying areas in the county. If the storm is large enough we may call for evacuations of Zones B, C, D and up through Zone E. You should evacuate outside of the evacuation areas. Each storm is different so it is critical that you stay informed.



Because evacuations take time to ensure everyone can get to safety, they are called well in advance of the storm. Evacuations have a beginning and end time. You must be in your safe shelter by the end of the evacuation period to make sure you are safe before the storm surge and high winds arrive.

Evacuation orders issued by Pinellas County are for the entire county, including cities and unincorporated areas.

Listen closely to the evacuation order to see if your zone is included. If it is not included, you do not need to evacuate based on storm surge.

## Know your zone

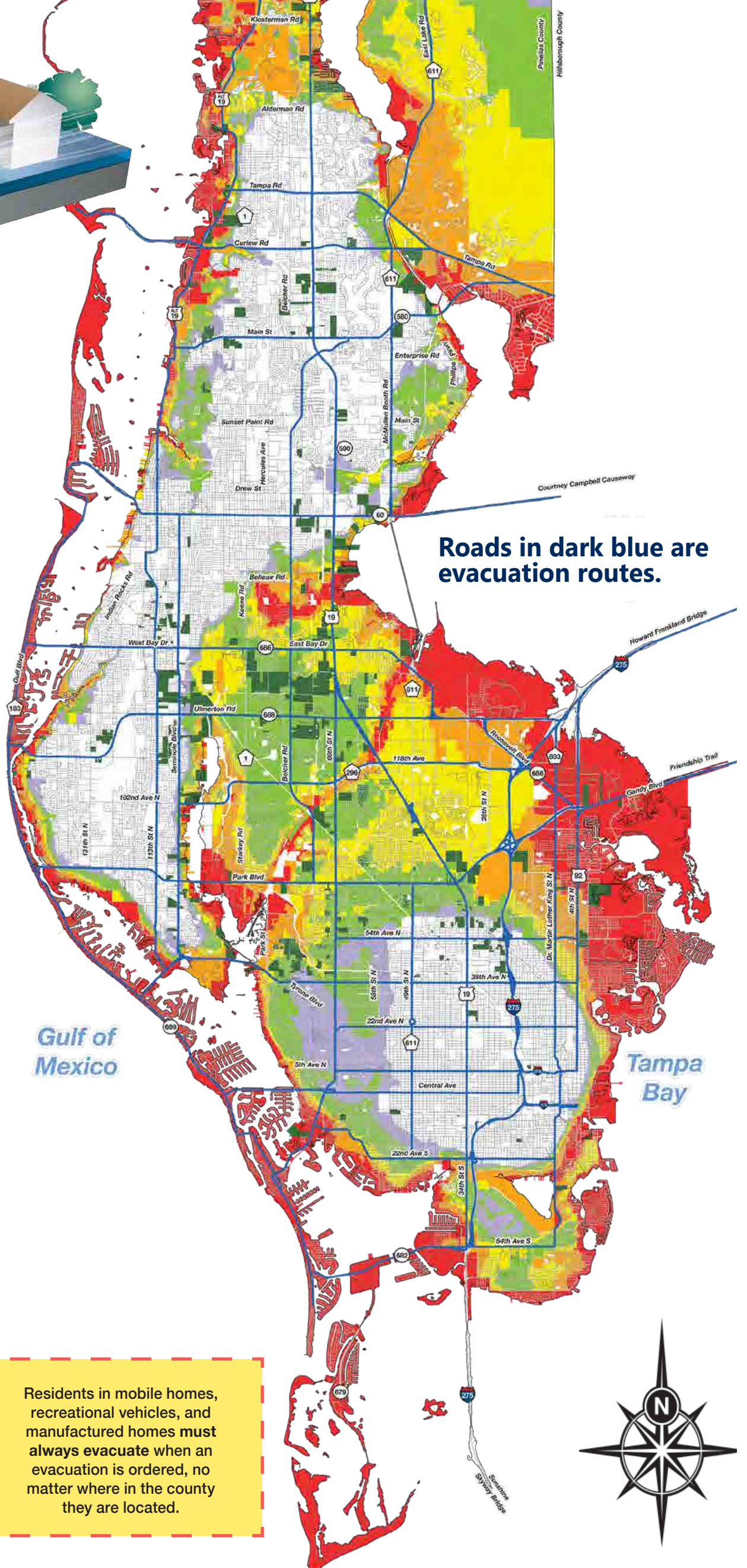
There are several ways to find out your evacuation zone:

- [www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone](http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone)
- Ready Pinellas mobile app
- Utility bill (*Pinellas County Utilities customers, some cities*)
- Property Appraiser records
- (727) 453-3150 (*landlines only*)

If you live in or have businesses in a "non-evacuation zone," you will not be ordered to evacuate (*with the exception of mobile and manufactured homes*)

## What's the difference between evacuation zones & flood zones?

EVACUATION ZONES	FLOOD ZONES
Based on Tropical Storm and Hurricane scenarios	Based on the probability of flooding from heavy rain or high tides
Based on ground elevation and proximity to water	Based on flood risk over period of years for insurance and building purposes
Determined by the National Hurricane Center	Set by the Federal Emergency Management Agency
Look up online at: <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone">www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone</a>	Look up online at: <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/maps.htm">www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/maps.htm</a>



**EVACUATION GUIDELINES**  
*(mobile homes MUST always evacuate)*

Potential Surge Heights (in feet)

A	<b>Up to 11'</b>	Evacuate red areas and all mobile homes
B	<b>Up to 15'</b>	Evacuate red and orange areas and all mobile homes
C	<b>Up to 20'</b>	Evacuate red and orange areas and all mobile homes
D	<b>Up to 28'</b>	Evacuate red, orange, yellow and green areas and all mobile homes
E	<b>Up to 35'</b>	Evacuate red, orange, yellow, green and purple areas and all mobile homes

Areas shown in white are non-evacuation zones.

Evacuation Routes

## My evacuation zone is



Residents in mobile homes, recreational vehicles, and manufactured homes must **always** evacuate when an evacuation is ordered, no matter where in the county they are located.







## Flood

Hurricane evacuation zones and flood zones are not the same thing. You can live in an area that is in a non-evacuation zone based on storm surge, but everyone is in a flood zone, which may be high, moderate or low flood risk.

It is important to check both your evacuation zone and your flood zone. Look up both at [www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/maps.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/maps.htm).

Hurricanes, tropical storms and other severe weather can cause high tides, flooding and other drainage problems in Pinellas County. Just a few inches of rain over a short period of time can present flood hazards. Also, multiple days of rain can have a lasting impact. Low lying areas can be especially vulnerable during these events.

## Insurance

Not all insurance policies are created equal. Check your policy or talk to your agent to make sure you've got sufficient coverage and to determine if any home improvements would qualify for a discount on premiums.

- Homeowner insurance policies DO NOT cover damage from rising flood waters or storm surge. If you own a home in a high risk flood zone, your mortgage company will likely require you to carry a separate flood policy.
- Anywhere it rains it can flood. About 25 percent of flood insurance claims occur outside of high risk flood zones. If your home is in a low or moderate risk area take advantage of a highly discounted Preferred Risk Flood Insurance Policy.
- A new policy takes 30 days to take effect, so don't delay. Purchase flood insurance for your home, business or rental. Assistance is available from Pinellas County Flood Insurance Advocates at [www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/advocates.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/advocates.htm).
- Understand your coverage. Your structure and your contents are covered separately on your flood policy. For details visit <https://www.iii.org/article/making-sure-your-home-properly-covered-disaster>.

### Hurricane windstorm insurance

Check that your insurance policy covers damages from wind. Not all policies include this. Different

carriers have different waiting periods so do not wait until a storm is approaching to purchase this.

### Other insurance

Consider insurance for mobile homes, cars, boats and businesses to protect against storm damage and flooding. If you rent your home, be sure that you have insurance to cover the replacement of your personal property. Encourage your renters to have insurance policies for their belongings.

### Home hardening

Adding storm shutters, garage door braces and hurricane straps to the roof will make your home safer from wind damage and could lower your insurance costs.

### Questions to ask yourself

- Do I know my evacuation zone?
- Do I know my flood zone?
- What are my deductibles?
- Should I get flood insurance?
- Do I have enough coverage to replace my home and belongings?
- Do I have loss-of-use coverage for temporary housing expenses?

### Insurance claims

#### Before the event:

- Take photos or video and inventory your property. You will need this, if you have to make a claim.

- Make sure you have all of your important documents together.
- Back your photos and documents up electronically using cloud-based storage.

#### After the event:

- Take photos or video of the damage to document your losses for your insurance claim before you move any debris or remove damaged belongings.
- Make a list of damaged contents.
- File your insurance claims promptly. There are time limitations on submitting claims with many insurance companies.
- Do not sign an Assignment of Benefits. In Florida, there's a rapidly growing scam in which some unscrupulous home repair vendors pressure homeowners to sign away the rights and benefits of their insurance policies as a condition of performing work. This practice has led to grossly inflated claims and an explosion of Assignment of Benefit lawsuits against insurers, which is driving up the cost of homeowners' coverage for consumers.

### Resources

- Information on flood insurance technical assistance: [www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/insurance.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/insurance.htm)
- Information on the National Flood Insurance Program at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov).
- Information on insurance policies: Insurance Information Institute at [www.iii.org](http://www.iii.org)

## Wind

Hurricane wind speed is described in categories from 1 to 5. The scale to the right gives an idea of how much property damage could occur.

In assessing your risk for wind, consider the age and sturdiness of your structure. Was it built after 2002, when the Florida Building Code was established? Find out by visiting the Property Appraiser's website at [www.pcpao.org](http://www.pcpao.org).

**If you live in a mobile home, manufactured home or recreational vehicle, you must evacuate no matter what, because these structures are not strong enough to, even if they are strapped down.**

Has your home, business, house of worship been hardened to withstand high winds? Be sure your structure is sound before inviting others to shelter there.

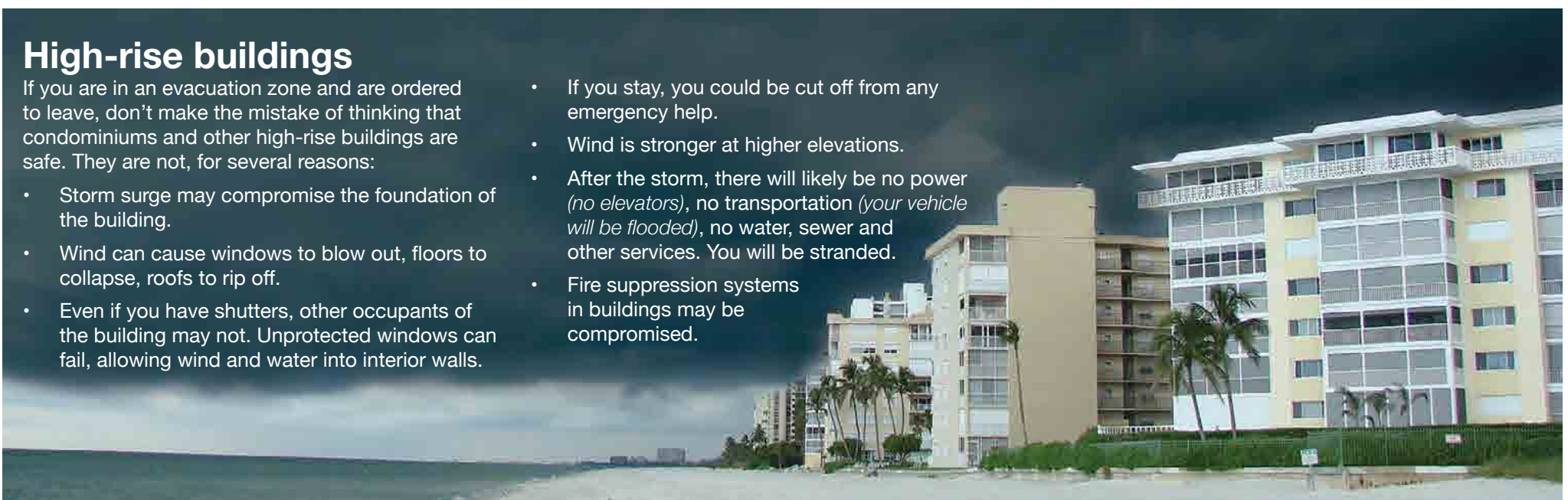
Category	Sustained Winds	Wind Damage	Saffir-Simpson Scale
<b>1</b>	<b>74-95 mph</b>	<b>Very dangerous winds will produce some damage:</b> Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding, gutters. Snapped tree branches. Power outages likely.	
<b>2</b>	<b>96-110 mph</b>	<b>Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage:</b> Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many trees snapped or uprooted. Near-total power loss.	
<b>3</b> (major)	<b>111-129 mph</b>	<b>Devastating damage will occur:</b> Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking & gable ends. Many trees snapped. Electricity & water unavailable for days to weeks.	
<b>4</b> (major)	<b>130-156 mph</b>	<b>Catastrophic damage will occur:</b> Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage, including roof structure & some exterior walls. Most trees snapped. Power outages for weeks or months. Most of the area uninhabitable for weeks or months.	
<b>5</b> (major)	<b>157 mph or higher</b>	<b>Catastrophic damage will occur:</b> High percentage of framed homes destroyed, total roof failure & wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks or months. Most of the area uninhabitable for weeks or months.	

In 2017, Hurricane Irma only had wind gusts to category 1 strength in Pinellas County, yet power was out for several days for many residents. Do not underestimate a hurricane or even a tropical storm.

## High-rise buildings

If you are in an evacuation zone and are ordered to leave, don't make the mistake of thinking that condominiums and other high-rise buildings are safe. They are not, for several reasons:

- Storm surge may compromise the foundation of the building.
- Wind can cause windows to blow out, floors to collapse, roofs to rip off.
- Even if you have shutters, other occupants of the building may not. Unprotected windows can fail, allowing wind and water into interior walls.
- If you stay, you could be cut off from any emergency help.
- Wind is stronger at higher elevations.
- After the storm, there will likely be no power (*no elevators*), no transportation (*your vehicle will be flooded*), no water, sewer and other services. You will be stranded.
- Fire suppression systems in buildings may be compromised.





# When an evacuation is called, what will you do?

## Mobile homes must always evacuate

Mobile homes, manufactured homes and recreational vehicles are not strong enough to withstand the strong winds of a hurricane. Whenever an evacuation



order is given in Pinellas County, residents of mobile homes, manufactured homes and recreational vehicles must evacuate. This evacuation order is for the entire county, regardless of where you are located in the county.

- Even newer mobile homes, built under tougher laws, can't withstand the force of hurricane-force wind gusts or tornadoes. In addition, carports, awnings and parts of the home may become missiles in the wind, making the mobile home parks themselves dangerous places to be.
- The community centers in the mobile home parks may not be safe shelters.

### To protect your mobile home:

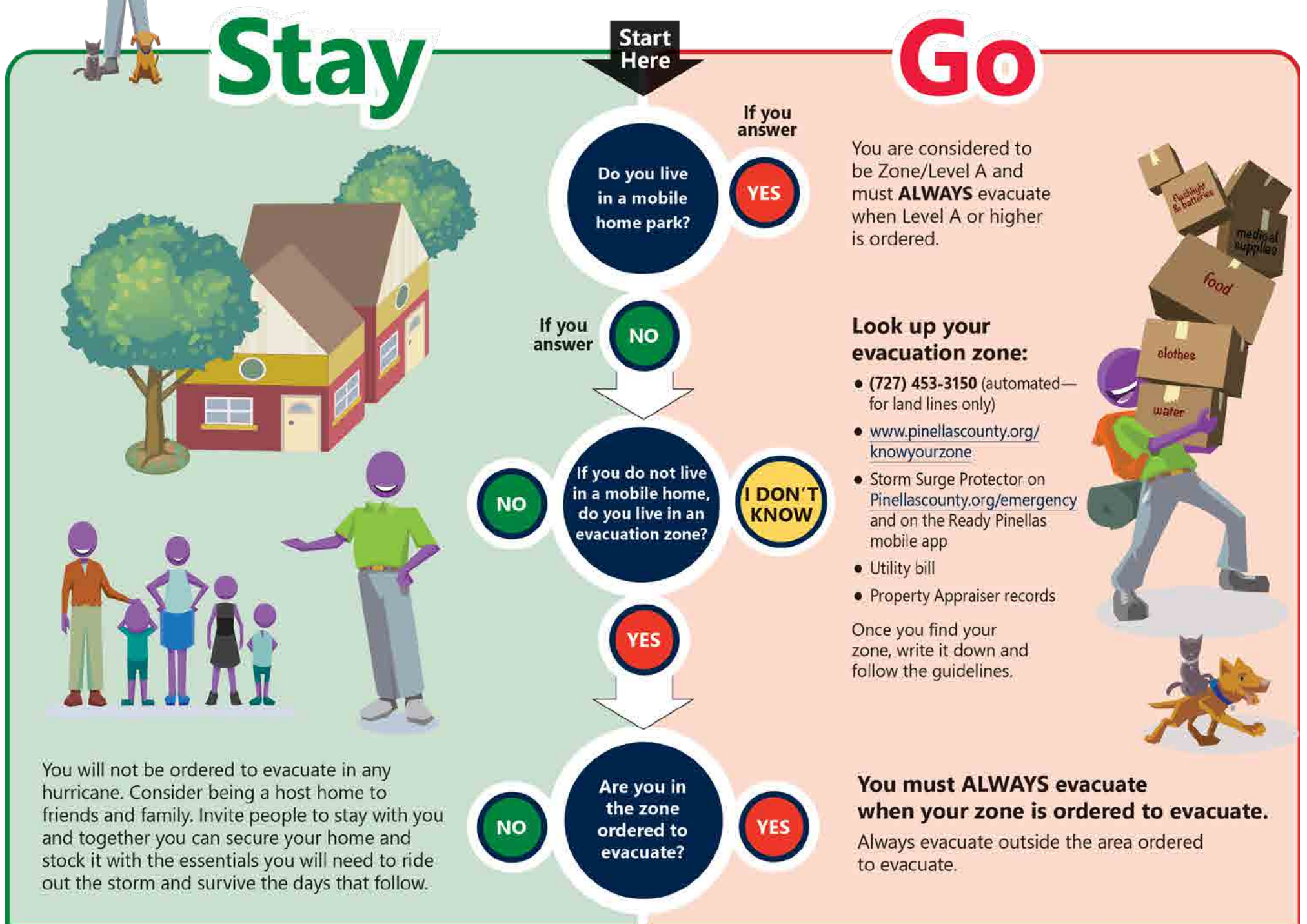
- Add anchors and straps if needed.
- Replace rusted anchors and connections.
- Tighten straps.
- Fix wood rot and termite damage at connections, joists and trusses.

### Before you evacuate:

- Put shutters/plywood over windows.
- Remove loose items from around your unit.
- Lower TV and radio antennas.
- Lower/remove awnings.
- Elevate belongings if your park often floods.

## Should I stay or should I go?

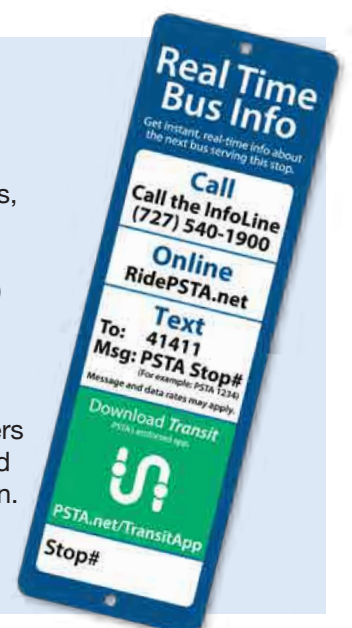
Use this tool to see if and when you would have to evacuate.



## Assistance with transportation

If you have to evacuate, be ready to leave your home early because these services will stop as soon as conditions start getting worse.

- If you are in need of transportation to a shelter, PSTA buses run free to public shelters during evacuations as long as it is safe. They may modify regular routes. Pets are allowed. Buses will stop running just before the winds increase to give staff time to reach safety.
- Check for updates at [www.psta.net](http://www.psta.net)
- If you have special medical needs, prepare ahead and register for transportation assistance. Call Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800.
- If you plan to use taxis or other commercial transportation services, do so early. These drivers may have to evacuate as well and may stop providing transportation.





## The Pandemic

COVID-19 has been a life-changing experience for everyone and it makes planning for hurricane season more challenging than before. It is more important than ever for you to know your risk, be prepared, and stay informed.

How and where we shelter people may be different this hurricane season. We will need to observe social distancing and protective measures within the shelters. Wherever you

shelter, be it locally or otherwise, we recommend you practice social distancing and CDC guidelines. It is very important that you listen to/watch for the most up-to-date information as a storm threatens.

We are getting new information about COVID-19 best practices, testing, preventative measures and possible vaccines. It is very important to stay informed for updated information.



# If you have to evacuate, you have options



We recommend that you wear cloth face coverings and continue to practice proper hygiene and cleaning practices wherever you go.

## Stay with family or friends

The best option for evacuation is staying with family or friends locally who are not in an evacuation zone.



## Stay in a host home, or be a host home

Host homes are a great way for businesses, civic groups or faith-based communities to help within their network. Buildings or homes outside of evacuation areas are great options to consider to help those who must evacuate. There is a toolkit available on the Pinellas County website that you can use to match up people who have to evacuate with people who do not. To learn more, go to [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/hosthomes.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/hosthomes.htm).

## Pet host home

If you can not host anyone but have room and a heart for pets, consider making the offer to shelter the pets of family or friends. This would give the pet owner more options for their own evacuation plans, while keeping their pets safe.



## Out of town

If you decide that you will evacuate from the county, you must leave days in front of the hurricane to beat overbooked flights and jam-packed highways.

- Fill your gas tank as early as possible, get cash, and bring your emergency kit, including emergency supplies for your vehicle.
- Travel to an area that is not anywhere close to the forecasted path of the hurricane. There are many examples of people evacuating to the east side of the state, or to a state north of Florida, only to have the hurricane hit there.
- After the hurricane passes, you may not be able to return to the county right away (see page 13).



## Hotel/motel

If you are planning to stay in a hotel or other lodging, choose wisely and remember to leave early enough so that you can travel safely.

- Check the evacuation zone of the hotel.
- Make reservations early and call ahead to confirm your stay.

- Look for pet-friendly lodgings. Check for changes to pet policies. Sometimes the pet policy will differ during an emergency.
- Know what hotels are available. Visit St. Pete/Clearwater participates in a statewide Accommodations Availability and Information Hotline. Call **(800) 317-5050** or visit [www.visitstpeteclearwater.com/storm](http://www.visitstpeteclearwater.com/storm), which is active before and after a storm.
- Do not depend on the hotel to provide food or water. Bring enough supplies to last for at least two weeks.

## General transportation

- PSTA buses run free to public shelters during evacuations as long as it is safe.
- Regular routes may be modified.
- Pets are allowed in a carrier or with a collar, leash and muzzle.
- Buses will stop running just before the winds increase to give staff time to reach safety.
- If you plan to use taxis or other commercial transportation services, do so early. These drivers may have to evacuate as well and may stop providing transportation.

## Protective Measures

- Have a face covering and hand sanitizing wipes for every person who will be evacuating with you. For information on how to make a simple cloth face covering, visit the CDC website at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/diy-cloth-face-coverings.html>.





# Public shelters

As we prepare for hurricane season, here are a few key things we want you to be aware of:

- We plan to utilize all available shelter space to allow for social distancing. Alternate locations may be utilized and it will be important that you monitor the media for an up-to-date list of sites for any evacuations that are ordered and the shelter locations that will open.
- Following social distancing will keep everyone safer. In general public shelters we will increase amount of space per individual/family households, increase routine cleaning of common areas, and work to provide proper hand washing materials and hand sanitizer, as able.
- Cloth face coverings are recommended when you are in public places. Plan to bring your own mask to a shelter. Have enough clean masks per person in your household in your hurricane kit.
- We also recommend hand sanitizer and wipes as part of your kit. The county will work diligently throughout the season to obtain additional sanitizer at shelter sites.
- Family units will be allowed to share the space assigned to them. We will need to maintain appropriate distance requirements between each family unit.

- **Remember:** public shelters do not have cots or generators, and the space you will be able to utilize is limited. Prepare by bringing:
  - a one-person air mattress
  - books and activities
  - a fan
  - earplugs
  - covering for your eyes for sleeping
  - other hygiene, comfort items and medications

Often, there is food and water served, but you may want to bring your own food if you are on a special diet.

## If you are COVID-19 positive or pending test results

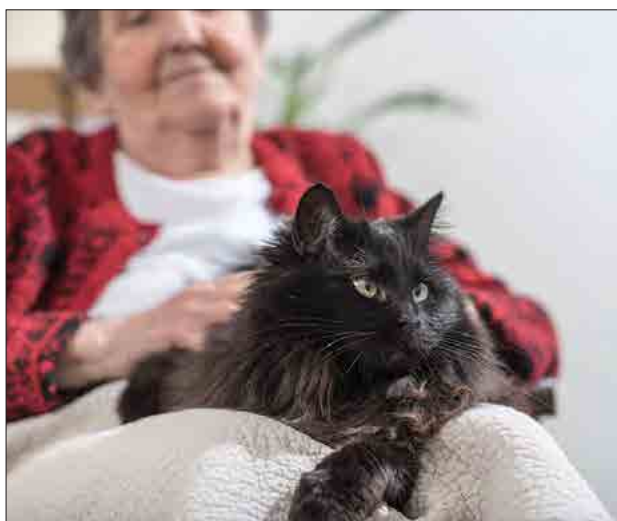
If you are feeling ill at the time of an evacuation, are awaiting test, or have tested positive for COVID-19, you may have to shelter in a separate shelter, away from other individuals for health and safety. Stay informed for the latest CDC guidance and local orders as a storm approaches.

## Special needs shelters

Special needs shelters are for those who have minimal medical needs or who are dependent on electricity for life-sustaining equipment. They are not for residents of assisted living facilities or long-term nursing care. You can ask your facility's administrator for information on your facility's emergency plan.

The guidelines that apply to general public shelters will be the same in special needs shelters. Additional precautions will be taken when transporting citizens to the shelters.

- Caregivers and immediate family members will stay together as a family unit, with appropriate spacing between each unit.
- As with public shelters, precautions will be taken to keep the area clean and sanitized. Keep in mind that not all special needs shelters have cots for everyone, so bring a one-person air mattress with you. You will need your own medical equipment and cloth face coverings for each person in your party.
- Please preregister for special needs shelters by calling **(727) 464-3800** or go to the website at [www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds](http://www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds) to download a form and to get more information.
- Please see the section on public sheltering for other general guidelines.



## Special needs and pets

If you are staying at a special needs shelter, your pet cannot stay with you. If you do not have a family member or friend who can take care of your pet while you are in the special needs shelter, the staff and volunteers at Pinellas County Animal Services will care for your dog or cat.

- Simply bring your dog or cat with you to the special needs shelter. An Animal Services staff member or volunteer will bring them to the dog and cat shelter on Ulmerton Road in Largo.
- You will need to provide a leash, carrier, license, health records, medication and any special instructions. Food is supplied but you can send your own.
- Once you return home, Animal Services staff will bring your pet home to you.
- Remember, to be eligible you must be pre-registered with the Emergency Management Special Needs program. Call Emergency Management at **(727) 464-3800** to receive a form by mail or call your nearest fire department or home health provider.

Please note this is only for cats and dogs. If you have a pet other than a cat or dog, make plans now for someone to care for them while you are staying in the shelter.

Service animals are welcome at any shelter; note that you must bring the Service animal's supplies.



## Special needs transportation

If you need assistance with transportation, your fire department will pick you up and bring you to a special needs shelter, but you **MUST REGISTER**. You can register by filling out a special needs registration form, which you can get by calling (727) 464-3800 or downloading at [www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds](http://www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds).

When an evacuation is called, your fire department will call you, and verify that you are still in need of transportation assistance to a shelter. Please be ready with your belongings. They will assist you with your belongings and any medical equipment that you have.

## How kids can help Make plans with the whole family



- Involve children in emergency planning.
- Let them help build the Emergency Preparedness Kit. Use matter-of-fact language to discuss safety steps you will take.
- Play "let's pretend" games with young children to help them work out "what if" situations.

## What you might need



If you are evacuating or even if you're riding out the storm at home, don't forget the everyday items your children will need. Think through a typical day at home and plan as if there will be no power. A few suggestions:

- Face masks
- Diapers and wipes
- Powdered milk
- Blanket and pacifier
- Stuffed animal or favorite toy
- Favorite non-perishable snacks
- Toys
- Games
- Plenty of batteries

## Some good sites for kids



Pinellas County Hurricanes for Kids Activity Book [www.pinellascounty.org/kids](http://www.pinellascounty.org/kids)

Kids Get a Plan • Florida Division of Emergency Management [www.kidsgetaplan.com](http://www.kidsgetaplan.com)

Owlie Skywarn • National Weather Service [www.weather.gov/owlie](http://www.weather.gov/owlie)

Ready for Kids • National Hurricane Center [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids)

Weather Wiz Kids [www.weatherwizkids.com/weather-hurricane.htm](http://www.weatherwizkids.com/weather-hurricane.htm)



# Planning for your pet



Your pets are a part of your family and it is important that you plan ahead for their needs as well.

Update your pet's vaccinations and make sure their county license is valid.

Microchip your animal in case you get separated. If your contact information changes, update it with the service that you registered with.

Take a photo of you and your pet. Keep it with your important documents and on your phone.

- Obtain a crate for your pet, one that is large enough for them to turn around in. Do not wait to purchase one. They may not be available later in the season.
- If your pet takes medications, keep a two-week supply on hand. Pets may get anxious during stressful events so ask your veterinarian for advice.

## Build your pet's emergency kit

- Pet food and water for two weeks
- Identification/microchip (remember to update)
- Pinellas County Animal Services license
- Immunization records
- Photo
- Collar/leash/muzzle
- Medications for two weeks (with instructions)
- Toys/blanket
- Cat litter, pan, scoop
- Plastic waste bags
- Disinfectant
- Paper towels
- Carrier or crate
- Newspaper or other lining

## If you evacuate

- Never leave any animal alone at home if you evacuate.
- If you plan to evacuate out of town or to a public shelter, consider asking friends or family who live in an area that is not being evacuated to care for your pets. It will make it easier for you and less stressful for your pets.
- If you will be bringing your pet to a host home, hotel or shelter, make sure your type of pet(s) and number of them will be accepted.



- Many hotels allow pets during evacuations. Check hotel availability at [www.visitstpeteclearwater.com](http://www.visitstpeteclearwater.com), where Visit St. Pete/Clearwater has a statewide directory that is updated during emergencies.
- If you make arrangements with a kennel or veterinarian, check with them ahead of the storm to make sure they still plan to remain open.

## Pet-friendly shelters

If you have no other option, the county has pet-friendly shelters for dogs and cats only. At the pet-friendly shelters, your pet will be in a crate in a separate area of the shelter from you. The owners must stay at the shelter and are expected to care for their pets. **You will need to provide the crate** and have a leash and collar, food and water bowls, litter box and litter, medicine and any comfort items. Food is available for the pets at the shelter but you may want to bring your own.

Pre-registration is not required. A pet friendly shelter enrollment form is available on the Pinellas County Animal Services website at [www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices). Filling it in beforehand. It will make registration easier once you get to the shelter.

Service animals are always allowed. They need an emergency kit too, with enough food and supplies for two weeks.

PSTA provides free bus service to pet-friendly shelters.

## Where you cannot bring your pets

Animal shelters cannot shelter pets during a disaster. Do not bring your pets to Pinellas County Animal Services, SPCA Tampa Bay, Humane Society of Pinellas or other animal welfare organizations.

### Other pets

If you have pets other than cats and dogs, you have the responsibility to plan for their safety.

All animals need at least two weeks of food, water and other supplies. After a hurricane, it will be difficult to get supplies for more exotic animals, so be prepared for at least a month.

- When you evacuate with your pets, be sure to keep them secure.
- Never let your animal loose. It is not safe for them or others.

### Horses

- Make sure vaccinations are up to date.
- Form a neighborhood disaster committee so your neighborhood can work together and share resources.
- Have sufficient animal identification.
- Clean up your property and remove debris as part of your preparations.
- If you plan to evacuate, leave early.
- If you are staying home, have at least a two-week supply of hay and water.

The Sunshine State Horse Council provides information on preparing your horse and what to expect before, during and after a storm. Find information on making an emergency plan for your horses at <https://evac.flahorse.com>

### Lost pets

If you lose your pet during the storm, do not look for him/her until the storm passes and it is safe to go outside.

Once the hurricane passes, responders will pick up stray animals and bring them to temporary collection sites to keep them safe. Once they are brought to a more permanent site, instructions will be announced to the public.

## How do I secure my boat?

No matter how seaworthy your boat is, never stay on your boat in a hurricane. Make preparations early and evacuate for your safety. Note that drawbridge operations will be modified during evacuations.

## Modified bridge closings

When a hurricane is approaching, Pinellas County's 10 drawbridges will not open for boats on demand, giving preference to evacuating vehicle traffic. As the storm gets closer, the bridges will be locked down to ensure that the barrier islands are evacuated and to protect the bridges from wind damage.

A special marine advisory will be issued by the U.S. Coast Guard to update boaters on channel 16.

The 10 drawbridges are:

- Pinellas Bayway
- Tierra Verde
- Corey Causeway
- John's Pass
- Tom Stuart Causeway
- Indian Rocks
- Dunedin Causeway
- Beckett Bridge
- Park Boulevard
- Treasure Island

## Preparing your boat

### Marina slip or private dock storage



- Keep insurance up-to-date.
- Create a hurricane plan for your boat and file a copy with the marina operator.
- Take a photographic inventory of your boat and its contents.
- Purchase and stow mooring line for storms—line should be about twice the diameter of normal line. Allow extra line for tide and storm surge.
- When a storm is approaching, remove loose items on the deck and store them on land.
- Shut off fuel lines at the tank.
- Keep batteries charged; make sure bilge pumps are operating properly.
- Secure hatches and doors.
- Use several cleats to distribute the load on the boat.
- Use chafing gear, such as reinforced radiator hose where lines will rub for protection – several feet on each side.
- Disconnect electric, water, fuel and other dock connections.
- Remove valuables.

### Land storage

- Store boat and trailer in a secure covered building, such as a garage if possible.
- If left outside, secure using ground hooks and straps.
- Put wooden blocks between trailer frame and springs for extra support with added weight.

### Anchored storage

- Anchor on the lee side of protective land rather than mooring to a dock.
- Use two anchors and no stern anchor.
- Line length should be six to nine times water depth for storm surge shift.
- Keep batteries charged and bilge pumps operating properly.



# How can I prepare my home?

There are several simple steps to making your home storm ready, and they do not have to be expensive fixes.

## \*Brace your gabled roof

Gabled roofs—two slopes that come together to a peak at the top—are prone to failure if not properly braced in construction. High winds could cause your end wall to collapse. See the Florida Division of Emergency Management’s Hurricane Retrofit Guide for advice: [www.floridadisaster.org/hrg](http://www.floridadisaster.org/hrg).

## \*Protect your windows

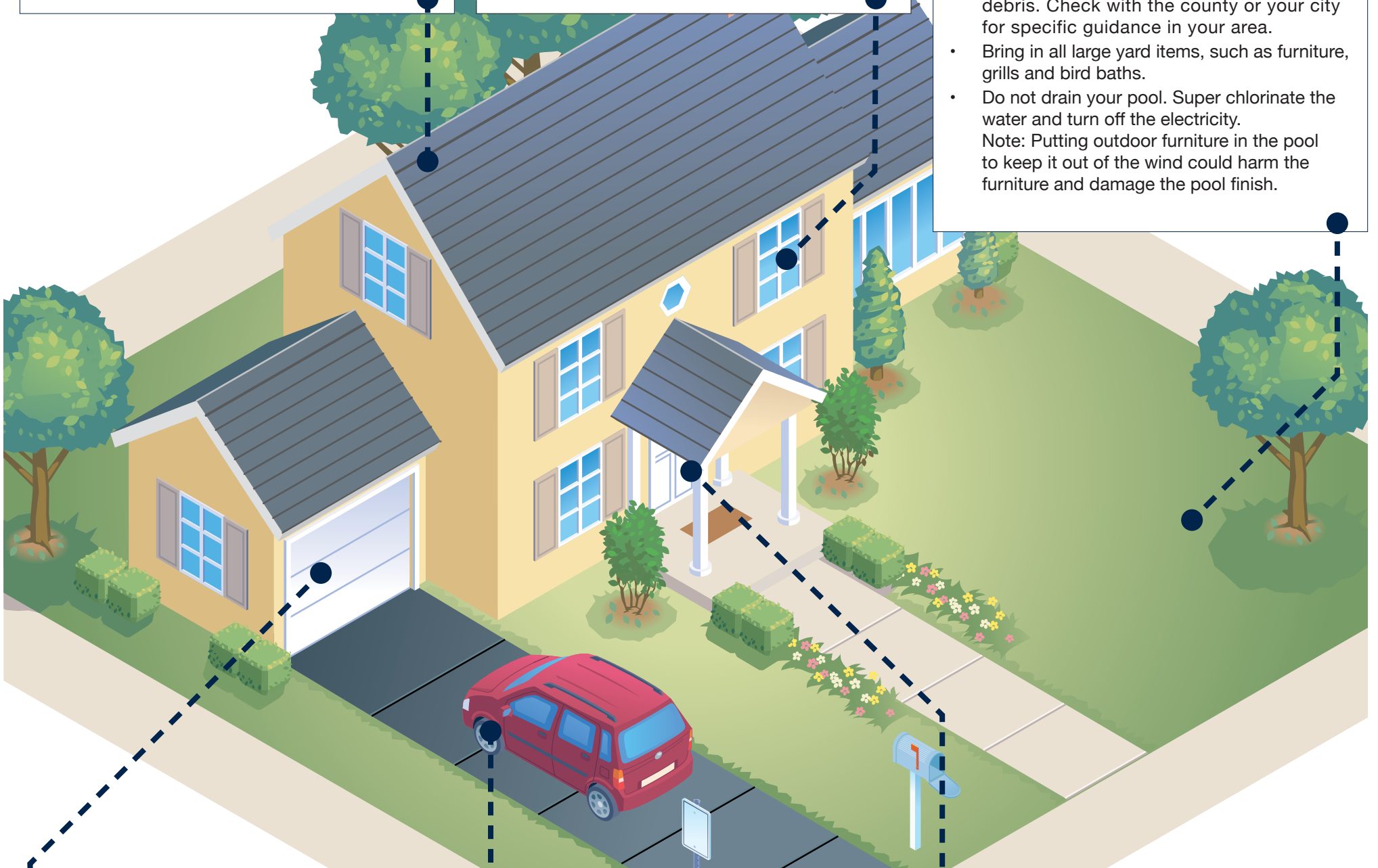
Your best option is to install impact resistant windows or hurricane shutters. Otherwise, be ready to cover your windows with commercial exterior plywood—7/16" minimum—when a storm is approaching.

**Duct tape provides NO protection.**

## Prepare your yard

Rock mulch, sagging tree limbs, yard furniture and decorations are among the objects that could become deadly missiles in high winds. Keep your trees pruned, clean out your gutters on a regular basis, and when a storm is coming...

- Dispose of any piles of loose tree limbs or debris. Check with the county or your city for specific guidance in your area.
- Bring in all large yard items, such as furniture, grills and bird baths.
- Do not drain your pool. Super chlorinate the water and turn off the electricity.  
Note: Putting outdoor furniture in the pool to keep it out of the wind could harm the furniture and damage the pool finish.



## \*Brace your garage door

Old garage doors in good condition can be braced with retrofit kits while new doors must meet stringent wind requirements. After Hurricane Andrew, engineers determined four out of five homes that suffered major structural damage lost their garage door first.

## Prepare your vehicle

- Keep up with your car’s maintenance.
- Keep gas tank half full—fill tank during a Hurricane Watch.
- Build a survival kit for your car: first aid, non-perishable food/water, tire inflater, tool kit, jack and spare tire, jumper cable, road flares, flashlight, DC/AC power inverter, mobile device chargers.

## Check seals

Replace any worn out weather stripping or caulk around windows and doors.

**\*Protecting windows, gable roofs and garage doors are the most important steps to take.**

## What about rental properties?

Renters and property managers should make sure that they have hurricane plans in place and that they understand what each is responsible for to prepare for a hurricane and when renters should return.

- What evacuation zone are you in?
- If you are in an evacuation zone, where will each of you go? Get emergency contact information.
- Who will shutter the windows and make other preparations?
- If the rental property is damaged, what should the renter do? What will the property manager do?
- Will you be permitted to return? If my rental is damaged what are your options?
- If you can, put the agreement in writing. If you are going to rent, you can include it in the lease.

For renters

- Consider getting insurance to protect your personal belongings. The landlord’s insurance does not protect anything that you own.

- Always share emergency contact information, in writing.
- Know if you may need to evacuate and let your landlord know where you will be.
- Find out where your landlord will be staying.

For landlords

- Make sure you have adequate insurance.
- Take steps to make your rental property storm ready.
- As the storm approaches, secure your rental: shutter windows, make sure your tenants are safe and have the supplies they need if they will shelter there.
- Make sure that your tenants know their responsibilities.
- Take care of your responsibilities.
- Check on your tenants before and after the storm.

## Should I get a generator?

A fuel-powered generator can keep your appliances working after a disaster and keep you more comfortable. You can buy a small one to run your medical equipment, fans and small appliances. But keep in mind, generators come with the dangers of carbon monoxide, electrical shock and fire.

**Follow these safety measures:**

- Use generators outdoors and away from windows and doors to avoid carbon monoxide exposure. **NEVER** operate a generator indoors. **NEVER** use a generator in an attached garage, even with the garage door open.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty, three-pronged extension cord.
- **NEVER** plug the generator into a wall outlet—this can cause electrocution.
- Buy a carbon monoxide detector.
- Use as directed.



# Build an Emergency Preparedness Kit



## Basic Supplies

- Sanitation—wipes, antibacterial hand gel, soap, toilet paper, hygiene supplies, feminine supplies, diapers. Cloth face covering- enough for each family member.
- Water—at least one gallon of water per person per day for drinking, and one gallon per person per day for hygiene and cooking
- One-week supply of non-perishable food that does not require cooking, for example: dried fruit, canned tuna fish, peanut butter, etc. Remember comfort foods.
- Non-electric can opener
- Medications and copies of prescriptions (*Ask your pharmacist for a printout.*)
- Rain gear
- Flashlight or lantern
- Battery-operated or hand-crank radio
- Extra batteries
- First aid supplies—over-the-counter pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medicine/laxative, anti-histamine, anti-itch cream, antiseptic
- Insect repellent
- Extra batteries for medical devices such as hearing aids, etc.
- Eyeglasses and extra contact lenses
- Extra bottled oxygen if dependent on it
- Small generator for electrically dependent equipment like an oxygen concentrator or nebulizer
- Cash for when ATMs are out of service—small bills will make purchasing easier
- Emergency Access Permit (*for beaches*)
- Books, cards, board games for entertainment
- Full tank of gas in vehicle
- Cell phone with charger, extra battery backup, solar charger
- Emergency contacts in mobile device and in print for backup
- Information downloaded to your mobile device (*contacts, maps*)
- A paper map
- Paper and pencil
- Sunscreen

## If You Go

### Host Home or Hotel Go Kit

#### In addition to basic supplies:

- Pillow and blankets
- Air mattress, sleeping bag, floor mat or other as needed
- Food and water. Find out from the host what you can bring, including the perishable food you have left.
- Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils
- Complete change of clothing for several days
- Check with your host to see what they need.

### Public Shelter Go Kit – General

#### In addition to basic supplies:

- Wearable medical alert tag
- Blanket, pillow, cot, folding chair or twin-size air mattress
- Complete change of clothing for several days
- Special dietary items (*sugar-free, low sodium, gluten-free, etc.*) with can opener if required. (*common food and water is supplied*)
- Personal hygiene (*toothbrush, wipes, soap, hairbrush, adult diapers*)
- Earplugs, headphones, sleep mask

### Special Needs Shelter Go Kit

#### In addition to basic supplies:

- Any durable medical equipment or supplies you may need such as:
  - Portable oxygen
  - Wheelchair, walker or cane
  - Eyeglasses
  - Hearing aids with batteries
  - Oxygen concentrator
  - Nebulizer
- Medications in the original container (*2-week supply*)
- Blanket, pillow, cot, folding chair or air mattress (*available cots are limited in number*)
- Complete change of clothing for several days
- Personal hygiene (*toothbrush, wipes, soap, hairbrush, adult diapers*)
- Pen and paper for communicating emergency information
- Earplugs, headphones, sleep mask
- Written instructions or orders regarding your care
- Pet Go Kit (*Pets do not stay with you—see page 7*)

## If You Stay or When You Return

### Stay Kit for Home

#### Even if you are evacuating, these supplies will be needed when you return:

- Two weeks of fluids to drink and non-perishable food that does not require cooking, for example: dried fruit, canned tuna fish, peanut butter, etc. Remember comfort foods
- Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils
- Cooler with ice (*Make extra ice in plastic bags and plastic food storage containers and keep it in the freezer to keep food cold longer.*)
- Insect repellent
- Sunscreen
- Tarps
- Rope or elastic cord (*for tarps if necessary*)
- Whistle to signal for help
- Tools, including wrench to shut off water, utility knife for sheeting and duct tape, hammer and nails to make temporary repairs

- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air
- Sheets of plastic and duct tape to seal windows and doors if ordered to do so
- Matches or lighter in waterproof container
- Large garbage bags
- Portable toilet—use one from a boat or camper, or make one using a 5-gallon bucket with lid, trash bags, chlorine bleach
- Household chlorine bleach with medicine dropper to disinfect or treat water. (*Do not use scented, color safe or bleach with added cleaners.*)
- Extra gas if you have a generator and somewhere safe to store it
- Extra propane or charcoal for outside grill
- Battery-powered fan
- Camera to take photos/video of damage
- Disinfectant to prevent mold growing from floodwaters

### Important Documents

Take photos of your documents for backup.

Put paper copies together in a sealed plastic bag.

- Driver license or ID card
- Emergency Access Permit for barrier island residents/businesses
- Social Security card
- Important numbers and emergency contacts
- Medical records – pharmacy prescription record, doctors, medications, dosages, blood type
- Insurance policies for home, health, flood, auto, renters
- Titles to house, cars

- Pay stubs for disaster assistance eligibility
- Household inventory for insurance claims – photo or video documentation stored online
- Other irreplaceable papers, such as birth, marriage, divorce, death and adoption certificates; passports; military records; wills; trust documents
- Account numbers for bank, credit cards, savings and investments.
- This Hurricane Preparedness Guide for reference, which you can also download from [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency).

### Basic Supplies for Pets

- Enough pet food and water for two weeks
- Identification/chip (*remember to update*)
- License
- Immunization records
- Photo
- Collar and leash
- Medications for two weeks with instructions
- Toys/blanket
- Cat litter, pan, scoop
- Plastic waste bags
- Disinfectant
- Paper towels
- Carrier or crate
- Newspaper or other lining





# Good business preparedness

A hurricane or other major disaster could shut down your business for weeks or months. According to FEMA, almost 40 percent of small businesses never reopen their doors after a disaster. Many times this is due in part to a lack of planning.

It is critical to have a business continuity plan so that you can resume offering your services to the community as soon as possible.

## Are You Ready?



## Sign up for emergency notifications

- Make sure members of your workplace sign up for Alert Pinellas at [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas). This is a free community notification service that allows you to get alerts via cellphone, email and/or texts. Important information will be relayed during an emergency.
- Sign up for emergency notifications and other news from Pinellas County Economic Development at [www.pced.org/subscribe](http://www.pced.org/subscribe)
- Register for updates from the Florida Division of Emergency Management at [www.floridadisaster.biz](http://www.floridadisaster.biz)

## Get help with business disaster planning

Pinellas County Economic Development can help prepare your comprehensive business continuity, emergency preparedness and disaster recovery plan at no cost. Schedule an appointment with the Florida Small Business Development Center at Pinellas County Economic Development at [www.pced.org/sbdc](http://www.pced.org/sbdc) or phone (727) 453-7200.

You can also find guidance online: <http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/businesssolutions.htm>

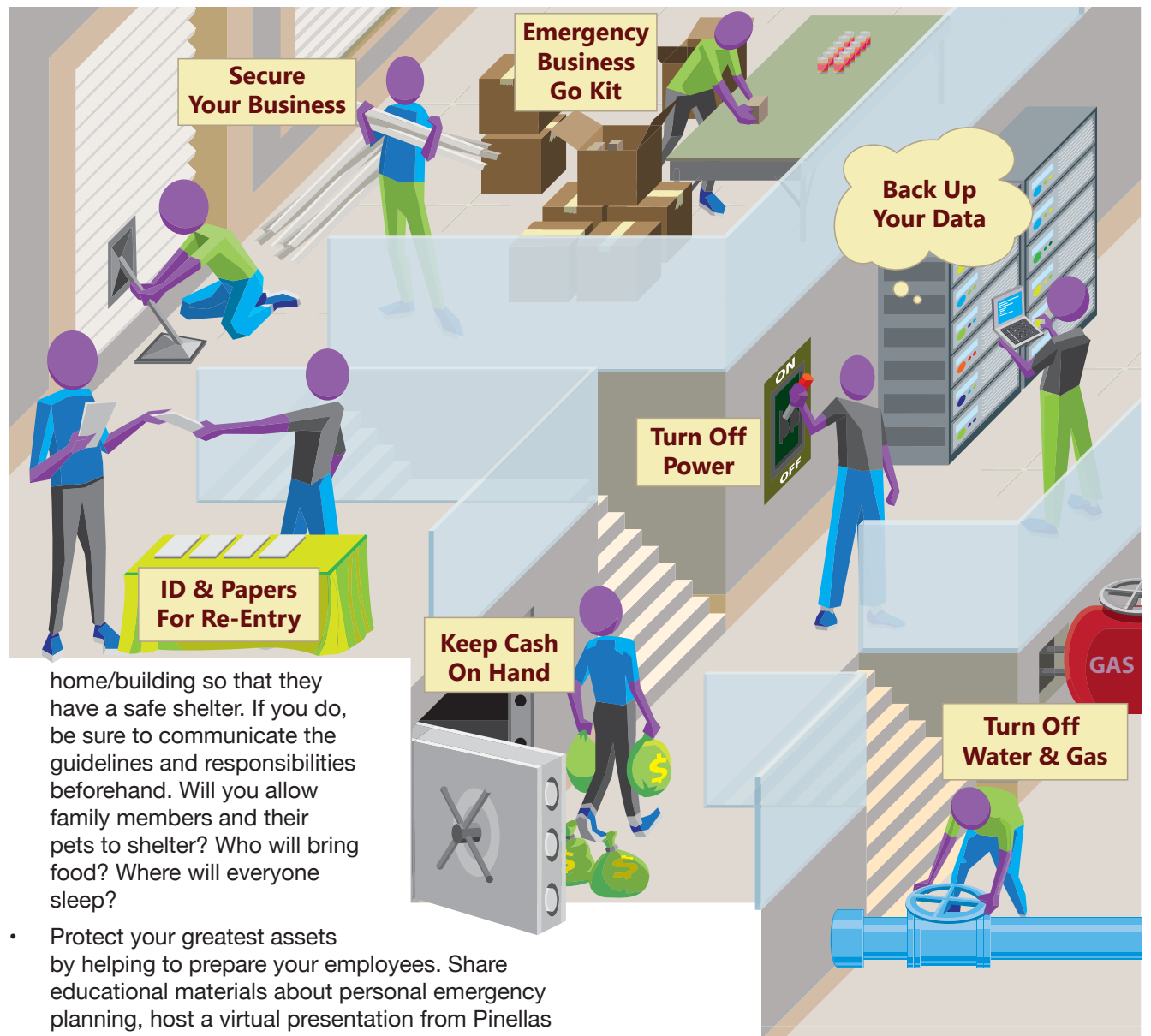
## What is your risk?

Check the evacuation zone for your business, look up the flood zone and assess the sturdiness of your building in the case of high wind.

Based on your assessment, you will decide if you will need to evacuate your building. Evaluate what equipment will need to be moved or protected in the building.

## Steps to prepare your business

- Plan on doing business without power.
- What are your critical business functions? Plan for an alternate location; expect to work with limited or no water, sewer or power for at least two weeks.
- Store your important documents and data in cloud-based storage, and back it up on a hard drive. Remember to share access information with more than one employee.
- Practice restoring your technology. Share the procedure, along with passwords and log-ins, with more than one employee.
- If employees will work from home (if there is power), practice the plan. Make sure they have proper access to work remotely and that they are able to use the technology provided.
- Create an employee, vendor and key client communication plan; share this plan and test it with your employees. Update it frequently. Print it out.
- Communicate your disaster plan to employees; specifically, when you will shut down operations and send them home, as well as your plans for reopening and your expectations of them.
- If you have a sturdy building in a non-evacuation zone, consider offering your employees a host



home/building so that they have a safe shelter. If you do, be sure to communicate the guidelines and responsibilities beforehand. Will you allow family members and their pets to shelter? Who will bring food? Where will everyone sleep?

- Protect your greatest assets by helping to prepare your employees. Share educational materials about personal emergency planning, host a virtual presentation from Pinellas County Emergency Management or Economic Development. Be receptive to the concerns of your employees.
- Review your business insurance coverage. Does it include business interruption coverage? This is insurance to compensate you for lost income if your company is unable to operate because of disaster-related damage.
- Identify who is responsible for assessing your business after the storm. Ensure they have a letter or proper identification so they can pass through traffic control points if appropriate.

## Prepare an emergency kit

Remember to print out key information.

- Insurance policies
- Contracts, plans
- Property management contracts
- List of vendors
- Employee contact information and emergency plans
- Photo inventory of the interior and exterior of the business
- Backup files/drivers for data
- Logins and passwords

## When it's time to go

Evacuation orders apply to all properties in a given zone. They apply to all types of properties. When an evacuation is ordered, businesses in the evacuation zone must leave as well.

- Before you go, clear your property of debris and loose items. Take down signs that could be damaged in high winds.
- Prepare the building by covering windows and securing doors.
- When considering the timing of evacuations, consider the responsibilities of your employees. Closing early and allowing employees to leave gives them the time they need to prepare at home.

Before you go, shut off the electricity, water and gas.

## Tourism businesses

- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater's Accommodations Hurricane Preparedness Took Kit includes useful resources to help those in the tourism industry be better prepared in the event of a weather related emergency.
- Accommodations Availability & Information Hotline (800) 317-5050

- [www.visitstpeteclearwater.com/storm](http://www.visitstpeteclearwater.com/storm) (Active prior to and after a named storm)
- CVB industry partner information and hotline (727) 464-7200
- Updates to storm accommodations inventory [www.pinellascvb.com/storm](http://www.pinellascvb.com/storm)
- <http://data.visitstpeteclearwater.com>  
Note: Industry Partners will need a property login and password from VSPC to enter the site, which is active prior to and after named storm. Email [pr@visitspc.com](mailto:pr@visitspc.com) to receive your login and password.

## Report damage or economic injury

The Florida Business Damage Assessment Survey is a required first step in applying for a Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan and an important way that the state assigns resources to help businesses and communities recover after a disaster. All businesses in Pinellas that have sustained damage or economic injury due to a disaster are asked to visit <https://floridadisaster.biz/BusinessDamageAssessments> or [www.PCED.org/damage](http://www.PCED.org/damage) to complete the Florida Business Damage Assessment Survey.

## Disaster loan assistance to get back to business

### SBA disaster loans

Once a disaster has been declared, the U.S. Small Business Administration provides low-interest disaster loans to businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations and even homeowners and renters. SBA disaster loans can be used to repair or replace real estate, personal property, machinery and equipment, inventory and business assets. For more information, visit [www.disasterloan.sba.gov](http://www.disasterloan.sba.gov)

### Florida small business emergency bridge loans

Should disaster strike, Pinellas County Economic Development will help businesses apply for Florida's emergency bridge loan program. This program provides a source of expedient cash flow to businesses impacted by a catastrophe so that they can begin repairs and replace inventory. For more information, visit [www.floridadisasterloan.org](http://www.floridadisasterloan.org).



# The storm is coming. What does “in the cone” mean?

The National Hurricane Center uses a graphic of a cone to show the probable track of a storm on weather forecasts. The cone shows the forecasted area where the eye of the storm may go. The effects of the storm may be felt far outside of the cone. You can use it as a guide for the type of preparations you should make.

The closer the hurricane is, the more accurate the forecast. But be aware that hurricanes often shift direction at the last minute, so you need to be prepared if you are anywhere near the cone. Do not let your guard down.

Check the Pinellas County website for updates and special instructions.



This information is also part of the Ready Pinellas mobile app.

Apple iOS

Android devices



## 5-day cone

If Pinellas is in the 5-day cone it means a storm is on a probable path to reach our area in five days.

### Implement your plan.

- Know your zone. If you do not already know your zone, look it up. ([www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone](http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone))
- Review your family disaster plan.
- Get your emergency preparedness kit with important papers ready.
- Begin to prepare your home and yard.
- If you have special needs, have your caregiver begin to implement your plan. If needed, be sure you are registered for a special needs shelter.
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida there is no way to tell this many days ahead exactly where the storm will hit.

## 3-day cone

- If Pinellas is in the 3-day cone it means a storm is on a probable path to reach our area in three days.

### Step up your preparations.

- Double check your survival kit and make any last necessary purchases.
- Gather special supplies for infants, children, seniors and pets.
- Be sure you have all materials and tools necessary to shutter windows.
- If your plans are to evacuate, make arrangements, book reservations and pack what you can in your vehicle.
- Refill medications. (If the Governor has declared a state of emergency that includes Pinellas County you can get a 30-day refill without the insurance company's usual restrictions.)
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida there is no way to tell this many days ahead exactly where the storm will hit.

## Hurricane watch

(48 hours ahead)

Prepare as if the storm is headed directly for your home. Be ready for a Hurricane Warning within a few hours if the storm remains on track and continue implementing your disaster plan.

- Fill vehicle gas tank.
- Get cash, secure papers and valuables.
- If you could not refill your medications in the 3-day cone timeframe try again now.
- Fill containers and tubs with water, even if evacuating—you may need the water when you return.
- Secure yard equipment and furniture.
- Shutter your windows.
- If you plan to evacuate the area if you are ordered to, secure your home so you can leave as soon as an evacuation order is issued.
- If you are registered for a special needs shelter and will be getting transportation, be sure you have everything you need for your emergency preparedness kit.
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida, there is no guarantee that area will not be hit by the storm if its path changes.
- Be prepared for an evacuation order to be issued at anytime.
- Check media sites for updates to evacuation zones and shelter information.

## Hurricane warning

(36 hours ahead)

- Stay tuned to local news and get your weather radio ready.
- Complete final preparations to evacuate or to shelter in your home.
- If your plan is to travel out of the local area and you can leave at this point, go. You can expect traffic to get heavier as the hurricane nears.
- If you are registered for a special needs shelter and will be getting transportation, be ready to leave. Rescue workers will begin pick-ups shortly after an evacuation order is issued.
- If you are going to a host home, assist with home preparations and bring emergency supplies there.
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida there is no guarantee that area will not be hit by the storm if the forecast changes.
- Be prepared for an evacuation order to be issued at anytime.

## Evacuation order

Listen carefully to the evacuation order. What zone is being told to evacuate?

**Are you in that zone?**

**YES** I live in a mobile or manufactured home, and must evacuate if an order is issued for any part of the county.

**YES** I live in an evacuation zone that is being ordered to evacuate.

**If you answered YES you must evacuate.**

**NO** I do NOT live in an evacuation zone that is included in the evacuation order.

If you do not live in the evacuation zone that is being told to evacuate, you do not have to leave your home. Review your plan and your decision on whether you will stay or go. (See page 5)



## Steps before you leave

- Turn off the water and gas utilities at the main valve.
- Lock windows.
- Close all doors.
- Tell friends and neighbors where you are going. If you are evacuating locally, get to your shelter location within a few hours of the order.
- If you are going to a host home, go there now.
- Be aware of your evacuation time range. Evacuations will be issued with beginning and end times. The end time means that sustained tropical storm force winds are expected to arrive by that time and all evacuations should be complete.
- Consider turning on SMS notifications for social media apps. If service is interrupted, texting may work when other services do not.



# The storm is here. What should I expect?

If...	Then...
<b>The power goes out</b>	<b>You will need a battery-powered radio, flashlight, batteries, cell phone and battery charger, non-perishable food, water.</b> Check your emergency kits to make sure you can make it at least a week without power. You will need ways to cook or boil water in the weeks to follow, like an outside grill or camp stove. If you can find an open store you will need cash. You also will want items to keep you occupied: books, board games, etc.
<b>The power stays out for six hours</b>	<b>If there is food in the refrigerator,</b> move perishable foods into an ice-filled cooler. Put a thermometer in the cooler to make sure it stays below 40°F. Meats and other perishable foods can stay above 40°F without spoiling for two hours.
<b>The power stays out for two days</b>	<b>If there is food in the freezer,</b> it can be stored safely for two days if you keep the freezer door shut. Once the storm passes, cook any unspoiled food outside and consider sharing with your neighbors.  From this point forward you will need non-perishable food.  <i>(When you know a hurricane is coming, if you have a lot of frozen food, use it to prepare your meals. Otherwise you risk having it spoil in a power outage.)</i>
<b>The water supply is affected</b>	<b>It is always possible that the drinking water supply could be affected during a disaster.</b> Monitor the news for boil water notices, which means there is a possibility of contamination. In this case you should be prepared to disinfect the water.  Boil—Bring a pot of water to a rolling boil for one minute to ensure bacteria, viruses or parasites are gone.  Bleach—Add 1/8 tsp. of unscented bleach per gallon of water and let stand for 30 minutes; bleach should contain 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. This is less effective than boiling, but will work if there is no way to boil water.  Bleach can also be used as a disinfectant for cleaning by mixing nine parts of water to one part bleach.  If water is out, use your emergency supplies.
<b>There is a sewer outage</b>	<b>If a sewer outage is announced, DO NOT flush your toilet.</b> Powered sewer lift stations may be down, which could cause a sewage backup in your home. Use a portable toilet, like one used on a boat or camper, or set one up by using one of the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>5-gallon bucket</b>—Line with heavy-duty trash bag and use household bleach as disinfectant. Make sure it has a tight lid.</li><li>• <b>Toilet bowl</b>—Turn off your outside water supply first and flush once to empty before lining with a trash bag.</li></ul> Do not use cat litter. It cannot be flushed after the sewer system is running. Once given the OK by officials, dispose of the emergency toilet's contents into your household commode. Thoroughly sanitize your emergency toilet with bleach before storing or disposal.
<b>Phone, cable &amp; cell service is down</b>	<b>Use a battery- or crank-powered radio.</b> Radio broadcasts are usually the last communication source to go down. Get a portable radio and lots of batteries. Tune in to National Weather Service advisories. Severe weather alerts are transmitted through the NOAA Weather Alert Radio. Local radio stations usually report on emergency situations and AM stations can broadcast longer than FM stations.  Pinellas County FM HAR 96.3—Use your radio to tune in to the county station for information on local traffic.  Mobile Text Messaging—Texting often works when other services do not. If your phone's digital clock works, then you can send and receive texts.  Chargers and batteries—Keep your phone and other devices charged. Make sure you have the connection you need to plug into a vehicle, even if you do not own your own car. Invest in a backup battery charger. There are many models, including solar-powered. Do not forget the basic spare batteries for your radio, flashlight and other emergency items. Make sure your extra batteries have not expired.  Apps—Mobile apps are invaluable during hurricanes. In addition to Pinellas County apps, know which others could be useful, like GasBuddy to find open gas stations or local weather apps. If you have WiFi even if your phone's data is down, check <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org">www.pinellascounty.org</a> for information on new county apps.
<b>Your Home Is Damaged by the Storm</b>	<b>Take refuge in your safe room</b> —an interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level of your home. The center of your house is the safest.  Lie on the floor under a table or other sturdy object if you cannot make it to a safe room.  Consider leaving your home ONLY if remaining is more dangerous than the weather outside.  Wait until the storm has passed to tend to any damage.

# The storm has passed. Now what?

## Can I start driving once a storm passes?

Do not attempt to travel after the storm passes until officials say it is safe to do so.



- There will be trees, electrical wires and other dangers on the roads.
- It is highly likely that your workplace, children's schools and stores will be closed. Many roads and bridges are likely to be closed or blocked.
- Emergency crews will be dispatched as soon as conditions are safe to begin clearing major roads of debris and open up routes to reach hospitals, fire stations, police stations and other critical facilities.
- Be patient and stay home until it is safe to travel.
- Traffic lights may out even if power has been restored. Treat all intersections and locations where there is usually a traffic light as an all-way stop sign.
- Roads may still be littered with debris.
- Many routes may be flooded. NEVER drive through standing water. Remember: Turn around. Don't drown.

**Once officials say you can drive, you should still be very careful.**

## Will I be able to get back home?



After an evacuation, many parts of Pinellas County may be inaccessible due to damage, flooding or debris blocking major roadways. Access into the county may be closed. Coming home immediately is not a guarantee.

- Stay tuned to social media and local news for updates on flooded areas, road closures and re-entry points before attempting to return to the county, your home or your business.
- Be prepared with proper ID that identifies you and the address of your residential or business property for re-entry after a storm.
- If you live or own a business on a barrier island, an Emergency Access Permit will make accessing the island after a mandatory evacuation faster and easier. You can get a permit from your City Hall, or at [www.pcsoweb.com/emergency-access-permit](http://www.pcsoweb.com/emergency-access-permit). If you do not have an Emergency Access Permit, you will be required to wait in line at the law enforcement checkpoint to show identification or other proof of residency, ownership, or employment every time you want to access the island.



# The storm has passed. Now what?

## What should I do when I return home?

- Avoid downed lines; there is no way to tell if they are electrical and if they are still live wires. Be sure to report downed lines to the power company if you are able to make calls.
- Avoid flooded areas and standing water.
- Water may be contaminated or electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- Floodwaters can contain raw sewage, bacteria, viruses and other germs that can cause disease.
- Use caution in areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have been weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Do not enter a home that has major damage to the roof and/or walls. There is no way to know if it is safe.
- Watch for snakes, raccoons, possums and other animals, as well as insects that may have moved into your evacuated home.
- Prevent mosquitoes from breeding in standing water and to protect yourself from bites. Use the 3 Ds: Drain water when possible; Dress in light colors and cover all parts of the body; and Defend with DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus repellants. To report mosquito problems, call (727) 464-8900.
- Keep kids and pets with you. There could be dangerous conditions in the neighborhood, such as power lines, fallen trees and debris.
- Photograph and list all damaged or lost items including their age and value where possible. Take photos of water in the house. Adjusters need evidence of the damage to prepare your estimate.
- Contact your insurance agent before repairing damages.
- Remove wet contents immediately to prevent mold. Wet carpeting, furniture, bedding and other items holding moisture can develop mold within 24 to 48 hours. Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage and chemicals. For information on cleaning up after a flood, go to [www.floodsafety.com/national/property/cleanup/](http://www.floodsafety.com/national/property/cleanup/)
- Get required permits before you start any home repair, improvement or construction. Hire a licensed contractor. Do not sign an Assignment of Benefits contract as a condition of having your home repaired.
- File your insurance claim as soon as possible.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are a serious health hazard.
- Officials will be making initial damage assessments as soon as the storm passes. These officials will always carry proper identification.
- If your home has major damage it may be declared uninhabitable and you will not be able to stay there.
- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers may come to a storm-ravaged area to give tarps to people who are eligible. Listen to updates from officials to learn about these and other possible services.

- There may be feeding stations and cooling centers set up as soon as it is safe for rescue workers. Check for updates on the news or for community notices that will be distributed. Sign up for Alert Pinellas to have these notices texted to your phone, as texts will sometimes work when other services do not. Go to [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas).

## Consumer alert

In a declared state of emergency, it is illegal to sell necessary goods or services at increased prices.

- If you believe a business or individual is price gouging, call Pinellas County Consumer Protection at (727) 464-6200 or report it to the Florida Attorney General's Office at (866) 966-7226 or through [www.myfloridalegal.com](http://www.myfloridalegal.com). If you do not have phone service, document the activities of the worker and report it as soon as you can.
- Make sure the professional you are hiring is a licensed contractor.

## When will the debris be picked up?

Pinellas County (for unincorporated areas) and each municipality has different procedures for debris pickup. That's why residents may have different directions about dealing with yard debris, regular trash and bulk items.

- Be patient. Debris clearance will start by opening up one lane of traffic to allow emergency vehicles and responders to help our community. Removing debris from other areas may take time depending upon the amount of debris.
- Normal daily schedules and processes will likely vary after a storm.
- The type of storm will also make the difference whether large items will be picked up, if yard debris will be in piles or bagged, etc. Be patient as urgent needs will be taken care of first.
- For information and instructions after the storm, you can check the website of your city or the county, follow them on social media or stay tuned to local news.
- Those who live on private roads may need to make additional plans for a location to dispose of debris.
- Contractors that you hire to do work such as cutting a tree down, fence work, flooding repair or removal of household items are responsible for debris removal. That is included in your fee so be sure that they are licensed and that they fulfill their responsibilities.

## When will power be restored?

Duke Energy focuses on restoring power in a sequence:

- Public safety situations
- Transmission, substation equipment and main distribution lines
- Essential facilities
- Distribution lines
- For more details see the diagram below.

## TECO suggests preparing your home for power outages:

- Remove any flammable items on the stove.
- Make sure there are no irons left on or other potentially dangerous situations.
- Turn off appliances and turn them on one by one once power is restored.

To report an outage or view current outages:

Duke Energy customers: [www.duke-energy.com/outages/restoring-your-power](http://www.duke-energy.com/outages/restoring-your-power)

TECO customers: [www.tampaelectric.com/residential/outages/outagemap](http://www.tampaelectric.com/residential/outages/outagemap)

## What is my responsibility during recovery?

Be prepared to take care of yourself and each other for at least a week. If a hurricane were to devastate the county, it could be a week before roads are opened and rescue workers can deliver water and basic food to the area. It will likely be weeks before grocery stores can reopen. It could take weeks to restore basic services.

In other words, you may be on your own for quite a while, and you should prepare for this.

It is your responsibility to arrange for loans, insurance, contractors and the other items of business that you will need to get back on your feet.

## Assistance after the storm

### Disaster assistance

Following a disaster, organizations will come into the area to help. Check the county website or social media platforms for updates and listen to the news for announcements.

### FEMA

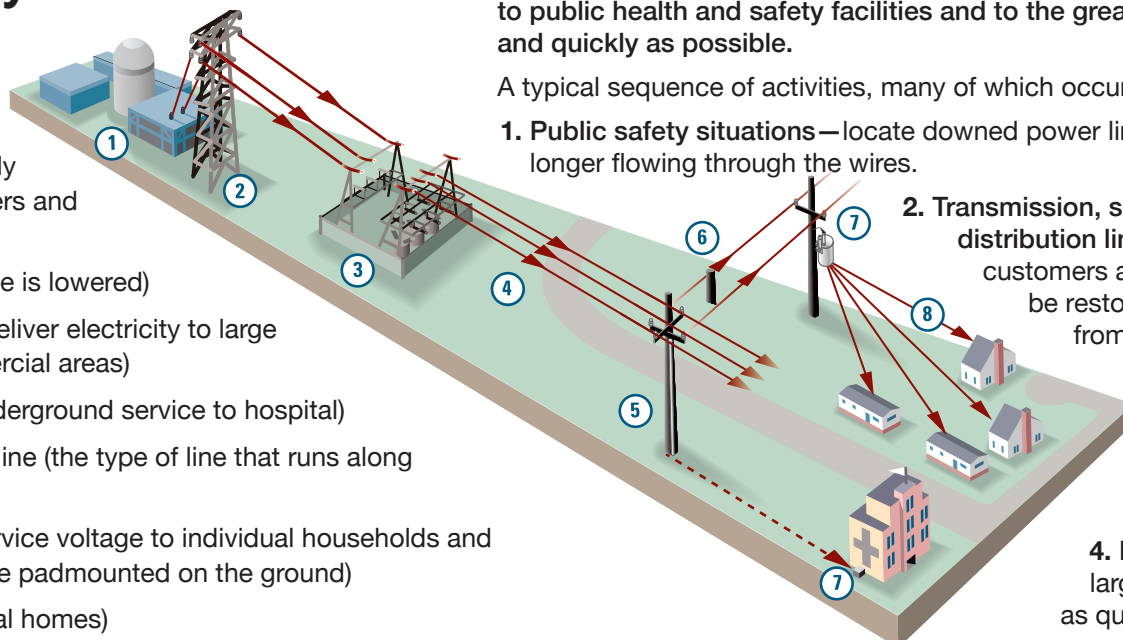
After a disaster, if a Presidential Disaster Declaration is issued, survivors must register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) if they feel they need help from any of the FEMA disaster assistance programs. Applicants have to apply for a Small Business Administration Loan to begin with, even if they are not a small business.

- If the loan is approved, then a low-interest loan is available to help you pay for repairs.
- If the loan is not approved, then you are referred back to FEMA, who determines your eligibility for additional disaster help.
- Since this is a process, it is important to sign up for assistance as soon as possible at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).
- Disaster Recovery Centers may be set up to provide assistance to residents seeking to register for disaster assistance.

Disaster assistance is not meant to get people back to where they were before the storm. It is meant to get people through the disaster.

## How Duke Energy Restores Power Restoration Diagram

- 1 Generation sources (power plants)
- 2 Transmission lines (supply large number of customers and large geographic areas)
- 3 Substation (where voltage is lowered)
- 4 Main distribution lines (deliver electricity to large subdivisions and commercial areas)
- 5 Power pole (showing underground service to hospital)
- 6 Local distribution or tap line (the type of line that runs along neighborhood streets)
- 7 Transformer (reduces service voltage to individual households and businesses – may also be padmounted on the ground)
- 8 Service lines (to individual homes)



Duke Energy focuses on restoring power in a sequence that enables power restoration to public health and safety facilities and to the greatest number of customers as safely and quickly as possible.

A typical sequence of activities, many of which occur simultaneously, is as follows:

1. **Public safety situations**—locate downed power lines and make sure electricity is no longer flowing through the wires.
2. **Transmission, substation equipment and main distribution lines**—these serve large numbers of customers and large geographic areas, and must be restored first to keep electricity flowing from power plants to neighborhoods.
3. **Essential facilities**—emergency service and critical infrastructure such as hospitals, law enforcement, fire departments and water treatment facilities.
4. **Distribution lines**—we work to get the largest number of customers back on as quickly as possible.



# What else should I prepare for?

Preparedness for any hazard, whether natural or manmade, is all about understanding the threats, planning ahead, and being ready to put that plan into action. Many other hazards provide little or no warning or preparation time. If anyone is hurt or if you need immediate help, call 9-1-1.

Some things you should always have:

A safe room inside your home, workplace, school and other locations where you spend time.

At least two ways to get emergency notifications. Sign up with Alert Pinellas at [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas) and know where to get reliable news.

An emergency plan for home, business, school and other locations you frequent.

A Go Kit in case of evacuation.

A Stay Kit in case you have to shelter in place.

This should include plastic sheeting and duct tape.

A safe meeting place in the neighborhood that your whole family knows.

Emergency contacts (*mobile and printed*).

Awareness of your surroundings. Even while doing outdoor activities, take note of locations that might be good for a safe shelter if needed.

Good communications about emergency plans.

A two-week supply of food and water at home in case you need to shelter in place.

Nonprescription drugs such as pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes and vitamins.



## Thunderstorms and lightning

### When Thunder Roars Go Indoors

Florida has over a million lightning strikes per year. Pinellas County has regular storms—especially in the summer—that come up fast can lead to grave danger for those not paying attention. To avoid getting hurt by lightning:

- Check the weather before you go and keep an eye on the sky.
- If you see dark clouds approaching and hear thunder, find a safe place to take cover, like restrooms in a park, a shelter on the beach or even a business near to you.
- Get off of any elevated structures.
- Do not lie flat on the ground.
- Do not stand under a tree.
- Get as far away from water as possible.
- Stay away from anything that conducts electricity.

## Tornadoes

### Duck and Cover

When you get a tornado warning on your emergency weather radio or from Alert Pinellas you will not have much time: about 12 minutes.

- Find your safe room now and make sure everyone in your home or business knows it. Look for an internal room with no windows as low in the building as possible. Many use a bathroom or a closet. The safe room can also be used when a shelter in place order is given.
- If you are in a car, park safely, get out and seek shelter. Cars are easily overturned. Do not try to outrun a tornado.
- If you are in a mobile home, you must get to a safer place. Identify a safe place now, perhaps the community restrooms, laundry room or community center.

If you find yourself out in the open, lie down in a ditch or culvert, or if all else fails, lie flat on the ground and cover your head.

## House fire

### Get Out, Stay Out, Call for Help

If a fire starts in your home, you may have as little as two minutes to escape.

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas.
- Test smoke alarms every month and change the batteries twice a year.
- Talk to your family about a fire escape plan and practice it. Have two ways to escape.
- Keep items at least 3 feet away from anything that gets hot.
- Do not smoke in the home.
- Turn heaters off when you leave the room.
- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- If a fire occurs, get out quickly and call for help. Never go back in for anything or anyone.

## Wildfires

In Pinellas County, wildfires can occur in open spaces, parks, preserves and even in your backyard. Drought and freezes raise the chances of fire. Wildfires can be caused by lightning but usually they are started by humans—either by accident or intentionally.

- Maintain the outside of your home and keep it free of anything that will easily burn, such as firewood. Prune vegetation and clean gutters regularly.
- If you see a wildfire, call 9-1-1. Do not assume someone else has reported it.
- If you think you may have to evacuate, get your Go Kit, seal doors, cover vents, close gas valves and turn off pilot lights.
- If ordered to evacuate, do it immediately.
- Do not return home until officials say it is safe.

# What if we're told to shelter in place?

Shelter in place means to stay in the building you currently occupy and protect yourself there. Make sure you are receiving your emergency notifications and tune in to local broadcasts for official instructions.



There are many reasons you might be told to shelter in place. It could be that there was a chemical spill in the area or that a violent act is suspected. It may only be a matter

of hours, not days, that you will be asked to stay sheltered.

If you are notified of an emergency and do not know what to do, play it safe and shelter in place. After a hurricane, shelter in place. Officials will let you know when it is safe.

## What to do if you are home or at work

- Get everyone into the safe room (interior room with the least number of windows possible).
- If instructed to do so:
  - Seal all windows and doors with plastic and duct tape.
  - Turn off air conditioning and other ventilation systems.
- Remain indoors until officials say it is safe.
- Stay updated and be sure you are signed up through Alert Pinellas [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas)

## What NOT to do:

- Leave home, work or the building you currently occupy—for any reason, even to get your children from school. Schools have emergency plans and will keep your children safe until the danger passes. You may put them and yourself in great danger if you attempt to get them.

## What if I am driving?

- Safely park your car as soon as possible and go inside the nearest public building.
- If there are no buildings in the area, park safely (preferably in shade), close your windows, and if instructed to do so, shut off your air conditioning/heat/fan and seal the vents if possible. Use only recirculated air. Listen for emergency notifications on your mobile device and listen to the radio for updates.





# IMPORTANT CONTACTS

## State of Florida

**Florida Attorney General's Office**  
(price gouging)  
(866) 966-7226  
[www.myfloridalegal.com](http://www.myfloridalegal.com)

**Florida Division of Emergency Management** (non-emergency)  
(850) 413-9969  
[www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)

**Florida Highway Patrol**  
\*FHP (mobile phone) / (727) 570-5010  
[www.flhsmv.gov/fhp](http://www.flhsmv.gov/fhp)

## Federal agencies

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**  
(800) 621-3362  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

**National Hurricane Center**  
[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)

**National Weather Service/Tampa Bay Area**  
[www.weather.gov/tbw](http://www.weather.gov/tbw)

**NOAA Weather Alert Radio**  
Specific Area Message Encoding (SAME) code for Pinellas County: 012103

## Utility companies

**Clearwater Gas**  
(727) 562-4900 (general)  
(727) 462-6633 (gas leaks)  
[www.clearwatergas.com](http://www.clearwatergas.com)

**Duke Energy** (report outages)  
(800) 228-8485  
[www.duke-energy.com](http://www.duke-energy.com)

**Frontier**  
(800) 921-8101  
[www.frontier.com](http://www.frontier.com)

**Spectrum**  
(855) 222-0102  
[www.spectrum.com/services/florida/pinellas-county](http://www.spectrum.com/services/florida/pinellas-county)

**TECO Peoples Gas**  
(877) 832-6747 (gas leaks)  
[www.peoplesgas.com](http://www.peoplesgas.com)

**TECO** (report outages)  
(877) 588-1010  
[www.tampaelectric.com](http://www.tampaelectric.com)

**WOW!**  
(866) 745-3685  
[www.wowway.com](http://www.wowway.com)

## Hotlines

**2-1-1 Tampa Bay Cares**  
2-1-1 texting  
Text your zip code to 898211  
[media@211tampabay.org](mailto:media@211tampabay.org)

**Citizen Information Center**  
(727) 464-4333  
(During emergencies)

Call 9-1-1 for emergencies only.  
Text 911 only if you are unable to call in an emergency.

## Want to help?

### Volunteering takes planning too.

Pinellas County works with non-profit and faith-based organizations to provide community support in times of need.

### Adopt-A-Shelter

During dangerous weather, you may be able to open your facility as a shelter to your employees, congregation or the public. The county will have many sheltering needs after a disaster as well. To talk about how you can help, call **Emergency Management** at (727) 464-3800.

### Billboard Emergency Alert System (BEAS)

Help us let drivers and pedestrians know about urgent news by putting alerts on your electronic signs. By partnering with us, you can help the community prepare and stay safe. If you own or manage a digital sign along any road in Pinellas County and want to be a BEAS partner, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/beas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/beas), email [ema@pinellascounty.org](mailto:ema@pinellascounty.org) or call **Emergency Management** at (727) 464-3800.

### Pet transport

Residents who will stay in special needs shelters during a disaster need to have their pets taken care of too. You can help bring the dogs and cats to Pinellas County Animal Services so that they can be cared for until their owner returns home. If you can help, call **Animal Services** at (727) 582-2600.

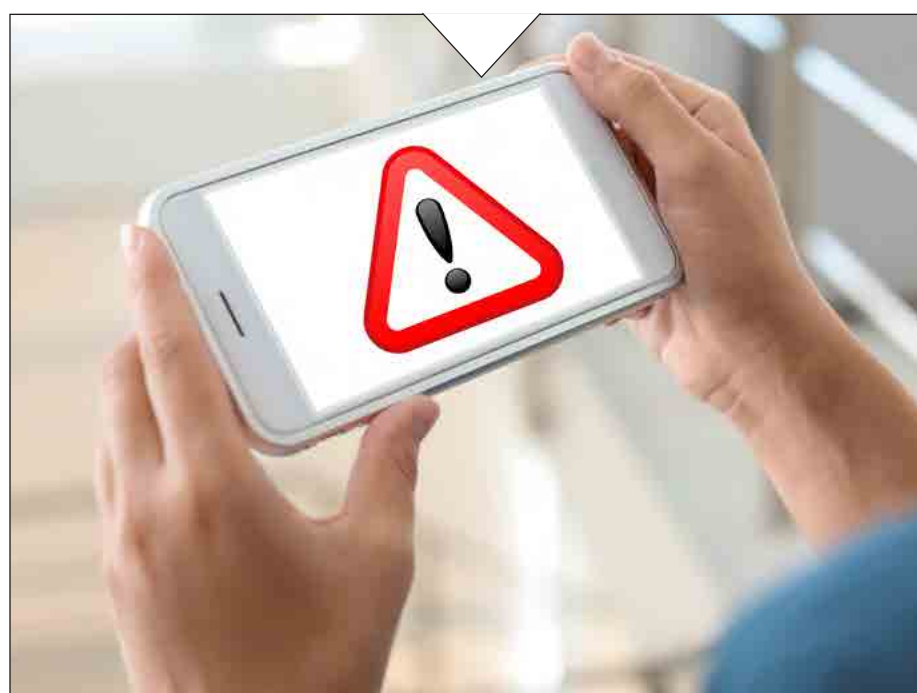


## ALERT Pinellas

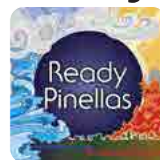
In emergencies, stay informed.

Sign up for Alert Pinellas, the county's emergency notification service, and be in the know. This FREE service will call, text and email you with important notices affecting your safety and/or health.

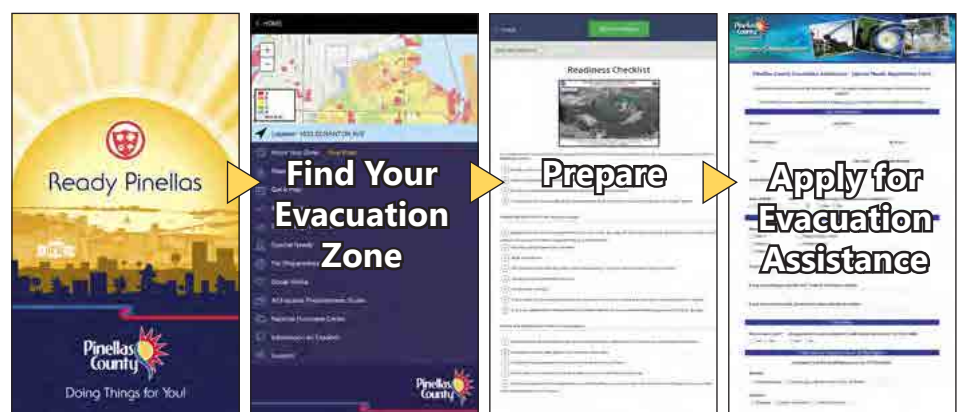
Sign up at [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas)



## Ready Pinellas



Get the Ready Pinellas mobile app, the county's risk assessment tool that helps you look up your evacuation level, create preparedness checklists and plans, and is linked to crucial emergency websites and social media. Ready Pinellas is available to download from the Apple App Store or Google Play.



Apple App Store



Google Play

