

# Sarasota County, Florida

## All-Hazards Disaster Planning Guide

### Hurricane and Disaster Supplies



Are you ready?



Hurricane Season is June 1<sup>st</sup> – November 30<sup>th</sup>

**YOUR NEW HURRICANE EVACUATION MAP INSIDE**

Do you know your **Evacuation Level**? Check the map or visit: [ags3.scgov.net/knowyourlevel](https://ags3.scgov.net/knowyourlevel).

#### Connect with Sarasota County

Facebook: [@SRQCountyGov](https://www.facebook.com/SRQCountyGov)  
[@SRQEmergencyServices](https://www.facebook.com/SRQEmergencyServices)

Twitter: [@SRQCountyGov](https://twitter.com/SRQCountyGov)  
[@scgovEOC](https://twitter.com/scgovEOC)

Contact Center: 311, (941) 861-5000

County Website: [scgov.net](https://www.scgov.net)

#### PREPARE

Your Disaster Plan  
 Disaster Supply Kit  
 Keeping Animals Safe  
 Preparing Businesses

#### RESPOND

Bracing for a Storm  
 Evacuate or Stay?  
 Special Needs Populations  
 Your Evacuation Map

#### RECOVER

What to Expect After a Storm  
 Hazard Mitigation  
 Recovery Assistance  
 Update Your Disaster Plan



Prepare today! [tampabayprepares.org](https://www.tampabayprepares.org)

# WHEN A DISASTER STRIKES, WILL YOU BE READY?

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

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

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

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



## Your Disaster Plan



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

### KNOW YOUR RISK

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

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

### HOME RENTERS

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

**Make a plan today!**

### PICK TWO MEETING PLACES IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

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

### EMERGENCY TRAINING

Prepare yourself for emergencies by taking first aid and CPR courses ([redcross.org](http://redcross.org)).

### DISASTER COMMUNICATION

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

### BUSINESS OWNERS

If you own a business, follow your Business Continuity Plan. For more information on how to create a Business Continuity Plan, read pages 17-18 of this guide and visit [disastersafety.org](http://disastersafety.org) and [ready.gov](http://ready.gov).



## KEEP A PAPER TRAIL

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

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



## HELP YOUR NEIGHBORS & THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

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

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

## AT-HOME HEALTHCARE & HOMEBOUND PATIENTS

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

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

## ARE YOU COVERED? KNOW THESE INSURANCE TIPS!

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

\* FEMA Flood Zones ([floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov)).

\*\* Educational resources are available from the Insurance Information Institute ([iii.org](http://iii.org)).

# Disaster Safety Tips The time to prepare is now!

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

## FLOODING

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

## LIGHTNING/THUNDERSTORMS

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

## TORNADOES

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

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



Visit [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more information about preparing for disasters.



## FIRE SAFETY

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



## RIP CURRENTS

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



## PANDEMIC DISEASE

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



social distancing  
slows the spread



(at least 6 feet)



## SUSPICIOUS BEHAVIOR

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



## ACTIVE SHOOTER

If there is an active shooter in your vicinity:

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



## HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

**IF YOU ARE TOLD TO EVACUATE:**

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

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

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

# Disaster Supply Kit

Is your **supply kit** ready?

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

## STOW UNTIL NEEDED:

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



## REPLENISH FOR FRESHNESS:

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



## TIPS FOR PREPARING ON A BUDGET

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

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

## IF YOU EVACUATE, ALSO TAKE:

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



## EVACUATION ITEMS FOR CHILDREN:

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



# Bracing for the Storm

Is your home ready?

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

## THE ABCs OF SEVERE WEATHER

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

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

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

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

## MOBILE HOMES, BOATS, & RVs

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

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



Image Credit: The Sims 4 Electronic Arts

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

# EVACUATE OR STAY?

WHICH PATH SHOULD YOU TAKE?

START

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

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

YES



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

NO



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

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

YES

NO



## EVACUATE TO A SAFE LOCATION

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

1. **Assemble your disaster supply kit.** Prepare enough supplies for your entire family, including pets.
2. **Select your safe place.** Determine where you will go and how you will get there. This place can be a friend's or relative's home, hotel, motel, or nearby designated shelter/evacuation center. Make sure your destination is NOT in an area that has been ordered to evacuate. When possible, evacuating *tens of miles, not hundreds* reduces your chance of being stuck in traffic and shortens your time to return home.
3. **Do you need help with transportation?** Consider carpooling with friends or relatives, or a rideshare program like Uber or Lyft. **Sarasota County provides an emergency shuttle to evacuation centers.** Call the County to coordinate your evacuation travel (311, 941-861-5000). **If you don't need help, fill your vehicle's gas tank and check oil, fluids, and tires.** Gas pumps will not operate if the power goes out.
4. **Notify family and friends of your plans.**
5. **Bring extra cash.** Banks and ATMs will not operate during power outages. Few stores will be able to accept credit cards or personal checks.
6. **Enact your Pet Plan.** Read more about keeping animals safe on [pages 15 & 16](#).
7. **Secure your home, pack important documents, and gather your evacuation supplies.**
8. **Check on your neighbors.** Especially the elderly and people with medical needs. Do they need transportation assistance?
9. When advised by your County, grab your family, pets, and supply kit and head to safety using your **Hurricane Evacuation Map (inside this guide)**.



## SHELTER-IN-PLACE

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

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



## RIDE OUT THE STORM

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

# Sarasota County Evacuation Centers

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

## How do I know if I need to go to an evacuation center?

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

- o Current evacuation center information is available from local radio and television stations, the Sarasota County Contact Center at **311, 941-861-5000**, and Access Sarasota(Comcast channel 19/ Frontier channel 32). More information is available on the county website: [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared).
- o Evacuation centers will open based on the nature and timing of the threat to the county. **Never go to an evacuation center unless local officials have announced it is open.** Stay tuned to local media for a listing of evacuation centers that will be open. Openings may differ by size and intensity of a disaster. Evacuation centers are opened for the single purpose of protecting lives and are opened based on the ability of that facility to withstand the forecasted wind effects and storm surge.
- o **All Sarasota County evacuation centers welcome properly crated and supplied dogs and cats.** Current vaccination records are required. Read more about keeping animals safe on [pages 15 & 16](#).
- o Evacuation centers are public environments where people are seeking shelter from intense weather. Power loss results in no air conditioning. Evacuation centers do not have generators and offer no services other than a very basic food provisions and water. There are no cots, pillows or blankets provided.  
**Evacuees must bring their own bedding and supplies.**
- o **For the latest information on COVID-19 protocols and evacuation centers, please visit:** [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared).

These graphics show possible spacing in Sarasota County evacuation centers. For the latest information on COVID-19 protocols in Sarasota County evacuation centers, visit [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared).



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

## Functional Needs Support Services

Functional Needs Support Services (FNSS) are services that enable children and adults to maintain their usual level of independence in a general population evacuation center.

Those requiring FNSS may have physical, sensory, mental health, cognitive, and/or intellectual disabilities affecting their ability to function independently without assistance. Individuals will not be turned away from general population evacuation centers, or inappropriately placed in other environments.

Upon arrival to a Sarasota County general population evacuation center, inform center management staff of your request for services to ensure the most effective approach. Sarasota County will make every effort to meet functional and access needs at approved evacuation centers upon request.

## Medically-Dependent Evacuation Centers

If you will need assistance in an evacuation or need to go to a medically dependent evacuation center, **register with Sarasota County Emergency Management. Early application and registration with Sarasota County Emergency Management is recommended.** Examples of qualifying medical needs include the use of oxygen or use of medical equipment that requires electricity. It is important to apply in advance for this program so, if qualified, you will be on the county's registry for transportation and sheltering at a medically-dependent evacuation center during a disaster.

Pre-registration helps us to help you when time is limited. To apply or for more information visit [scgov.net/beprepared](https://scgov.net/beprepared) (keyword: medical needs) or call **311, 941-861-5000**.

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

## Prescriptions

Your prescription medications are one of the most important things to include in your disaster supply kit. But in a declared emergency, what happens when your insurance company claims it is too early for you to get a refill? The Florida Emergency Prescription Refill Bill (FS 252.358 and 462.0275) requires all insurers to suspend refill-too-soon restrictions when a patient seeks a refill in a county that is (1) under a NWS Hurricane Warning; (2) under a state of emergency declared by the Governor; or (3) the County Emergency Operations Center is activated. If you evacuate out of the county, this law also allows patients to get an emergency 72-hour refill if the pharmacist is unable to obtain refill authorization from the doctor.

Keep a list of each medication you take, including the name of the doctor who wrote the prescription, dosage instructions, and the name and phone number of the pharmacy where you had it filled.

For the latest information on medically dependent evacuation centers in Sarasota County and COVID-19 protocols, please visit [scgov.net/beprepared](https://scgov.net/beprepared).



**Advanced registration is required.**

**Register at [scgov.net/beprepared](https://scgov.net/beprepared)**

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

# Hurricane Threat

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

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

Hurricanes are categorized on a scale of 1 to 5, depending on wind strength and destructive power. The evacuation levels are color-coded to designate the level of storm surge likely to occur.

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

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

| SAFFIR SIMPSON HURRICANE WIND SCALE |             |   |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|---|
| CATEGORY                            | WIND SPEED  | DAMAGE AT LANDFALL                                    |
| 1                                   | 74-95 mph   | Very dangerous winds will produce some damage         |
| 2                                   | 96-110 mph  | Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage |
| 3                                   | 111-129 mph | Devastating damage will occur                         |
| 4                                   | 130-156 mph | Catastrophic damage will occur                        |
| 5                                   | 157+ mph    | Catastrophic damage will occur                        |

## Hotel or Motel Evacuation

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

## Leaving Coastal Areas

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

# Using Your County Map →

1. Locate where you live and work on the map or online at "Know Your Level" ([scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared)).
2. Determine whether you are in an evacuation area, and if so, what level (color).
3. If you are in an evacuation area, or live in a mobile home, boat, or RV, decide where you will go if ordered to evacuate.

Your choices include:

- o Home of a relative or friend outside the evacuation level.
  - o Hotel/motel outside the evacuation level (make arrangements early).
  - o Go to a public evacuation center.
  - o As a last resort, leave the area entirely.
4. If you must go to a public evacuation center, use your county map to decide which one is convenient. Make sure you verify that the evacuation center is open **before you go**.

## Transportation Plan (Hurricane Evacuation Centers)

For those who cannot drive or otherwise be transported by family, friends or neighbors, Sarasota County will provide last-resort, free transportation for you and your pets (along with a limited amount of supplies) to and from a general population evacuation center. Transportation will be offered at designated rally points throughout the county.

Complete the online registration form on [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared). All county libraries are available to help with online registration for those without a computer or call 311 to register. The form will include guidance for those who cannot drive or walk to a designated rally point.

Rally points may change depending on the severity of a storm. Residents who pre-register will receive an automated telephone message with information about when they will be picked up. This program is activated only when Sarasota County has declared a county emergency, an activation is ordered, and evacuation centers are opened. Visit [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared) for more information, or call **311, 941-861-5000**.

Important: The online registration process will cease when landfall is expected within 60 hours.

## Alert Sarasota County

Register to receive notifications from Alert Sarasota County at [AlertSarasotaCounty.com](http://AlertSarasotaCounty.com) and monitor the local news.



**Hurricane Watch:**

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

**Hurricane Warning:**

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

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

**County Evacuation Guidelines**

**Potential Storm Surge Heights (in feet)**

- A Up to 12'** Evacuate red areas and all mobile home/RV residents
- B Up to 16'** Evacuate red and orange areas and all mobile home/RV residents
- C Up to 20'** Evacuate red, orange, and yellow areas and all mobile home/RV residents
- D Up to 26'** Evacuate red, orange, yellow, and green areas and all mobile home/RV residents
- E Up to 32'** Evacuate red, orange, yellow, green, and purple areas and all mobile home/RV residents

Areas shown in white are non-evacuation zones

**Evacuation Routes**

Find your home's Evacuation Level at: [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared)

**My Evacuation Level is (fill below):**

\_\_\_\_\_

Residents in mobile homes, boats, RVs, and manufactured homes **MUST EVACUATE** no matter where you are located in the county.



**Find your closest Evacuation Center on the map.**

| #  | Evacuation Center              | Address                              |
|----|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1  | Fruitville Elementary School   | 601 Honore Ave., Sarasota            |
| 5  | Brookside Middle School        | 3636 S. Shade Ave., Sarasota         |
| 6  | Southside Elementary School    | 1901 Webber St., Sarasota            |
| 8  | Riverview High School          | 1 Ram Way, Sarasota                  |
| 9  | Booker High School             | 3201 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota        |
| 22 | Phillippi Shores Elementary    | 4747 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota      |
| 25 | Gulf Gate Elementary School    | 6500 S. Lockwood Ridge Rd., Sarasota |
| 33 | North Port High School         | 6400 W. Price Blvd., North Port      |
| 34 | Heron Creek Middle School      | 6501 W. Price Blvd., North Port      |
| 36 | Woodland Middle School         | 2700 Panacea Blvd., North Port       |
| 37 | Taylor Ranch Elementary School | 2500 Taylor Ranch Trail, Venice      |
| 38 | Atwater Elementary School      | 4701 Huntsville Ave., North Port     |

**Dogs and Cats**

All Sarasota County evacuation centers welcome properly crated and supplied dogs and cats. Current vaccination records are required for dogs and cats. Learn more about keeping animals safe on pages 15 and 16.

**COVID-19 Precautions**

To see the latest information on hurricane evacuation centers and COVID-19, please visit [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared).

**A storm surge...**

Low pressure near eye pulls water higher.

Winds pile up water and push it toward shore.

**...and its destructive power**

The surge can begin before the storm hits, cutting off escape routes.

Battering waves may erode beaches and damage buildings.

A shallow coastline slope produces a greater surge than a steeper slope.

Waves push the water inland faster than it can drain off.

Floating debris can act as battering rams.

Image Credit: NOAA Weather Underground

# IMPORTANT CONTACT INFO.

|   |  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
|---|--|-----------------|-----------------|------------|------------|---------|-----------|-----------|------------|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|------------|------------|--|-----------|-----------|------------|--|--|
| <b>SARASOTA COUNTY CONTACT CENTER</b>   | <b>311, 941-861-5000</b><br><a href="http://scgov.net">scgov.net</a>                         |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>EVACUATION INFORMATION</b>   | <b>941-861-5000</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>TTY-DEAF COMMUNICATIONS</b><br>for Sarasota County Contact Center  | <b>941-861-1833</b> or<br><b>1-800-955-8771</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>MEDICALLY-DEPENDENT REGISTRY</b>   | <b>941-861-5000</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>AMERICAN RED CROSS SWFL CHAPTER</b>  | <b>941-379-9300</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>SUNCOAST COMMUNITIES BLOOD BANKS</b><br>1760 Mound Street, Sarasota, FL 34236<br>539 U.S. HWY 41 Bypass North, Venice, FL 34285<br>3025 Lakewood Ranch Blvd., Bradenton, FL 34211  | Call toll-free:<br><b>1-866-97-BLOOD</b><br>or visit: <a href="http://scbb.org">scbb.org</a> |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>CATHOLIC CHARITIES</b>   | <b>941-355-4680</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES</b>  | <b>941-861-5000</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>SALVATION ARMY</b>   | <b>941-954-4673</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>UNITED WAY</b>   | <b>941-366-2686</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>SUNCOAST 2-1-1</b><br>Call 2-1-1 for a free and confidential service that helps people find the local resources needed.  | <b>2-1-1</b><br>Text your ZIP code to<br>898-211 for more resources                          |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>ANIMAL SERVICES</b>  | <b>941-861-9500</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>FLORIDA POWER AND LIGHT</b>  | <b>800-468-8243</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>HIGHWAY PATROL</b>   | <b>941-492-5850</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>SARASOTA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE</b>   | <b>941-861-5800</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>SOLID WASTE</b>  | <b>941-861-5000</b>  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>NOAA WEATHER RADIO</b>   | <b>FREQ 162.40 MHZ</b><br>FIPS code 012115   |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
|  <table border="0"> <tr> <td><b>RADIO AM</b></td> <td></td> <td><b>RADIO FM</b></td> <td>WSLR 96.5</td> <td>WTZB 105.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WLS 930</td> <td>WBRD 1420</td> <td>WTMY 99.1</td> <td>WRUB 106.5</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>WSRQ 1220</td> <td>WSDV 1450</td> <td>WJIS 88.1</td> <td>WHPT 102.5</td> <td>WSRQ 106.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td>WTMY 1280</td> <td>WWPR 1490</td> <td>WSMR 89.1</td> <td>WKZM 104.3</td> <td>WSRZ 107.9</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>WENG 1530</td> <td>WCTQ 92.1</td> <td>WZSP 105.3</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | <b>RADIO AM</b>  |                 | <b>RADIO FM</b> | WSLR 96.5  | WTZB 105.9 | WLS 930 | WBRD 1420 | WTMY 99.1 | WRUB 106.5 |  | WSRQ 1220 | WSDV 1450 | WJIS 88.1 | WHPT 102.5 | WSRQ 106.9 | WTMY 1280 | WWPR 1490 | WSMR 89.1 | WKZM 104.3 | WSRZ 107.9 |  | WENG 1530 | WCTQ 92.1 | WZSP 105.3 |  |  |
| <b>RADIO AM</b>   |  | <b>RADIO FM</b> | WSLR 96.5       | WTZB 105.9 |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| WLS 930   | WBRD 1420  | WTMY 99.1       | WRUB 106.5      |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| WSRQ 1220   | WSDV 1450  | WJIS 88.1       | WHPT 102.5      | WSRQ 106.9 |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| WTMY 1280   | WWPR 1490  | WSMR 89.1       | WKZM 104.3      | WSRZ 107.9 |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
|   | WENG 1530  | WCTQ 92.1       | WZSP 105.3      |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |
| <b>DO NOT CALL 9-1-1 FOR DISASTER INFORMATION</b>   |  |                 |                 |            |            |         |           |           |            |  |           |           |           |            |            |           |           |           |            |            |  |           |           |            |  |  |

**NOAA Weather Radio** can provide you with valuable hurricane information as well as vital warning information for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms and other dangerous weather phenomena. It also broadcasts warning and post-event information for all types of hazards and significant matters of public safety.



[twitter.com/scgovEOC](https://twitter.com/scgovEOC)

[twitter.com/SRQCountyGov](https://twitter.com/SRQCountyGov)



[facebook.com/SRQEmergencyServices](https://facebook.com/SRQEmergencyServices)

[facebook.com/SRQCountyGov](https://facebook.com/SRQCountyGov)

## Web-Based Hurricane Info.

Sarasota County Government maintains a special webpage to relay important hurricane information for local residents. You can find out which, if any, evacuation level (zone) you live in, your nearest public evacuation center (shelter), medically-dependent (special needs) registration forms, and much more. For more information, visit: [scgov.net](http://scgov.net), keywords: "all hazards"; or [facebook.com/srqemergencyserives](https://facebook.com/srqemergencyserives).

## Sarasota County Notification/Warning System

**Alert Sarasota County** is a free, secure, advanced, and effective community notification system that allows you to receive calls, email alerts, or text messages about events that could impact your neighborhood or help protect your family or property. This system allows Sarasota County to send critical communications to all or targeted areas within the county when immediate actions are required. Your contact information remains private, and will only be used for public health, safety, and wellness purposes.

Anyone with a physical address in Sarasota County may participate. Visit [scgov.net/beprepared](http://scgov.net/beprepared) for more information, to register now or update information, or call **311, 941-861-5000**.

## Hearing Impaired Callers

Sarasota County 9-1-1 Communications Center is equipped with the TTY/TDD system. (**TTY: 7-1-1 or 1-800-955-8771**).

Accepted abbreviations adopted to ensure accuracy:

- o GA means "go ahead"
- o SK means "stop keying"
- o Q means "question"
- o xxx indicates a mistake

A call to 9-1-1 will always be responded with "9-1-1, what is your emergency Q GA?"

The TTY/TDD's are designed to follow a few simple rules:

- o Punctuation is not used
- o Contractions are written as one word
- o Apostrophes are replaced with a single space
- o "Hang up now" indicates help is on the way

For more information about 9-1-1 services call the Sarasota County Call Center at **311, 941-861-5000** and ask for Public Safety Communications.

# What to Expect After a Storm



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



## RE-ENTRY AFTER THE STORM

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



## POST-STORM SAFETY

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



## STORM DEBRIS CLEAN-UP: SARASOTA COUNTY REQUIREMENTS

Depending on the severity of the storm, residents should anticipate delays, and possibly suspension in their regular collection services including trash, recycling, and yard waste. Storm debris must be separated by category for collection, for example:

- o **Vegetative:** tree limbs and trunks.
- o **Garbage:** place spoiled food in containers, or double bag it for pick-up.
- o **Household goods:** furniture, clothes, books, toys.
- o **Construction materials:** drywall, roof shingles, carpet, aluminum, vinyl, wood fencing.
- o **Appliances:** refrigerators, water heaters, televisions, computers.

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

Live on a private road? If so, the homeowner must grant the county the right to enter the roadway for debris removal. For further information, to be added to the private roads community database, or to obtain the Right-of-Entry/Hold Harmless form, call **311 or 941-861-5000.**



## GENERATORS

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



## CONTRACTOR FRAUD

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



## HAZARD MITIGATION

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

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

# Keeping Animals Safe Prepare your entire family.

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

## DISASTER PLANNING FOR DOMESTIC AND RURAL ANIMALS

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

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

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

## IDENTIFICATION

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



## EVACUATION SUPPLIES FOR YOUR HOUSEHOLD PETS

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

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

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

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

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

## PREPARE YOUR LIVESTOCK BEFORE A STORM

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

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



# Business Preparedness

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

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



Take note of the following tips:

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

For more disaster preparedness tips for businesses visit: [disastersafety.org](http://disastersafety.org) and [ready.gov](http://ready.gov).

## HURRICANE PHOENIX

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

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

## PROJECT PHOENIX 2.0



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

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

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

Visit [floridadisaster.biz/DisasterPlanningToolkit](http://floridadisaster.biz/DisasterPlanningToolkit) to prepare your Business Disaster Plan.



Image Credit: [floridadisaster.biz](http://floridadisaster.biz)



## BUSINESS PREPAREDNESS & RECOVERY RESOURCES

1. The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) provides low-interest disaster loans to help businesses recover from declared disasters. Video guide to SBA's Disaster Assistance Program: [youtube.com/watch?v=Xm\\_ss5QmBAE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xm_ss5QmBAE).  
  
The SBA advises that if immediate assistance is required, small businesses should call the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), or the SBA in its local community. FEMA can be reached at [1-800-621-3362](tel:1-800-621-3362) and contact SBA's Disaster Assistance team at [1-800-659-2955](tel:1-800-659-2955).
2. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) provides assistance to Florida workers, businesses, and communities after a disaster. Learn more at [floridajobs.org](http://floridajobs.org).
3. U.S. Chamber Foundation's "Resilience in a Box" workbook guides companies toward addressing preparedness issues while building in flexibility to handle potential business interruptions. Visit the following websites for more information:
  - 1) [uschamberfoundation.org/resilience-box](http://uschamberfoundation.org/resilience-box)
  - 2) [uschamberfoundation.org/node/43155](http://uschamberfoundation.org/node/43155).

# Securing Electronic Devices & Data

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



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

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

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

# Disaster Recovery Assistance

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



## INDIVIDUAL & HOUSEHOLD DISASTER ASSISTANCE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



### HOW DO I APPLY FOR FEDERAL DISASTER ASSISTANCE?

A number of services and special programs are available when the President signs a major disaster declaration. Call FEMA or apply online at [disasterassistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov).

Federal Emergency Management Agency



**FEMA**

[fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov)

**1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**

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



### IS CRISIS COUNSELING AVAILABLE TO ME?

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

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

# Update Your Disaster Plan



## COMPLETE YOUR DISASTER PLANNING CHECKLIST

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of hotel/motel: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_

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

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

**Insurance information.** Name of company, agent, phone number, and address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior windows                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Large windows and glass doors  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garage doors                             | <input type="checkbox"/> Roof gable ends                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roof protection                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Indoor hazard protection plans |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor property protection plans        | <input type="checkbox"/> Trees and landscaping          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile home, boat, or RV (if applicable) |   |

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

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

Digital copies of this guide are available to download at [tampabayprepares.org](http://tampabayprepares.org).

Contact your county to request a hard copy.