



HURRICANE MILTON EMERGENCY EVACUATION ESSENTIAL ITEMS LIST



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Emergency Evacuation Essentials

If you live in an area of Florida that is in the direct path of the potentially catastrophic Category 5 Hurricane Milton, *you must immediately evacuate your home* and head to your nearest emergency shelter. Prepare for the possibility of an extended stay – between 72 hours and one week. In the time that you have remaining (if possible) gather together the essential items you'll need to ride out the storm in the shelter as comfortably as possible.

Packing a well-prepared go-bag (also called a bug-out bag) for a hurricane evacuation, especially to an emergency shelter, is crucial for ensuring your safety, hygiene, and comfort during an extended stay. The following is a checklist of the most important essential items broken down into categories:

Personal Hygiene and Sanitation:

☐ **Toiletries:** Toothbrush, toothpaste, biodegradable soap, deodorant, comb/brush, lotion, lip balm (to prevent dry skin)



☐ **Wet wipes or baby wipes:** Essential for quick cleaning when water is scarce.

☐ **Hand sanitizer:** Alcohol-based (at least 60%) for maintaining hygiene.

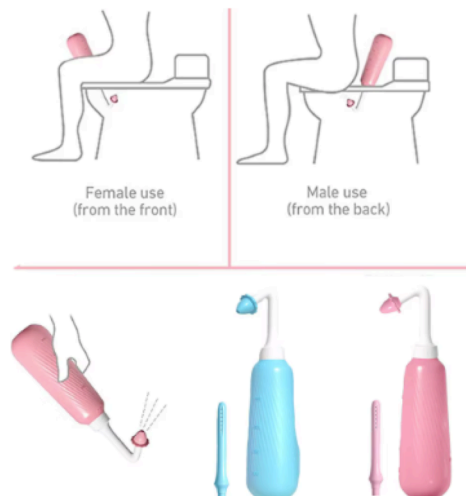
☐ **Sanitary pads/tampons:** If needed.

☐ **Disposable Toilet Seat Covers:** You'll definitely need these as you might be in a shelter with thousands of people. Taking the law of averages into consideration, many will have poor hygiene and will be using the toilets. In addition many others will have gastric issues due to the stress. You'll need these as a barrier to protect you from the splashed fecal material, urine and other waste that will be splattered on the seat.



☐ **Toilet paper:** Pack at least one roll.

☐ **Peri-Bottle or Portable Hand Bidet:** A peri-bottle is a small squeezable dispenser used by women after birth that allows them to gently clean their sensitive areas after birth. It can also function as a portable Bidet to be used as a substitute for toilet paper if it isn't available. Or a portable bidet can also be purchased at finer drug and medical supply stores. (too late to order online)



☐ **5 Gallon Bucket/Portable Toilet:** Public toilets in emergency evacuations are often clogged by toilet paper or overuse. If in the even this occurs, you might want to have a back up bucket just in case.

☐ **Small towel:** Quick-dry microfiber towels are lightweight and fast-drying.

☐ **Trash bags & Ziplock bags:** For waste, used items, or waterproofing belongings.

- ☐ **Tissues:** Portable packs for general use.

Disease Protection:

- ☐ **Face-masks (N95 or surgical masks):** Protects against airborne viruses and bacteria.
- ☐ **Disposable gloves:** For handling shared surfaces or first aid.
- ☐ **Disinfectant wipes/Spray:** For sanitizing surfaces in the shelter.
- ☐ **Insect repellent:** Hurricanes often bring mosquitoes, especially in shelters with open windows.

Basic PPE (Personal Protective Equipment):

- ☐ **Lightweight rain poncho/weatherproof clothing:** For wet conditions.



Sleeping Comfort:

- ☐ **Sleeping bag or blankets:** Choose lightweight, compact, and weather-appropriate options. Wool blankets are great as they retain warmth even when wet.
- ☐ **Sleeping pad or inflatable mat:** It cushions you from the hard shelter floor and provides insulation.



☐ **Earplugs and eye mask:** Shelters can be noisy, and bright lights may stay on overnight.

☐ **Pillow:** A small, inflatable, or compressable travel pillow for comfort.

☐ **Pup-Tent:** For privacy if sleeping on floor.

Medicine and First Aid:

☐ **Prescriptions:** At least a week's worth, with copies of your prescriptions.

☐ **First Aid kit:** Should include bandages, antiseptic wipes, adhesive tape, sterile gauze, tweezers, (tick removal tweezers too) scissors, and over-the-counter meds like ibuprofen, acetaminophen, antihistamines, and anti-diarrheal medications.



☐ **Thermometer:** For monitoring fever.

☐ **Multivitamins:** To supplement any gaps in nutrition.

☐ **Extra eyeglasses:** Or contact lenses and solution.

☐ **Emergency whistle:** To signal for help if needed.

Food and Water:

☐ **Non-perishable food:** High-energy, ready-to-eat items such as energy bars, nuts, dried fruits, canned beans, MRE's (meals ready to eat) and tuna with pull-tab lids. Avoid bulky or perishable foods.

☐ **Canned (preferably with easy open tab tabs) or freeze-dried meals:** Easy to prepare if you have access to a portable stove or hot water.

☐ **Water:** Pack bottled water or a portable water filter system like a mini Sawyer Water filter, LifeStraw Family Filter etc or water purification tablets just in case the shelter's water is unsafe.

☐ **Utensils:** A reusable spork, a small lightweight plate or bowl, and a cup.

☐ **Manual can opener:** If you're packing canned goods.

Clothing and Footwear:

☐ **Change of clothes:** Pack lightweight, quick-dry clothing (long-sleeve shirts, pants, underwear, socks).

☐ **Sturdy footwear:** Water-resistant shoes or boots.

☐ **Extra socks and underwear:** Wet feet can cause problems, so keep spares.

Electronics, Communication & Lighting:

☐ **Cell phone and portable charger (power bank):** Make sure they're fully charged before evacuating.



☐ **Solar charger or hand-crank radio/charger:** In case of extended power outages.

☐ **Flashlight/headlamp:** With extra batteries.

☐ **Solar lantern:** (in case of power outage at shelter)

☐ **Solar/hand crank or battery-powered radio:** For receiving emergency alerts and shelter updates.

☐ **Important documents:** Copies of ID, insurance policies, medical records, and contact information. Keep them in a waterproof folder or Ziplock bag.



Shelter-Specific Needs for Pets:

☐ **Pet food and water:** Enough for at least three days, in compact, sealed containers.

☐ **Leash and collar/harness:** Ensure your pet's ID tag is up-to-date with your contact info.

☐ **Crate or carrier:** If your pet must be contained in the shelter.
Pet toys or comfort items: To help your pet stay calm.



Art By Rachel Stern HSGS

- ☐ **Waste bags or litter box (for cats):** To manage pet waste.
- ☐ **Medications and veterinary records:** In case of emergency vet care.

Miscellaneous:

- ☐ **Cash:** ATMs may be out of service, so have small bills on hand.
- ☐ **Multipurpose tool:** A good quality one like a Leatherman/Gerber/Victorinox
- ☐ **Duct tape and paracord:** Useful for emergency repairs or securing items.
- ☐ **Emergency blanket (Mylar):** Lightweight and great for staying warm or creating makeshift shelters.
- ☐ **Books, cards, or small games:** To keep yourself and your family entertained.
- ☐ **Healthy Snacks:** For when you get the munchies (and you will)
- ☐ **30' section of 550lb test Paracord or 330lb test Bankline:** Good for tying things down.
- ☐ **Bailing wire:** 18-22 gauge for tying things together quickly. Just wind tightly and it holds.
- ☐ **Super Glue:** For quick fixes.

Final Tips for Preparation:

- ☐ **Use a sturdy backpack for your gear:** Only take what you can comfortably carry. Use a laundry grocery, or luggage cart with the bag strapped to bungee cords to carry it.
- ☐ **Don't overpack:** Only take what you can comfortably carry or use a laundry grocery, or luggage cart with the bag strapped to bungee cords to carry it.
- ☐ **Keep your gear private:** Disguise it! Camouflage your backpack by covering it with a laundry bag. The less appealing it looks the safer it will be. *Theft is common in emergency shelters.* Don't encourage it by letting people see what you've got.
- ☐ **If possible, take a long shower to clean up before you leave:** Shower, wash your hair, shave – do everything you can to clean up as much as possible with the time you have. You may not have an opportunity to shower or bathe for a long period.
- ☐ **Fill up a small bottle of detergent, bleach & pack in your gear:** During a long stay (over 72 hours) you may want to wash your underwear, socks etc.

This setup should help you remain as comfortable, healthy, and secure as possible if you need to evacuate to an emergency shelter during a hurricane. Good Luck.