

# PREPAREDNESS GUIDE



**Disaster  
Expo**

Sat, April 29, 10am–2pm  
Veterans Memorial Park  
Hudson

## Information on:



Fire



Flood



Hurricane



Subsidence



Severe Weather



Other Hazards

**Hurricane Evacuation Zone Map | p.14-15**

# WELCOME



**Mike Carballa**  
County  
Administrator

Disasters can strike at any time and can have devastating effects on individuals, families, and communities. It is important to be prepared for such events in order to minimize their impact. This disaster preparedness plan outlines the steps that should be taken before, during, and after a disaster to ensure the safety and well-being of all those affected. By following this plan

and staying informed about potential threats, we can work together to minimize the damage caused by disasters and ensure a swift recovery.

I urge you to take some time to learn your evacuation zone, which is different than your flood zone. Knowing your evacuation zone allows you to plan ahead and make necessary preparations before a disaster strikes. It also helps you to know what routes to take during an evacuation, and where to go for shelter. In the event of an emergency, time is of the essence and knowing your evacuation zone can save precious time and ensure a safe evacuation for you and your loved ones. You can find your evacuation zone on pages 14-15 of this preparedness guide.

Working together as a community during times of disaster is crucial in ensuring the safety and well-being of all members. By sharing resources, providing support to one another, and following emergency plans, a community can better withstand the effects of a disaster and recover more quickly.

For timely emergency notifications, sign up for Alert Pasco at [bit.ly/AlertPasco](http://bit.ly/AlertPasco). You can also receive emergency updates and information by following us on social media and downloading the MyPascoApp.

Mike Carballa, P.E., County Administrator



**Disaster  
Preparedness Videos**  
*Watch Now!*  
**More information on p. 4**



**Andrew Fossa**  
Director of Emergency  
Management

Pasco County's mission is serving our community to create a better future. With that in mind, it is the mission of Pasco County Emergency Management to ensure that you are able to prepare, respond, recover, and mitigate against all threats and hazards that our community may face. We've created an interactive version of this guide to assist you in creating a plan that will help you be ready for whatever threats may arise. Our Emergency Management team stands by to help clarify the information that is contained in these pages. Always feel free to email, call, or contact us with any questions you may have. Pasco County Government and especially the Pasco County Emergency Management team are here to guide our citizens and visitors in the event of a natural or manmade disaster.

The best source for the latest information is always the MyPasco App (which is available in the Google Play and App stores). Remember to sign up for push alerts and Alert Pasco. Links to all of this information can be found here in the guide, and on our website [mypasco.net](http://mypasco.net).

## PASCO COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES New Port Richey



**ALERT PASCO is a mass notification service that allows us to alert you with emergency updates as they happen. To sign up for ALERT PASCO, visit [bit.ly/AlertPasco](http://bit.ly/AlertPasco) today!**





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If a disaster struck, would your family or business be ready? Taking simple steps today could save lives and prevent suffering later. This guide was developed to help you make plans for your family, your home, and your business. It also directs you to additional resources where you can get more information and assistance.








## COMMUNITY

Your government cannot do this alone. It takes the whole community to effectively prepare for, respond to, and recover from a disaster. Find out how you can help your neighbors and your community.

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## KNOW YOUR HAZARDS

Learn about the disasters that might affect your area. Are you in a Hurricane Evacuation Zone or FEMA Flood Zone? (They are different!) Check the evacuation zone for your location at [pascocountyfl.net/322/Evacuation-Zones](https://pascocountyfl.net/322/Evacuation-Zones). Pasco County residents are at risk for the following disasters:

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## MAKE A PLAN

Don't wait for disaster to strike; start planning now! The level of risk varies based on location within the county. It is important to understand the risks associated with where you live and to have a plan for each hazard.

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## RECOVERY

Recovery begins the moment a disaster strikes. Your community depends on civilians like you to volunteer and work together with emergency responders and neighbors. Communications is an essential part of recovery. Remember: "See Something, Say Something."

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# HURRICANE SEASON: JUNE 1 – NOVEMBER 30



# CONNECT WITH YOUR COMMUNITY



When disaster strikes, the combined efforts of government and the community are critical to minimizing the impact of an emergency. This includes our neighborhood and condo associations; faith-based, volunteer, and civic organizations; schools; and the business community, as well as residents.

For more information on how to get involved, visit the Department of Emergency Management website at: <https://www.pascocountyfl.net/310/Disaster-Preparedness>

The efforts of volunteers result in a community prepared to respond, recover, and be resilient in any hazard that may arise in our county.

In addition, our emergency plans should include the needs of children, seniors, people living with disabilities, and people in poor mental or physical health. You can get involved by helping to spread the word at your school, work, club, or place of worship. Together, we can prepare our community to be safer and more resilient.



## ***VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES***

### **WHAT IS THE PASCO COUNTY CITIZENS CORPS COUNCIL?**

The mission of the Pasco County Citizens Corps Council is to bring together local leaders, citizen volunteers, and volunteer first responder organizations to share resources and training. The council aspires to provide citizens with the training they need to prevent and respond to threats of all kinds. The primary goal of the council is to increase public awareness. The secondary goal is to ensure the utilization of these trained volunteers in the event of a local disaster or emergency.

### **WHAT IS THE CERT PROGRAM?**

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program educates people about disaster preparedness for hazards that may impact their area. Training includes basic disaster response skills such as fire safety, light search and rescue, team organization, and disaster medical operations. CERT members can assist in neighborhoods or the workplace following an incident when professional responders are not immediately available. CERT members are encouraged to support emergency response agencies by taking an active role in emergency preparedness projects.

### **WHAT IS RADIO AMATEUR CIVIL EMERGENCY SERVICES (RACES)?**

Founded in 1952, the Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) is a public service provided by a reserve (volunteer) communications group within government agencies in times of extraordinary need. During periods of RACES activation, certified unpaid personnel are called upon to perform tasks for the government agencies they serve. The exact nature of each activation will be different, but the common thread is communications.

## ***TRAINING AND EXERCISES***

Multiple opportunities are available to Pasco County Emergency Management volunteers. Contact Bruce Murphy for more information: 727-847-8137, ext. 8588, [bmurphy@mypasco.net](mailto:bmurphy@mypasco.net)

### **G-317: BASIC COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT) TRAINING**

Free training for any citizen interested in becoming a CERT volunteer is offered quarterly if there are enough interested participants. Topics of training include: Disaster Preparedness, Fire Safety and Suppression, Disaster Medical Operations, Light Search and Rescue Operations, Disaster Psychology/Communications, and Terrorism.

### **DISASTER SIMULATION EXERCISE**

This training is offered on an annual basis (date and times can vary). Topics of exercise include: Fire Suppression, Mass Casualty Incident Operations, and Light Search and Rescue.

### **VIDEO VIGNETTES**

Pasco County has made getting ready for any disaster a little easier with a series of Disaster Preparedness videos. Available on Pasco's YouTube channel as well as on the Emergency Management web page, these short videos provide information on a variety of topics, each less than two minutes in length, such as what to include in a disaster supply kit for you, family members, your pets, or someone with Special Needs. Learn about sandbags and how to use them, about evacuating with a pet, who qualifies as Special Needs, plus lots of other important information. These videos are not meant to replace this Disaster Guide, but to supplement and provide additional information that may be useful to you. Visit [bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos](http://bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos) to view the videos.



# Know Your Hazards FLOODING

## COASTAL FLOODING

The flooding of land areas along the coast caused by higher than average high tide and worsened by heavy rainfall and onshore winds. Lower elevation increases the effects of coastal flooding.

## STORM SURGE

An abnormal rise in water levels near coastal areas, over and above the regular astronomical tide. The surge is caused by forces generated from a severe storm through wind, waves, and low atmospheric pressure. The effects of a storm surge are more severe when they coincide with normal high tide. The storm surge historically causes 9 out of 10 hurricane-related deaths.

## STORM SURGE vs STORM TIDE

Storm surge is an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm, over and above the predicted astronomical tides. Storm surge should not be confused with storm tide, which is defined as the water level rise due to the combination of storm surge and the astronomical tide. This rise in water level can cause extreme flooding in coastal areas particularly when storm surge coincides with normal high tide, resulting in storm tides reaching up to 20 feet or more in some cases.

## INSURANCE

Purchase flood insurance. Each flood policy is designed specifically to your home/business location. Understand your policy and your coverage. If you have questions about your policy, ask your agent and request written copies. Many policies cannot be changed within days before or after a disaster. Don't wait until a disaster is approaching to protect yourself and your property. For more information on the National Flood Insurance Program, visit [fema.gov](https://www.fema.gov).

## RIVER FLOODING

Water levels rise over the tops of river banks due to excessive rainfall. This can occur slowly over several days or rapidly in a short period of time.

## FLASH FLOODING

Heavy rainfall in a short period of time, typically less than 6 hours, can cause raging torrents that rush down river beds, urban streets, or mountain canyons. The danger lies in the speed at which they wreak havoc. A flash flood can happen minutes after the beginning of excessive rainfall.

For more information, contact Emergency Management at 727-847-8137.

## AWARENESS

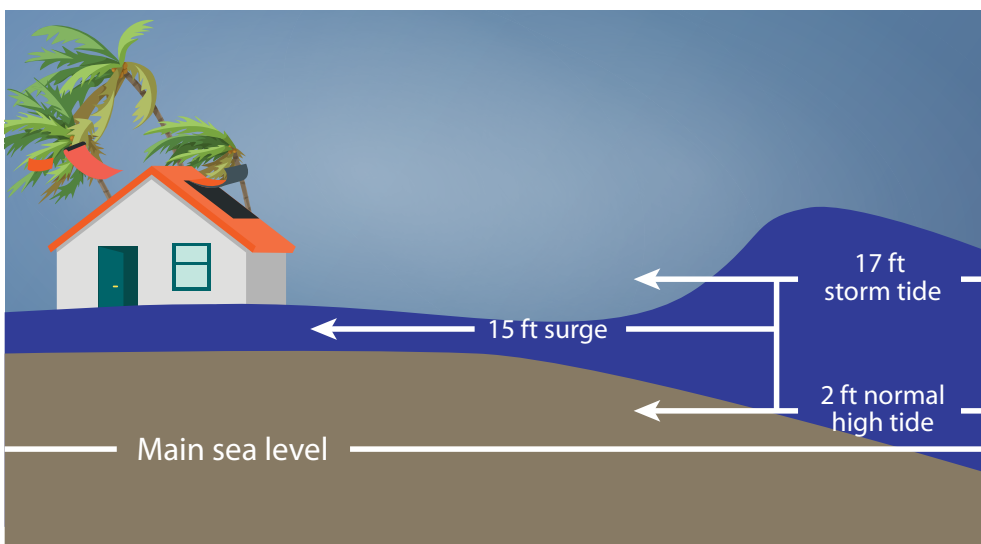
The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) defines flooding as any high flow, overflow, or inundation by water which causes or threatens damage.

Residents of Pasco County's coastline and tidal rivers are most at risk from the high winds, flooding, and storm surge that come with hurricanes. It is important to understand that every hurricane/tropical storm is unique.

## IMMEDIATE ACTION

If you are in danger from flood waters, get to higher ground. Stay away from flood-prone areas, including low spots, ditches, etc. Take dry clothing, a flashlight, and a portable radio with you.

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.



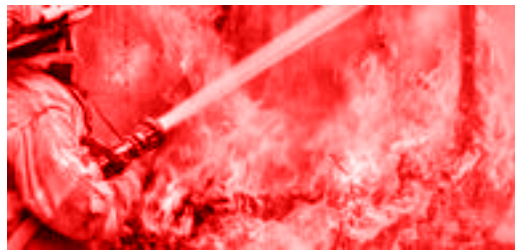
**TURN AROUND  
DON'T DROWN**

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.



# Know Your Hazards

## FIRE



### AWARENESS

Pasco County has two major fire hazards. Both wildfires and house/structure fires are often preventable if you take the necessary precautions.

### IMMEDIATE ACTION

If you are inside a structure and you see flames, smell smoke, or encounter both, GET OUT, STAY OUT and CALL 9-1-1.

Yell "Fire!" several times and go outside immediately. DO NOT use the elevator. Take the stairs. Leave your belongings and save yourself.

If doors or handles are warm, use your second way out. NEVER open doors that are warm to the touch.

If smoke, heat, or flames block all of your exit routes, stay in the room with doors closed. Get a wet towel and cover the crack under the door. Immediately CALL 9-1-1. Open a window and wave a brightly-colored cloth or flashlight to signal for help.

Once you are outside, go directly to your meeting place. Send one person to CALL 9-1-1. If you cannot get to your meeting place, follow your family emergency communication plan.

If you or your clothing catch on fire, STOP, DROP, and ROLL!

### HOUSE/STRUCTURE FIRE

According to the National Fire Protection Association, "Experiments, models and post-fire studies have shown homes ignite due to the condition of the home, and everything around it, up to 200' from the foundation."

Parents and guardians should talk to kids about using matches and candles. Talk about the dangers of fires. In the event of a power outage, use flashlights instead of candles. Always use proper storage for batteries.

Remember to thoroughly clean dryer vents regularly. Check power cords in your home for frayed wires. Keep fire extinguishers accessible on each level of your home/business and have them routinely checked for proper function.

### FIRE DRILLS

Make sure everyone knows at least two escape routes from your home or business. Share your plan with family members or neighbors.

### EVACUATION PLAN

The time to plan for a fire emergency is now. Take a few minutes to discuss with your family or colleagues what actions you will need to take as you make your Disaster Plan. Contact numbers are extremely important. Have working smoke alarms in your home and test them monthly.

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. Two escape routes out of your home and out of your neighborhood are preferable. Include your pets or service animals in your evacuation plan.

### FIREWISE CONSTRUCTION ROOFING AND VENTS:

Class "A" fire-rated roofing products offer the best protection. Inspect shingles and tiles. Replace or repair any that are loose or missing. Box-in eaves, but provide ventilation. Roof and attic vents should be screened to prevent ember entry.

### DECKS AND PORCHES:

Never store flammable materials underneath decks or porches. Remove dead vegetation and debris from under decks or porches and between deck board joints.

### SIDING AND WINDOWS:

Embers can collect in small nooks and crannies. Radiant heat from the flames can crack windows. Use fire-resistant siding and dual-pane tempered glass windows.

### EMERGENCY ACCESS:

Ensure your home and neighborhood have legible, marked street names and numbers. Driveways should be at least 12' wide with a vertical clearance of 15' for emergency vehicle access.



## WILDFIRES

Every year, thousands of acres of woodland and homes are destroyed by wildfires. The causes of wildfires vary and can include arson, lightning, and irresponsible debris burning. The spread of a fire through the woods can happen any time of year. The culmination of hot, dry weather patterns make it more likely. Wildfires often go unnoticed at first and can spread quickly through trees, brush, and homes.

You can check with your local fire department to get more information about burning on your own property. Restrictions for burning may apply during certain times of the year when the risk for wildfires is increased.

Many Local Forestry and Fire Agencies implement Fire-Risk Assessments. They can provide you with information specific to your property. Make a plan to prevent and prepare in the event of a wildfire.

If you have acreage, coordinate firefighting with Florida Forest Service. Keep copies of keys and a list of combinations. You can make arrangements and contracts in advance if you would like to offer use of equipment (water tanks, tractors, etc.). Include a map of water sources on the property and GPS locations.

## FIREWISE VEGETATION

- Maintain 30 feet or more of defensible space around any structures.
- Keep your defensible space free of leaves and debris.
- Mow and irrigate (within limits of any existing water restrictions).
- Clean roofs and gutters and keep them free of leaves, pine needles, twigs, and branches.
- Structures should be built with fire-resistant materials for roofs, siding, and decks.
- Maintain a clean yard.
- Remove any combustibles including wood, propane tanks, gas grills, motor homes, boats, ATV, and cars under or near structures.
- Trim branches 10' from the ground.
- Remove any vines that are climbing up trees or structures.
- Mulch with crushed stone, gravel, or chunky bark.
- Install spark arresters on chimneys.
- Landscape with FIREWISE plants.
- Keep highly flammable plants away from structures.
- Have a driveway 12 feet wide.



## IMMEDIATE ACTION

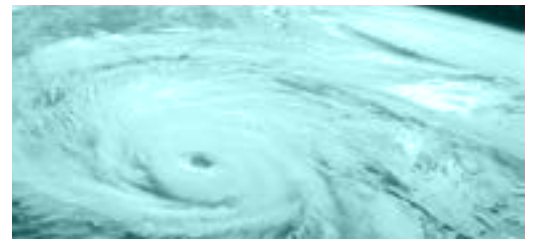
**If you are in danger of an approaching wildfire, be sure to:** Shut windows and doors, but leave them unlocked. Remove flammable window shades and curtains. Move flammable furniture to the middle of the room. Leave house lights on so firefighters can see your house. Shut off gas and turn off pilot lights. Shut off the air conditioner and close all vents. Evacuate to a safe zone and notify your emergency contact that you are safe.

**If you are in danger of an approaching wildfire, and you live in a rural area or on a farm, be sure to:** Open gates so livestock can escape. Load animals into your stock trailer. Close gates behind horses; they will run into a burning building. Move equipment to a safe zone away from combustibles. Shut off the gas supply and propane tanks.



# Know Your Hazards

# HURRICANE



## AWARENESS

Over the past 200 years, research estimates that 1.9 million people have been killed as a direct result of a hurricane. Hurricanes kill more people than any other type of storm. Historically, Pasco County has taken a direct hit from 31 tropical cyclones since 1872. The county has also activated or responded to 37 tropical cyclones that have made landfall either inside county boundaries or within 50 miles.

The latest hurricane to hit Pasco County was Hurricane Irma in 2017. County officials estimated more than 200 homes were damaged with 56 homes suffering major damage, and 4 homes destroyed. Of the 261,000 addresses in Pasco County, approximately 217,000 addresses were reportedly without power.

A tropical depression becomes a tropical storm when wind speeds exceed 39 mph. At this point, a tropical storm is given a name. The names are given

alphabetically, on a yearly basis, with the first storm beginning with the letter "A". The names are reused after 6 years unless it is declared as a major hurricane or deals catastrophic damages, in which case, the name is retired and cannot be used again.

A tropical storm becomes a hurricane when wind speeds exceed 74 mph. A hurricane is a severe tropical storm that forms in the Southern Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, or the Gulf of Mexico. They typically develop in warm, tropical waters and produce violent winds, incredible waves, and torrential rains and flooding.

While a hurricane can often be tracked and/or predicted in a forecast, the exact path of a hurricane is determined by weather patterns that may alter from the predicted paths. Hurricanes are one natural disaster that can include all of the hazards covered in this guide.

## THE SCIENCE OF THE STORM

The State of Florida is affected by approximately 40% of all hurricanes that make landfall in America. The effects of a hurricane can last for days leading up to, and following, the storm. However, the storm itself usually lasts around 12–24 hours. Wind and rain can begin long before the storm ever arrives. It begins to break apart when it makes landfall. It can be most dangerous if part of the storm remains over water and follows the coastline. This gives the storm the ability to maintain its integrity as a hurricane and lift water from the Gulf or Atlantic, causing more flooding and higher storm surges.

## THE EYE OF THE STORM

The center of the hurricane is called the eye. This part of the storm, however brief, is usually calm and quiet. The eye wall is the middle of a ring of clouds (similar to a tornado) caused by high winds with heavy rainfall. The eye wall is often the most destructive; having the highest winds, largest clouds, and most collective rainfall. The northeast side of the storm tends to have the highest probability of causing damage as a result of tornadoes, higher rainfall, and greater storm surge. Hurricanes can be unpredictable. There can be potential error in the forecasted track from the National Hurricane Center. Updated information can be found at: [weather.gov](http://weather.gov).

**You will get some warning with a  
TROPICAL STORM or HURRICANE**



## STAY INFORMED!



**Download the  
MyPASCO APP  
TODAY!**





## EVACUATIONS

If county officials issue an evacuation order for your area, it is highly recommended that you heed these instructions. Firefighters, law enforcement, and volunteers may not be able to get to you during the storm. This order is released in an effort to help you take necessary precautions. You should begin your preparations to protect your safety and belongings. [bit.ly/Evacuation-Zones](https://bit.ly/Evacuation-Zones).

Even emergency numbers such as 9-1-1 may not be available if communications are damaged during the storm. You may find yourself in a situation where you cannot ask for help and help cannot reach you. One plan is never enough. Always have a backup plan in the event the path or structure of the storm changes.

## BUSINESS OWNERS

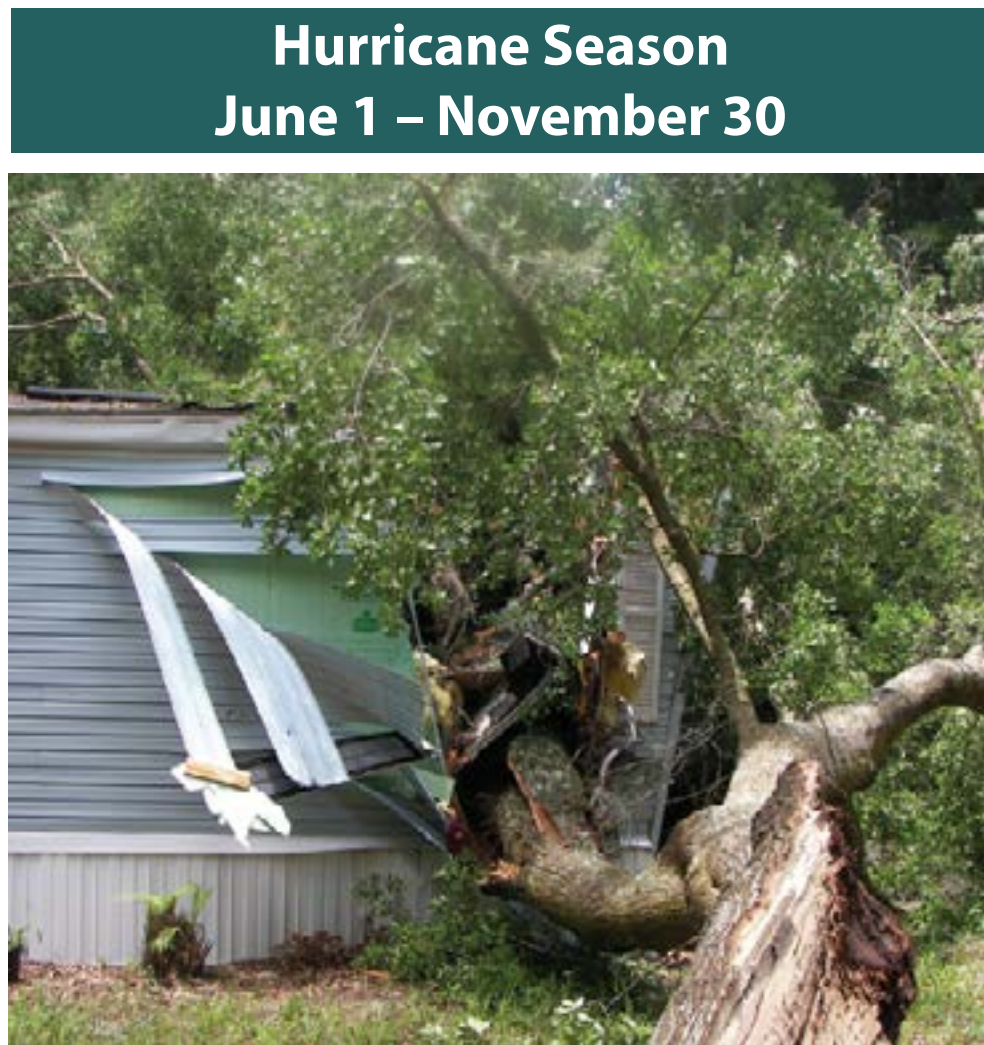
If you own a business, follow your Business Continuity Plan. For more information on how to create a Business Continuity Plan, go online to:

[disastersafety.org](https://disastersafety.org)

[floridadisaster.org](https://floridadisaster.org)

[FEMA.gov](https://FEMA.gov)

[disasterassistance.gov](https://disasterassistance.gov)



# Hurricane Season June 1 – November 30

## STORM FACTS

### SAFFIR-SIMPSON HURRICANE WIND SCALE

Tropical Depression	< 38 mph
Tropical Storm	39–73 mph
Cat. 1 Hurricane	74–95 mph
Cat. 2 Hurricane	96–110 mph
Cat. 3 Hurricane	111–129 mph
Cat. 4 Hurricane	130–156 mph
Cat. 5 Hurricane	156+ mph

### HURRICANE WATCH

Predictions have determined that your location is in a possible path of the storm within the next 48 hours. Have a plan in place if the WATCH becomes a WARNING.

### HURRICANE WARNING

You are in the projected path of the hurricane. A WARNING will be issued to the affected areas 36 hours in advance. All hurricane watches and warnings are issued by the Hurricane Center.

# Know Your Hazards

## SUBSIDENCE



### AWARENESS

A subsidence is a common, naturally occurring geologic phenomenon. Also referred to as a sinkhole, or a depression, a subsidence is a hole in the land surface. The hole can be shallow, deep, or wide. They are the result of limestone under the surface dissolving in acidic water.

### IMMEDIATE ACTION

If you believe you have encountered a depression, a sinkhole, or a subsidence, call 9-1-1.

Notify the call taker if you or others are in immediate danger. Let them know if any buildings or infrastructure are affected (i.e. houses, buildings, roads, sewer/ water lines, cable, etc.).

#### Is it on public property?

If it is on public property, the county will arrange for professionals to assess damages and survey the land. If repairs are necessary, the county will be responsible for making those repairs.

#### Is it on private property?

If it is on private property, the owner of the home or business is responsible for repairs. They will need to contact their insurance company to send out engineers and other professionals to assess the damage.



### FORMATION OF A SUBSIDENCE

Excessive rainfall or drought can increase the chances of a subsidence forming. They are considered a geological hazard with the potential to cause damage to properties, roads, and structures. They have even caused injuries to include loss of life.

### DANGERS IN DEPTH

There is no way to know in advance if your home/business/property will be affected by a subsidence. However, there are maps available which show where previous subsidences have been reported.



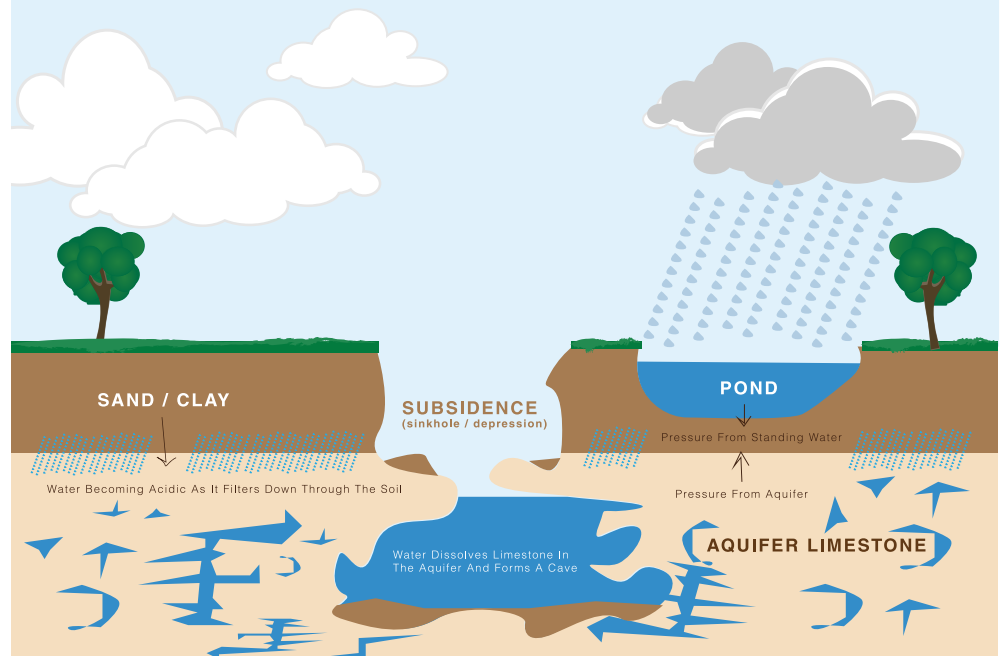
### FIXING A SUBSIDENCE

It can be costly to repair damages caused by a subsidence. It is important to check with your insurance company in advance to verify your coverage.

If you believe that you have a depression, a sinkhole, or a subsidence on your property, it is vital that you keep your distance and call the proper authorities to verify that the land is stable. Your insurance company should send the appropriate professionals to survey, take soil samples, and establish a plan of action to begin repairs.



### HOW SINKHOLES FORM







### FOG

During a heavy fog advisory, visibility is reduced to a 1/4 mile or less. A dense fog can be hazardous to drivers, pedestrians, mariners, and aviators. Make sure your headlights, not high beams, are turned on and reduce speed if necessary.

### HAIL

Hail is an accumulation of ice pellets that can range in size and fall in showers. Hail is typically seen either leading up to or directly before a severe thunderstorm or tornado forms. Seek shelter immediately if you see hail falling from the sky.

### HIGH WINDS

High winds can occur with or without warning and exceed 58 mph. They can have the same effects as a thunderstorm or tornado. Older homes are more at risk of damage if they have not been updated to code. To minimize damage in high winds, keep your home in good repair. Tack down loose roofing, trim trees, and keep gutters clean.

### LIGHTNING

Lightning can strike at any time without warning. If you hear thunder, seek shelter. On average, Florida has over 1.2 million cloud to ground lightning strikes per year. According to research from Vaisala, from 2011 - 2020 there were 246 fatalities in the US due to lightning strikes. 49 of those were in FL. FL ranks #1 in lightning fatalities for the US.

### THUNDERSTORMS

The National Weather Service defines a severe thunderstorm as one which produces winds of 58 mph or greater, 1" hail or larger, or tornadoes. Severe factors common to all storms are strong winds, large waves, and storm surge. Thunderstorms can begin at any time and cause severe damage.

# Know Your Hazards SEVERE WEATHER

## AWARENESS

Weather hazards can happen anywhere and at any time. There are severe weather occurrences that can be dangerous to your safety and your property. Always have a plan and know how to react. Make sure your address number is clearly marked on your home. Purchase a NOAA Weather Radio and/or a battery-powered commercial radio and extra batteries. 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.

## IMMEDIATE ACTION

Tornadoes in Florida appear quickly and move fast. They are typically less destructive than tornadoes in the Midwest. However, they are just as dangerous if you find yourself in their path. Know where the safe room is in your home and/or business and be ready to seek shelter immediately.

- Seek shelter in a small, windowless interior room or hallway on the lowest level of a sturdy building. Now is the time to wear a helmet if you have one.
- Mobile homes are not safe during

tornadoes. Abandon mobile homes and go to the nearest sturdy building immediately.

- 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. DO NOT try and outrun a tornado.
- If flying debris occurs while you are driving, pull over and park. The following options are available as a last resort:

- Stay in your vehicle with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows. Cover your head with your hands and a blanket if possible.

- If you can safely get lower than the level of the roadway, exit your car, and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.

### TORNADOES

#### TORNADO WATCH

Tornadoes are possible. Remain alert for approaching storms.

#### TORNADO WARNING

A tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Take shelter immediately if a tornado warning is issued for your area.





# Know Your Hazards

## ACTIVE THREAT



### AWARENESS

An active threat is defined as any incident, which by its deliberate nature creates an immediate threat or presents an imminent danger of bodily harm, serious injury, or death to anyone in the community. An active threat can be an individual, or group of individuals, displaying a weapon(s), having made threats, and showing intent to cause harm or act out in violence. A weapon is defined as any firearm, knife, or any other instrument that can cause bodily harm, serious injury, or death. A threat can take place in any environment. Be aware of your surroundings and be prepared to act using these skills.

### IMMEDIATE ACTION

#### RUN

If you are aware of a threat and you have a chance to get away...**RUN**. This is your first and best option to remove yourself from the situation safely. Getting away from the threat is the top priority. Leave your belongings behind and get away. Every opportunity you have to create distance between you and the threat increases your chances of escaping and surviving. Not everyone has the ability to run, but it is important to keep moving any chance you get. Continually assess your options of finding a way toward safety. Help others escape only if you can do so safely. Evacuate even if others choose not to follow. Warn and prevent individuals from entering an area where the threat may be.

- When you are safe, call 9-1-1
- Give your location first
- Describe the threat
- Describe any weapons

#### HIDE

You won't always have the opportunity or ability to run away. Look around for the closest place to **HIDE**. Try to hide under a sturdy object that provides some protection, a large metal or wood desk, a bookcase, a closet, or a bathroom out of view of the threat.

Barricade your hiding place using furniture and heavy items. Pay attention to which way the doors swing. Lock and block doors, close blinds, and turn off lights. Try to spread out along walls or hide separately. Staying in a group makes you an easier target. Silence all electronic devices. To communicate with police silently, instead of with a phone call, text to 9-1-1 or share your location and situation on social media. Remain quiet and keep your hands over your head. Stay in place until law enforcement gives you the all clear.

#### FIGHT

As a last resort, if you find yourself face-to-face with an attacker, now is the time to **FIGHT**. Commit to your actions and act as aggressively as possible. Act with intention. Recruit others to ambush with makeshift weapons. Look around for items such as:

- Chairs
- Fire extinguishers
- Scissors
- Books

Be prepared to cause severe or lethal injury. Throw items within reach. Improvise weapons to distract and disarm. Your main objective is to open an avenue of escape so you can transition back to **RUN**.

### AFTER A THREAT

Keep hands visible and empty. Know that law enforcement's first task is to end the incident and they may have to pass injured persons along the way. Officers may be armed with rifles, shotguns, and/or handguns and may use pepper spray or tear gas to control the situation. If an officer shouts commands and/or pushes individuals to the ground, it is for their safety. Follow law enforcement instructions and evacuate in the direction they come from, unless otherwise instructed.

If the injured are in immediate danger, help get them to safety and provide first aid. Consider seeking professional help for you and your family to cope with the long-term effects of the trauma.

### TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN

Open a conversation with your children about the training and drills that they are practicing in school. Ensure that they understand what to do in the event of a threat in any environment. Teachers and staff instruct students to follow "the ABC's of surviving an active threat". "A" defines **ALERT/AVOID**, "B" defines **BARRICADE**, and "C" defines **COUNTER**.

For more information, a detailed procedure is available at your child's school and through the Pasco County Schools website. To learn more about the training program in Pasco County schools, go to:

[pasco.k12.fl.us/school\\_safety](https://pasco.k12.fl.us/school_safety)  
[pascosheriff.com/community-outreach.html](https://pascosheriff.com/community-outreach.html)





# Know Your Hazards

## OTHER HAZARDS

### COVID-19 INFORMATION

#### THREE IMPORTANT WAYS TO SLOW THE SPREAD:

- **Wear a mask** to help stop the spread of COVID-19 to others.
- **Stay at least 6 feet (about 2 arm lengths)** from others who don't live with you, particularly in crowded areas.
- **Wash your hands** with soap and water for 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.

#### HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF WHEN GOING OUT:

- **Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth** to help protect others.
  - Choose a mask with two or

more layers of washable, breathable fabric that fits snugly against the sides of your face.

- **Stay 6 feet apart** and avoid crowds when possible.
  - The more people you are in contact with, the more likely you are to be exposed to COVID-19.
- **Avoid indoor spaces** as much as possible, particularly ones that aren't well ventilated.
  - You may find it harder to stay 6 feet apart in indoor spaces.
- **Wash your hands often**
  - Use soap and water for 20 seconds, especially after you have been in a public place or hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.

#### COVID-19 SYMPTOMS TO WATCH FOR The Most Common Symptoms:

- Fever
- Cough
- Headaches
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Muscle or body aches
- Loss of taste or smell

Other symptoms are signs of serious illness. If someone has trouble breathing, chest pain or pressure, or difficulty staying awake, get medical care immediately.

#### ONLINE RESOURCES:

CDC: [bit.ly/3c5Nyvg](https://bit.ly/3c5Nyvg)

Florida DOH: [bit.ly/FLHealthCOVID](https://bit.ly/FLHealthCOVID)

Pasco County Information:

[www.pascocountyfl.net/185/Coronavirus-Information-Resources](https://www.pascocountyfl.net/185/Coronavirus-Information-Resources)

### BOATING HAZARDS

Water vehicles follow the same guidelines as motor vehicles on the roadways. **DO NOT** Drink and Drive. Operating a vehicle while under the influence is punishable by law.

Be aware of your surroundings. Hazards can occur both under and around your water vessel. It is always best to travel at a safe speed that allows you to react in a timely manner to your surroundings.

Do not swim near boats that are being operated. You put yourself at risk of severe injury or even death.

The weather can change quickly. Check if any small craft advisories have been issued. Notify your emergency contact of your plans and route. If severe weather is expected, plan accordingly.

### EXTREME HEAT

Stay hydrated. Drink plenty of water even if you don't feel hot or thirsty. Wear protective clothing, hats, and/or sunscreen while outdoors. Seek shaded areas or go indoors if the heat index is high or you feel weak. Never leave your children/pets in a parked car. Even with the air conditioning running, they can overheat and suffer heat exhaustion, stroke, or death.

### HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INCIDENT

#### IF YOU'RE TOLD TO EVACUATE:

You should move to the place/shelter designated by public officials.

Stay calm. Quickly gather what you will need, unless you are told to leave immediately. Keep car windows and vents closed. Do not use the air conditioner until you are out of the evacuation area.

#### IF YOU ARE TOLD TO STAY INDOORS AND SHELTER-IN-PLACE:

Stay inside until local officials say you can leave safely. Bring pets indoors.

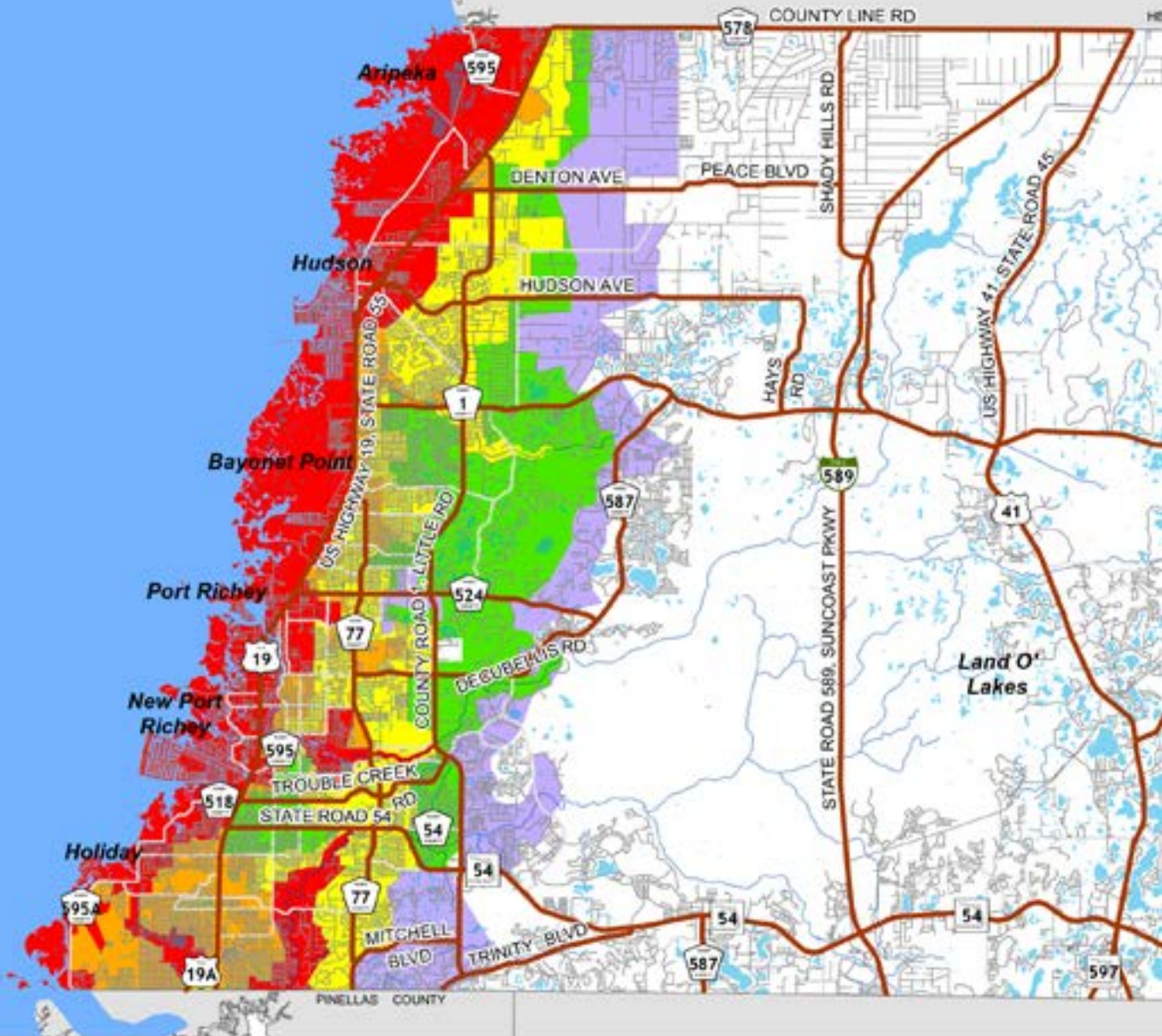
Close all doors and windows. Seal all gaps under doorways and windows with damp towels and duct tape. Turn off heating, cooling, or ventilation systems. If you are told to protect your breathing, cover your nose and mouth with a damp handkerchief or other cloth folded over several times.

### TERRORISM/VIOLENT CRIME

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. If it is an emergency, **CALL 9-1-1!**



# Evacuation



- Evacuation Routes
- Arterial Road
- Collector Road
- Residential Road
- City Limits

- Evacuation Zone**
- Level A
  - Level B
  - Level C
  - Level D
  - Level E
  - None

## Evacuation Levels

- Level A - Evacuate red areas and all manufactured home residents
- Level B - Evacuate red and orange areas and all manufactured home residents
- Level C - Evacuate red, orange, and yellow areas and all manufactured home residents
- Level D - Evacuate red, orange, yellow, and green areas and all manufactured homes
- Level E - Evacuate red, orange, yellow, green, and purple areas and all manufactured homes

## LEGEND

### Potential Storm Tide Heights (FT)

- To 11'
- To 17'
- To 22'
- To 30'
- To 36'





**PASCO**  
COUNTY FLORIDA  
OPEN SPACES. VIBRANT PLACES.

2023 PASCO COUNTY DISASTER PREPAREDNESS GUIDE 15

# Make a Plan DISASTER PLAN

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

## CHOOSE YOUR CONTACT PERSON

Ask someone out of the area to coordinate communications in the event of an emergency situation. During a disaster, communications can be affected, making it difficult to make phone calls. Family members should contact their emergency contact to report their location. Send your contact copies of important papers (ID, insurance, etc.) now, before a disaster strikes. Prepare a checklist of important information to share with your emergency contact. Your checklist should include the following information:

- Location (street name/landmarks)
- Safety (immediate/future threats)
- Medical (injuries/prescriptions)
- Check in (set up a time to check in)
- Future (locations & times where you can be found)

## THINK AHEAD ABOUT EVACUATION

Determine if and when you need to evacuate, where you need to go, and how you will get there. Ask friends or family if you could stay with them. If you are in a safe area, invite them to stay with you. For more disaster planning information, contact the Department of Emergency Management (phone numbers are listed on the back of the guide) or go online to:

[bit.ly/Pasco-Disaster-Preparedness](https://bit.ly/Pasco-Disaster-Preparedness)  
[tampabayprepares.org](https://tampabayprepares.org)  
[floridadisaster.org](https://floridadisaster.org)  
[ready.gov](https://ready.gov)

Remember, community shelters are locations of last resort. Now is the time to plan and prepare for yourself, your family, and your community.

**Fill in your personal information and contact info and keep with you.**



EMERGENCY CONTACT CARD				EMERGENCY INFORMATION CARD			
(NEXT OF KIN) LAST NAME, FIRST NAME				LAST NAME, FIRST NAME			
ADDRESS				ADDRESS			
PHONE				PHONE			
EMAIL				EMAIL			
RELATIONSHIP				RELATIONSHIP			
SSN				SSN			
BLOOD TYPE				BLOOD TYPE			
BIRTH DATE				BIRTH DATE			

**FOLD HERE** (between the two cards)  
**CUT HERE** (at the bottom of each card)



## PICK TWO MEETING PLACES

One meeting place should be close to your home or business for sudden events such as a fire. The second should be outside your neighborhood, in case you can't get home or family members get separated.



## KEEP YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION UP-TO-DATE

Include contact information in your phones and make emergency contact cards to carry with you. It is important that you write your contacts down on paper. Laminate the pages if you have the ability to do so. Don't just rely on electronic devices to store essential information such as a close family member's phone number and address—they may not work when you need them.





# Make a Plan

## PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

There are actions you should take to make your home and business protected and secure. To make some of these improvements, you will have to get up in the attic or crawl space with a flashlight. You may feel more comfortable with an experienced and licensed inspector, architect, engineer, or contractor. Take the time to do this well before any storm threatens.

### MOBILE HOME OR RV RESIDENTS

All mobile home and RV residents must evacuate for any hurricane evacuation order issued in Pasco County, regardless of your location within the county. Never stay inside a mobile home or RV to ride out the storm. Evacuate to the home of a friend or relative, a hotel, a motel, or a nearby designated shelter/evacuation center.

Anchor your mobile home or RV with tie downs and inspect the tie downs annually.

### PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY FROM FLOODING

**ANCHOR AND ELEVATE:** If vulnerable, electrical panel boxes, heat pumps, washers, dryers, water heaters, fuel tanks, etc. should be elevated or relocated to areas less likely to be subjected to flood waters.

**RETROFIT:** There are things you can do to minimize the flood risk to your home. Options to consider:

- Elevation
- Flood barriers
- Dry or Wet flood proofing

Making improvements to your property can lower your chances of unnecessary damages caused by a storm and can also lower your insurance rates.

As a storm approaches your home may be in danger of flooding. Local media will provide locations and instructions of where to fill sandbags to protect your property. Sandbags should be filled halfway and will weigh approximately 30 lbs. First, lay down plastic sheeting to act as a waterproofing layer. Then, lay the sandbags over the plastic like bricks from one end to the other. After you lay down all the sandbags, pull the plastic over the top and tuck it under the top row of sandbags.

### PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY FROM WIND

Check your walls and roofing; repair what you can in advance to minimize damage and flying debris. To withstand the forces of wind associated with severe weather, remember your ABCs:

- Anchor Your Roof
- Brace Entry/Garage Doors
- Cover Your Windows
- Safe Room—DO NOT stay in a room which has unshielded 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 areas are in your home. Take your disaster supplies with you into your safe room.

### SHEDS, BARNES, AND OTHER STRUCTURES

If you have a structure on your property that cannot be taken apart and stored, be sure to anchor it properly. This includes the following:

- Barn
- Shed
- Gazebo
- Chicken Coop
- Dog House
- Lanai
- Carport
- Boat Dock

### BEFORE YOU BUILD OR REMODEL

There is no need to wait for a disaster to protect your home and/or business from destruction. Pasco County, the State of Florida, and FEMA have programs in place that can help you bring your residence up to code. For tips on how to make your home safer, call (Federal Alliance for Safe Homes) Toll-Free (877) 221-SAFE (7233) or visit:

**[www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org)**

The county also offers programs to mitigate your property. Mitigation can reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Preparedness and recovery are specific to hurricanes, sinkholes, tornadoes, and flooding.

### WEB RESOURCES TO LEARN MORE

**[flash.org](http://flash.org)**

**[floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov)**

**[highwindsaferooms.org](http://highwindsaferooms.org)**

**[mysafe florida.org](http://mysafe florida.org)**

**[bit.ly/Pasco-Disaster-Preparedness](http://bit.ly/Pasco-Disaster-Preparedness)**

**[www.pascopa.com](http://www.pascopa.com)**





# Make a Plan SPECIAL NEEDS



## SPECIAL NEEDS OR DISABILITIES

If you or a relative are living with disabilities or in poor health (either mentally or physically), you should plan ahead for an emergency. You may need special assistance from family members, friends, neighbors, or social service agencies. Please ask for help if you need it or volunteer to help those who do. Remember that older adults who are caregivers may also require outside assistance. Excessive stress and anxiety can contribute to increased episodes of illness, particularly for persons with heart disease and other illnesses. If you or a relative live in a nursing home, assisted living facility (ALF), or residential facility, you should contact the administrator to learn about the disaster plan for that facility. Pasco County keeps records of residents living with disabilities and/or special needs within the county. Contact the Emergency Management team to register for special needs assistance prior to a disaster. Be sure to notify them if you have a service animal. For more information about special needs, visit: [www.pascocountyfl.net/320/Special-Needs](http://www.pascocountyfl.net/320/Special-Needs)

## HOME HEALTHCARE AND HOMEBOUND PATIENTS

Talk to your health agency and oxygen company. Let them know where you will be during a hurricane. Ask them about their plans to provide care during a disaster. Speak with your insurance company and find out what your options are in the event that your normal providers are not available.

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 arrangements with your physician. You should also register with your local power company.

If you evacuate, remember to take medications, written instructions regarding your care, any special equipment, and bedding with you. If you will need assistance in an evacuation or need to go to a special needs/medically dependent shelter, please register with the county Department of Emergency Management NOW, during “blue sky” (non-emergency) conditions. Visit [bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos](http://bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos) to view the special needs qualifications video.

Special needs/medically dependent shelters do not provide hands-on medical care—only medical monitoring. You will need to bring one caregiver with you. Request a copy of all medical records on CD. Keep these records updated. Bring them with you if you evacuate. In the event that you need to seek medical attention elsewhere, records can be difficult to obtain. Your medical facility can provide tags or jewelry with medical alert information. If you are unable to obtain them from your doctor, they can be found at medical supply stores and online.

## HEALTHCARE FACILITIES COORDINATION AND PLANNING

Pasco County Emergency Management is responsible for reviewing healthcare facility Comprehensive Emergency Management Plans, also known as a CEMP. A CEMP is a plan created to reduce vulnerability to all hazards. It is an in-depth document that describes how a facility will provide care for clients in an emergency (i.e., shelter-in-place, evacuating to another facility, etc.), provides a legal basis for actions taken in an emergency, arrangement of post-disaster priorities, and can help facilities understand lessons learned from prior disasters. The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) requires specific criteria for the different types of facilities.

Pasco County Emergency Management reviews plans for different types of healthcare facilities including:

- Ambulatory surgical centers
- Adult daycare centers
- Assisted living facilities
- Nursing homes
- Hospitals
- Intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled
- Residential treatment centers for children and adolescents

At a minimum, a CEMP should address:

- Emergency evacuation transportation
- Adequate sheltering arrangements
- Post-disaster activities (i.e., food, water, and emergency power)
- Post-disaster transportation, supplies, staffing, and equipment
- Identification process for residents, transferring of records, and responding to family inquiries

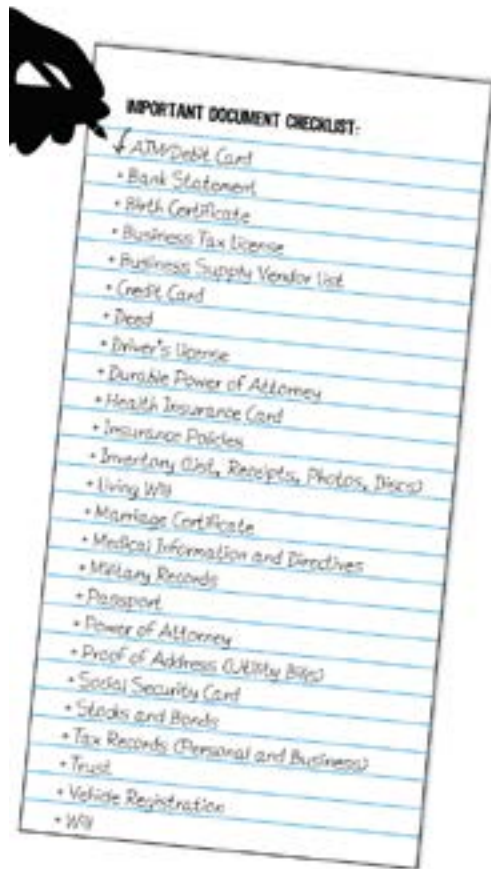
For more information about Pasco County Health and Medical, go to: [pascocountyfl.net/317/Health-Medical](http://pascocountyfl.net/317/Health-Medical)

## WHAT TO BRING TO A SHELTER

- Medication/Diabetic Supplies in their original packaging (14 days’ supply)
- Special Dietary Foods (food and special dietary food might not be provided at a shelter)
- Medical Supplies (oxygen masks, e-tanks, concentrators, regulators)
- Blankets/Pillows/Change of clothes
- Wheelchair/Walker
- Personal Hygiene Items/wash cloth
- List of Emergency Contacts & next of kin
- Your physician’s and home health agencies’ contact information
- ONE Caregiver (if applicable)
- To view the special needs kit video, visit [bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos](http://bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos)

# Make a Plan

## IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS



Keep important documents in a fireproof safe or box. Store a second copy in a secure location away from your home or business. You can e-mail copies to yourself, e-mail to a friend, create folders in a Cloud/Google/Dropbox account, or even burn a CD and mail copies to people you trust. It is important that you have more than one copy of original documents.

Inventory your property and possessions. If you have access to a camera or video recorder, take pictures and video survey of your property. Create a binder, a folder, or online storage with records of your belongings. Include the value of each item at the time of purchase, and the current replacement value. If you have receipts of expensive items or collectibles, include them in your inventory prior to any disaster.

### INSURANCE

Read your policy. Understanding what is—and is not—covered in your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy is a necessity. Take time now to learn about the risks you may face and build confidence that you are properly protected.

Talk with your agent. Reviewing your insurance coverage annually is an important step to maintaining the level of insurance protection necessary to be able to rebuild your home and replace your personal belongings. Ask your agent if there are any discounts for performing mitigation measures to your home or business.

If a disaster is approaching, start collecting photos and records to begin an insurance claim. Reach out to your insurance company or agent. Notify them that you are in a disaster area. This does not necessarily begin a claim, however, it does let them know you may need to file a claim if you have damages. At this time, they can assign you an adjuster or case worker as a point of contact. This can save time later.



### STEPS TO INSURANCE PROTECTION

- Insure your home for its reconstruction cost, not its real estate value. Any repairs to your home/property fall under your homeowner's policy.
- If you rent, you need insurance to protect your belongings. Replacement of personal belongings falls under your renter's insurance policy.
- Know your flood risk. Standard homeowner's policies do not cover damage from flooding. This includes storm surge from a hurricane. Flood insurance is effective 30 days after purchase. Don't wait until a storm is threatening.
- Find out your deductible and set aside funds to pay your hurricane deductible.
- Get coverage for the costs of building code upgrades. If you live in an older home, it can be costly to update things such as electrical, plumbing, and other code-related regulations.
- Inventory your home's contents. This can speed up the claims process. See the Insurance Information Institute for more information: <https://www.iii.org/article/how-create-home-inventory>



# Make a Plan PACK YOUR KIT



## THE BASICS



### 14 Days

**Medication:** Keep updated lists of family medications and dosages along with doctor and pharmacy phone numbers. Keep a two week (14-day) supply of prescription medications.



### 7 Days

**Food:** Keep enough food to feed the whole family for seven to ten days. Choose things that don't need refrigeration or cooking (canned goods, protein bars, peanut butter, etc.). Don't forget any special dietary foods or baby food and formula, if needed. Replenish every six months.



### 7 Days

**Water:** One gallon of water per person, per day for drinking and water for cooking/washing (minimum 7 days). Stock up on a few cases of bottled water in the event there is a "boil water" order.



**Batteries:** Have a supply of extra batteries for cameras, flashlights, radios, portable TV's, lamps, etc.

Here are the most important items for your disaster supply kit. Start by going through your home and finding what you already have on hand. For any items that you don't have, stock up today (or a little at a time) and store items where you can get to them quickly. Many items can be improvised. Items highlighted in orange should be included in your shelter kit. This list is merely a guide. You should create a kit that suits your household needs.

## HOME & SHELTER KIT

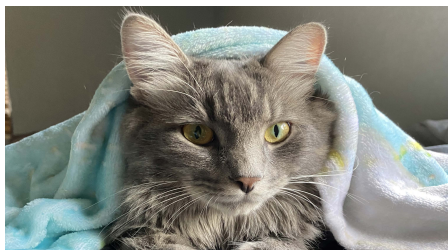
Visit [bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos](https://bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos) to watch evacuation kit video.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Quiet games, books, playing cards, favorite toys for children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food (non-perishable)         | <input type="checkbox"/> Important Documents (p. 19)                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medications                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Chargers  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Infant Items                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Cash/Checks   |
| Diapers/wipes  | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Map   |
| Formula/bottles  | <input type="checkbox"/> Toilet Paper  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Batteries                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Moistened Towelettes/Wipes                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flashlights & Extra Batteries | <input type="checkbox"/> First Aid Book and Kit  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Non-Electric Can Opener       | <input type="checkbox"/> Blanket/Sleeping Bag/Pillow                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Hygiene Items        | <input type="checkbox"/> Pet Supply Kit (p. 21)  |
| Hand sanitizer   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mask  |
| Toothbrush/Toothpaste                                  |  |
| Deodorant  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra Clothing/Shoes          |  |

## HOME ONLY KIT

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Portable Radio                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Water Purification Kit                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fire Extinguisher (small canister, ABC type) | Tablets  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency Car Kit                            | Chlorine-plain   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whistle/Distress Flag                        | Iodine   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mosquito Repellent                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean-Up Supplies                                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen                                    | Mop  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tool Kit                                     | Buckets  |
| Hammer & nails  | Towels   |
| Screwdrivers  | Disinfectant   |
| Cordless Drill  | <input type="checkbox"/> Camera  |
| Pliers  | <input type="checkbox"/> Bucket with lid and kitty litter (for emergency toilet) |
| Plastic tarp  | <input type="checkbox"/> Plastic Trash Bags                                      |
| Duct tape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Paper Towels  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Helmet  |





# Make a Plan PETS/LIVESTOCK

## YOUR PETS

Make a plan for your pets now. Pasco County Animal Services offers a low-cost vaccination clinic that includes microchipping. The clinic is offered weekly at the shelter.

Don't leave your pet and don't use your pet as an excuse not to evacuate. You are putting yourself, your family and your pet at risk! If you are ordered to evacuate, take your pet and your pet supplies with you. Seek shelter with friends or relatives or at a hotel. Many shelters/evacuation centers will not turn away pets. Watch the pet evacuation video here:



[bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos](https://bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos)

If you plan to take your pets with you to a shelter, YOU are responsible for your pet while staying in the shelter. You will need to bring your own crate and any supplies that apply from the list provided.

If you plan to go to a hotel or motel, go online to: [petswelcome.com](https://petswelcome.com)

After the storm has passed, be careful allowing your pet outdoors. Familiar scents and landmarks may be altered and your pet could easily be confused and become lost. Downed power lines, other animals, and insects brought in with high water could present real dangers to your pet. Nearly 80 percent of pets displaced by a disaster are never reunited with their owners.

Take care not to allow your pet to consume food or water which may have become contaminated.

## FINDING ROVER

Animal Services takes in lost and surrendered pets every day. If a lost animal is brought to the shelter, it will be held for 72 hours. After 72 hours, the animal becomes property of the shelter and will be fostered out or re-homed. With so many shelters in the area, it can be hard to locate your pet. Animal Services has had great success using a new app called Finding Rover. This app uses facial recognition to reunite pets with their owners. You can download it for free and post a lost or found animal in your area. Register your pet today. For more information, go to:

[findingrover.com](https://findingrover.com)

## YOUR LIVESTOCK

There are many resources to keep you and your livestock safe as a disaster approaches. It is important to tag your animals with identifying markers. If possible, keep a photo log of livestock. Check regularly that your fences are intact. Remove any trees and repair any structures that could fall on the fence or injure an animal.

If you plan to evacuate your animals, coordinate transportation in advance. Remember that gas may not be as readily available, and traffic will increase as the disaster approaches. Plan accordingly when you begin evacuating livestock.

If you plan to stay, your livestock should have access to clean water and enough food for at least 2 days. Provide adequate cooling options and a warm bed to use. For more information about planning for your livestock, go to:

[usda.gov](https://usda.gov)

## PET DISASTER SUPPLY KIT

- Proper ID collar and rabies tag/license
- Vaccination paperwork\*
- Carrier or cage (large enough for your pet to move around)
- Leash
- Ample food supply (min. 2 weeks)
- Water (minimum 7-day supply)
- Water/food bowls
- Any necessary medication(s)
- Specific care instructions
- Newspapers, cat litter, scoop
- Plastic trash bag for handling waste
- Proper ID on all belongings (include emergency contact information if you evacuate)
- Photo of you with your pet
- A comfort item such as a favorite toy or blanket
- Non-electric can opener
- Microchipping your pet is strongly recommended

\*Make sure your pets have had all their shots within the past 12 months. Pet-friendly shelters/evacuation centers and boarding facilities will require proof of vaccinations.



# Make a Plan STAY



## WHEN YOU SHELTER-IN-PLACE

There are multiple hazards that require you to shelter-in-place. You may not have the opportunity to evacuate if a hazard is rapidly approaching. Find a safe room in the house with no exterior windows or doors if you are in danger of any of the following:

- Hurricane
- Thunderstorm
- Tornado

If you live in a sound structure outside the evacuation area and do not live in a mobile home or RV, you may decide to stay home and take appropriate precautions.



## MONITOR THE WEATHER

Monitor your battery-operated radio, NOAA weather radio, or TV for the latest advisories and other emergency information.

## CHECK DISASTER SUPPLIES

Make sure you have at least a seven day supply of non-perishable foods. Try to find foods that have good nutritional value. Consider using disposable plates, bowls, or utensils in the event that you may not be able to clean your everyday kitchen supplies. Don't forget a non-electric can opener.

## WELCOME YOUR FRIENDS

Offer your home as shelter to friends or relatives who live in vulnerable areas or mobile homes. Remind them to bring their supply kits. Make sure your windows, doors, and garage doors are protected. During the storm, stay inside and away from windows, skylights, and glass doors.

## STORE WATER

Bottled water and water storage containers sell out quickly in stores when a disaster is approaching. City water can become contaminated if heavy rains persist or the water systems are damaged. Homes with well water require electricity to run the well pump. Expect that if you lose power you will be unable to utilize the water from your well. Use clean containers, including your bathtub or sink, for storing water. Plan on one gallon per person, per day, for at least seven days for drinking and other uses. If you are unable to find containers to store your water, don't panic. Page 26 of the guide gives instructions on how to boil water for drinking.

## SAFE ROOM

Find a Safe Room in your home, usually an interior, windowless, reinforced room such as a closet or bathroom on the lower floor. If you have a 2-story home, under the stairs might also be a safe place.

## DO NOT TRAVEL

Do not travel until you are told it is safe to do so.

## WAIT UNTIL DANGER IS OVER

Wait for official word that the danger has passed. If flooding threatens your home, turn off electricity at the main breaker. If you lose power, turn off major appliances (such as the air conditioner and water heater) to reduce damage from surge when power is restored.







# Make a Plan EVACUATE

## TIME TO EVACUATE

Sometimes hazards give you no other option than to evacuate your home, business, or community. Your plan to shelter-in-place might not be possible. Prepare yourself to evacuate if you are in danger.

There are two types of evacuation. One requires immediate evacuation in the event of an unforeseen emergency. This can include things such as:

- House/structure fire
- Flash flooding
- Sinkhole
- Tornado
- Wildfire

The second type of evacuation often allows time in advance to plan and prepare. This typically occurs with the following disasters:

- Hurricanes
- Large wildfires
- Heavy rainfall/flooding

## IF YOU MUST EVACUATE

If you live in an evacuation area, a mobile home, or an RV, when an evacuation order is given, don't panic. Move at a steady pace and ensure you leave enough time to get to where you will shelter from the storm. **DO NOT** take chances with your life by staying at home or by waiting until it's too late to make it safely to your place of refuge! For public transportation information, visit **GOPASCO**: <https://www.gopasco.com>.

## LEAVING COASTAL AREAS

If you are leaving the area, take your supplies with you. Move inland away from the storm surge and flooding. It is recommended that residents evacuate "tens of miles, not hundreds" if possible. Roads will be heavily congested and you run the risk of being caught on the highway without a safe refuge. You could also drive into the storm's path if it changes.

## FINDING SAFETY IN A PUBLIC SHELTER

Make sure your destination is not within a zone that has been ordered to evacuate. Shelters will be open, but they can fill quickly. Although the county prefers that you register for a shelter ahead of time, it is not necessary. Not all shelters are opened for every incident. Therefore, the closest one to you may not be an option.

Local officials will announce if any shelters are opened. As they fill up, people may be asked to seek other shelters. Space is limited for the number of persons a facility can hold. Verify that space is available prior to arriving at a shelter. Each person will be given a designated space of 20 sq. ft. (except during a pandemic) for their personal belongings. This space is about the size of a standard door. Only some shelters are able to accept pets. If you are evacuating with pets, make sure the shelter is able to accept them. For more information, see the Home & Shelter Kit on p. 20. To view the special needs shelter registration/reservation video, visit [youtu.be/b2OEefcw8Q0](https://youtu.be/b2OEefcw8Q0).



## VACANCY AT A HOTEL OR MOTEL

If you plan to go to a hotel or motel, you will need to check for availability and make your reservations 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 zone.

## CHECK BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Take your pets, including their supplies and vaccination records.

Take important papers, including your driver's license, special medical information, insurance policies, your insurance agent's name and number, and property inventories.

Remember to take your irreplaceable items, such as photos or keepsakes.

Let friends and relatives know where you are going.

Turn off your electricity, water, and gas if officials tell you to do so. If you are not familiar with how to turn off your utilities safely, contact your provider directly and ask for assistance. You can also hire a professional to turn it off for you. Lock your windows and doors.

Make sure your neighbors have a safe ride.

Stay tuned to your local radio and television stations for emergency broadcasts.

## COVID-19

- Stay with family or friends
- Hotel or motel
- As a last resort, stay in a shelter.

# Make a Plan

## FINAL PREPARATIONS

### PRECIOUS COMMODITIES BEFORE & AFTER A STORM

Emergency charger for cell phones and mobile devices. Consider a solar powered alternative.

Cash. With no power, banks may be closed; checks and credit cards may not be accepted, and ATM's may not be operational.

Charcoal, matches, propane, and grill. Do not use indoors.

Ice. If the power goes out, ice can help preserve food in the freezer or cooler. It can also be used for water.

Phone. An old-fashioned corded telephone (i.e. not a cordless or cell phone) does not require electricity.

Gas. For the days leading up to a disaster, try to keep your gas tank full on your vehicle.



### THE STORM IS APPROACHING

Keep a radio on in your home and/or business and listen for weather updates on local stations and on NOAA Weather Radio. Stay tuned for the latest information.

Review your checklists. Be sure to check your Disaster Supply Kit. Now would be the time to get any last-minute supplies that may not be available during the storm or after the storm passes. If items are unavailable in stores, check your home for items that may be substitutions.

You will need water for drinking, but you may also need it to flush toilets, wash dishes, or clean up. Clean bathtubs and sinks; fill them with clean water prior to a storm so you'll have extra clean water.

It is likely during a severe storm that you will lose power. Loss of power can last mere minutes, hours, days, or weeks. In an effort to preserve any food you have stored in your refrigerator and freezer, turn the dials to the coldest settings and avoid opening the doors. You can also freeze water in sandwich bags or water bottles. These will extend the duration of refrigeration and the ice will melt and provide you with an additional water supply.

If you take prescriptions, now is the time to refill them. Maintain at least a two-week supply of medication during hurricane season. Speak with your doctor or pharmacist prior to a storm and know your options for accessing refills.

Get cash. Banks and ATMs won't work without electricity and few stores will be able to accept credit cards, or personal checks.



Clear your yard of lawn furniture, potted plants, bicycles, trash cans and other potential airborne missiles. If you have a pool, leave it filled and super-chlorinated. Cover the filtration system and wrap the pool pump, time clock, light transformers, and heater with waterproof plastic. Turn all electrical equipment off at the circuit breaker during the storm. Do not cover the pool.

Protect your windows and glass doors with plywood or storm shutters. Brace double entry and garage doors at the top and bottom. If there is a chance flooding could threaten your home, move important items such as electronics, antiques, and furniture off the floor.

Fill your car's gas tank and check oil, coolant, and tires. Gas pumps won't operate without electricity. Verify that your Emergency Car Kit is stowed inside your vehicle.

Secure your boat early. Drawbridges will be closed to boat traffic after an evacuation order is issued.

Never sweep or blow yard leaves, pine needles, grass clippings, or soil into the street or storm water system. This clogs up the storm water pipes and prevents water from draining.





# Recovery CLEANUP

## RECOVERY OPERATIONS

You may not have an opportunity to evacuate before a disaster strikes. Not everyone heeds warnings of a disaster approaching. Immediately after a disaster, first responders will search for individuals in danger. It can take time to get to you if you are in a dangerous environment. If you see someone in need of assistance after a disaster, immediately call 9-1-1. Debris may be covering roads, bridges, and waterways and need to be removed before responders can get to you. If you see damage to public property such as roads, bridges, powerlines, utilities, etc., immediately call 9-1-1.

## LOOTING & CRIME

**DO NOT LOOT.** Looting is a term used during a time of disaster to identify regular burglary and is considered to be stealing. Charges may vary, but can include petty theft, burglary, larceny, or grand theft. If you see someone looting or committing a crime, immediately CALL 9-1-1. If you were affected by a disaster and need assistance, contact the Department of Emergency Management or Customer Service (listed on back).

## COUNSELING & SUPPORT

Living through a disaster can be overwhelming. There is a sense of relief when the disaster is over, and then a pause of “now what?” Take time to process. Reach out to family and friends for support. Sometimes speaking with someone outside of your support group can be helpful. There are outreach centers and free counseling services offered throughout the county.

If you need immediate counseling, you can contact SAMHSA Disaster Distress Hotline External. They offer a 24/7 national hotline dedicated to natural or human-caused disasters.

**Call 1-800-985-5990**

**Text TalkWithUs to 66746**

You can also contact the FEMA Helpline External link. They provide a helpline for those struggling with state or federal disaster assistance. Phone lines are open from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

**Call 1-800-621-3362**

## COMFORTING CHILDREN

Understand that everyone reacts differently after a disaster. A child’s reaction varies by age. Children of all ages may experience emotions and symptoms of fear of another disaster, loss of interest in activities, nightmares, or regressive behavior. Talk to your children and be honest about facts pertaining to the disaster and your emotions about it. Encourage them to talk about what they are thinking and feeling. Try to maintain a routine schedule.

## POST-DISASTER ASSISTANCE

After a disaster, you may be without power and many of the other services you rely on (water, sewer, phone, cell phone, and businesses). Immediate response may not be possible, so you must be prepared to be self-reliant.

In the event that you experience a disaster and your home or business is in need of repair, the Federal Government, State of Florida, and Pasco County have several programs that offer assistance. These programs can help with funding after flooding or storm damage. Each disaster situation is unique. Filing an application does not guarantee funding.

## INSURANCE CLAIM

Collect the photos that you took of your property. Store everything in a folder/binder or online. You can e-mail copies to yourself, e-mail to a friend, create folders in a Cloud/Google/DropBox account, or even burn a CD and mail copies to people you trust. It is important that you have more than one copy of original documents.

Often, in the event of a disaster that affects dozens, hundreds, or thousands of people and property, insurance companies have to alter how they normally manage claims. Keep track of everyone that you speak with and take notes. If they log phone calls with a tracking number or confirmation number, request those numbers.

If you are in need of shelter or living arrangements, be sure to let your insurance company know. Coverage for living expenses varies based on your coverage and it can be expensive to stay long-term in a hotel/motel.

Some insurance companies will offer assistance up front. You can use the funds to buy materials such as tarps, generators, tools, and supplies. Purchase items that will prevent further damages to your property while you wait for your claim to process. Understand that filing a claim takes time, and it can take even longer when many are affected. Maintain communication with your adjuster and keep organized records of your claim.



# Recovery CLEANUP



## RE-ENTRY

**BE PATIENT.** You won't 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.

## AUTHORIZED PERMISSION

When residents are permitted to return to a disaster area, access may be limited to residents and business owners. Residents – You will need a government issued photo ID and a utility bill showing your name and the address for the area you are seeking access. Businesses – Have a valid photo ID, documents showing proof of ownership/rental, County business tax license, and names of individuals authorized to be given access on business letterhead.

## TRAVELING ON ROADS & BRIDGES

Avoid driving, especially through water. Roads may have debris which can puncture your tires! Until power is restored, many traffic signals will be inoperable. Treat any intersection where traffic signals are out as a 4-way stop. If you see damage or debris on public property including downed power lines, trees in the road, flooding, or other hazards, report issues immediately to Public Works. They can be reached by calling customer service at 1-727-847-2411 or reported using the MyPasco app. **DO NOT** attempt to remove the debris or repair damages.

## DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

**IMPORTANT: USE CAUTION ALWAYS.** If you cannot complete your assessment safely, contact the proper authorities. Allow the professionals to remove any debris before completing the assessment.

Once you are able to return to your home or business, walk around the outside first to survey damage and enter with caution. It is recommended to take pictures or video after a disaster to document any damage for insurance claims.

Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home or business. If you suspect a gas leak, leave immediately and call 9-1-1 and your natural gas provider from a safe location.

If your home or business has been flooded, do not use the electricity. Contact a qualified licensed electrician to inspect the electrical system and appliances before turning the power back on.

## SAFETY FIRST

Be extremely careful with fire. If possible, use battery-operated flashlights and lanterns instead of candles. Refrain from burning any garbage or debris. If you plan to use a grill or a firepit, take the necessary fire safety precautions and **NEVER** leave a fire unattended. Keep grills and generators outdoors in a well-ventilated area and a safe distance from the home. Carbon monoxide poisoning is a frequent killer.

Stay tuned to your local media for up-to-date emergency information. Avoid any standing bodies of water. Always supervise children. **DO NOT WADE IN FLOOD WATERS OR SEWER DRAINS.**

Wildlife is also affected in a disaster. They may be displaced, and their behavior may be out of the ordinary. Especially be aware of snakes, insects, alligators, or animals driven to higher ground by floods. If you are threatened by a dangerous animal, immediately **CALL 9-1-1**. If you see an injured animal or an animal in danger, contact the nearest Animal Services facility listed on the back of the guide.

Refrain from drinking water from the pipes until officials verify that it is safe to do so. It is always best to drink bottled water or boiled water after a disaster. Boiling water kills disease-causing organisms, including viruses, bacteria, and parasites. Remember to allow the water to reach a rolling boil, then continue to boil for 1 minute. Store the boiled water after it has cooled in a clean, sanitized container with a tight seal.

## PURCHASING A GENERATOR

Generators can provide power to your home or business in case of a power outage or shortage. They can be portable or stationary. Portable generators are often more affordable and are gas powered. Stationary generators require professional installation to run power to your electric power supply. They can be powered by gas, propane, or solar.

To find the right generator for your home or your business, consider the appliances or equipment you want to use. Determine if you will need multiple outlets or multiple types of outlets on your generator.

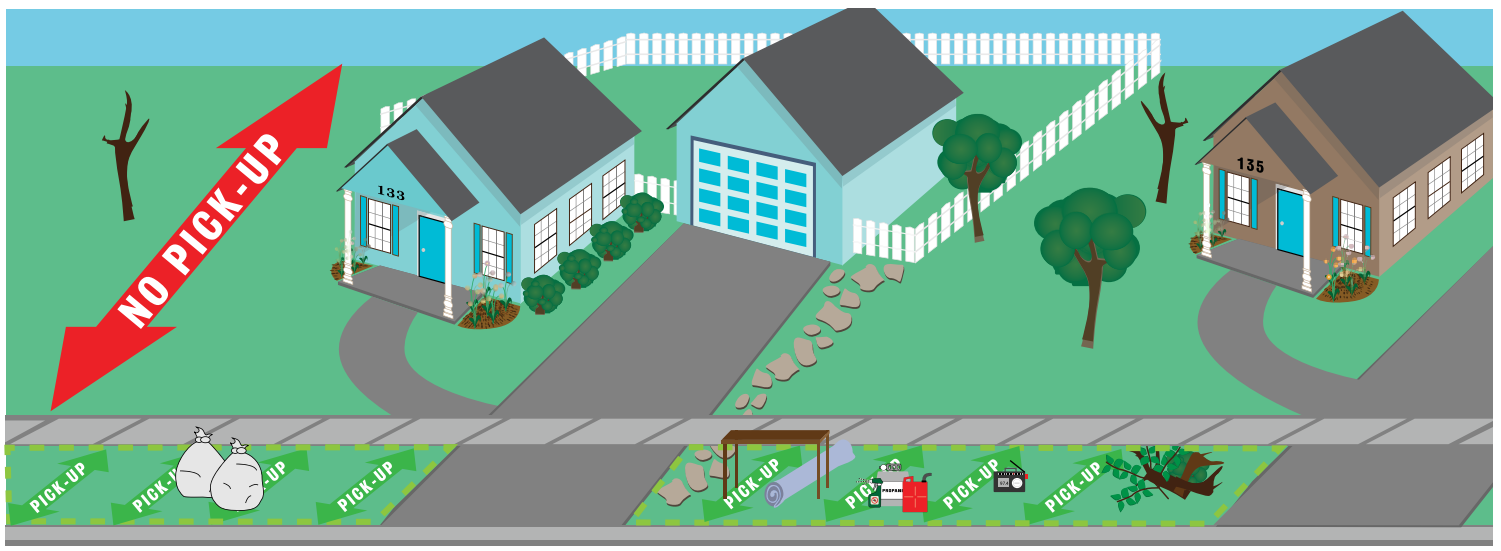
## GENERATOR SAFETY

If you already own a generator, remember to perform routine maintenance and safety checks. **NEVER** connect a portable generator to building wiring. This can cause generator backfeed, which is extremely dangerous for the general public (downed wires etc.) and utility workers.

Plug appliances directly into the generator. It is not recommended to use additional power strips or split extension cords. Generators are designed with a specific number of outlets because they can only provide power safely and efficiently to that number of outlets.

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Place generators outside and away from doors, windows, and vents that could allow carbon monoxide (CO) to come indoors. Exhaust fumes are dangerous and can be deadly.

Before refueling your generator, turn it off and let it cool down. Don't forget to check the oil every time you add gas. Keep your generator in a dry area.

Conserve fuel by alternating the quantity and type of appliances being utilized by the generator.

Store fuel safely outside in labeled and approved storage containers. Fuel should never be stored in direct sunlight or extreme temperatures.

Stationary (whole house) generators run off gas utility lines or an LP tank and supply electrical power to pre-selected circuits. They **MUST** be professionally installed by a licensed electrician.

Theft can be a problem after a disaster. Secure any portable generators to avoid stolen property.

### **TREE REMOVAL**

Be extremely careful with a chain saw and follow all safety precautions. Call professionals to remove large, uprooted trees, etc. Avoid downed or dangling power lines. Be especially careful when clearing fallen trees.

### **CLEANUP & REPAIRS**

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. Make temporary repairs to correct safety hazards and minimize further damage.

### **DEBRIS REMOVAL**

Always use proper safety equipment and precautions such as heavy gloves, safety goggles, heavy boots, long-sleeve shirts, and long pants when removing debris. Tie back long hair, wear a hat, and use sunscreen. Drink plenty of fluids, rest, and ask for help when you need it. **DO NOT** burn trash.

### **CURBSIDE DEBRIS**

When the county implements the debris removal program after a disaster, residents will be given instructions for where to place debris. The debris will be sorted into piles at the right of way. Debris needs to be placed at the curb. Any debris not placed at the curb will not be picked up. A list of instructions for each disaster can be found at: [pascocountyfl.net](http://pascocountyfl.net)

### **PERMITTING**

Permits are always required for any kind of demolition or permanent repairs, reconstruction, or roofing. You can contact the permitting office to improve your home prior to a disaster or repair it after a disaster.

### **PROTECT YOURSELF FROM CONTRACTOR FRAUD**

Hire only licensed contractors. Be cautious of anyone coming to your home uninvited and offering to do home repairs.

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.

Don't pull the permits for the contractor. This may be an indication that they are not properly licensed.

If you suspect a contractor of fraud, contact the State of Florida Consumer Fraud hotline at 1-866-966-7226.



# IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

**EMERGENCY . . . . . 9-1-1**

211 Referral Line . . . . . 2-1-1  
 Pasco Co. Customer Service . . . . . 727-847-2411  
 Pasco Co. Emergency Management . . . . . 727-847-8137

American Red Cross . . . . . 727-848-8354

## Animal Services

Dade City . . . . . 352-521-5194  
 Land O' Lakes . . . . . 813-929-1212  
 New Port Richey . . . . . 727-834-3216

Catholic Charities . . . . . 352-686-9897

Disaster Distress Hotline . . . . . 800-985-5990

Duke Energy . . . . . 800-228-8485

Federal Alliance for Safe Homes . . . . . 877-221-7233

FEMA Helpline . . . . . 800-621-3362

Florida Consumer Fraud Hotline . . . . . 866-966-7226

Florida Terrorism Hotline . . . . . 855-352-7233

Highway Patrol . . . . . 352-797-5738

NOAA Weather Radio FIPS . . . . . Code 012101

## Pasco County Public Transportation

West Pasco . . . . . 727-834-3322  
 East Pasco . . . . . 352-521-4587  
 Central Pasco . . . . . 813-235-6073

Salvation Army (New Port Richey) . . . . . 727-815-8539

## Sheriff

Main Office . . . . . 727-847-5878  
 Non-Emergency . . . . . 727-847-8102

Solid Waste . . . . . 727-847-8123

Special Needs Registration . . . . . 727-847-8137

TECO . . . . . 888-223-0800

To Report TECO Power Outages . . . . . 877-588-1010

United Way . . . . . 727-845-3030

Withlacoochee River Electric . . . . . 352-588-5115

Bayonet Point District . . . . . 727-868-9465



# ONLINE RESOURCES

[cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)

[dhs.gov](http://dhs.gov)

[disastersafety.org](http://disastersafety.org)

[egov.pascocountyfl.net/alertpasco/](http://egov.pascocountyfl.net/alertpasco/)

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

[fema.gov](http://fema.gov)

[lost.petcolove.org](http://lost.petcolove.org)

[flash.org](http://flash.org)

[floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov)

[floridadisaster.org](http://floridadisaster.org)

[highwindsaferooms.org](http://highwindsaferooms.org)

[iii.org](http://iii.org)

[mysafeflorida.org](http://mysafeflorida.org)

[pascocountyfl.net](http://pascocountyfl.net)

[pascosheriff.com](http://pascosheriff.com)

[bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos](http://bit.ly/Emergency-Management-Preparedness-Videos)

[pascocountyfl.net/754/Watch-Live-Pasco-TV](http://pascocountyfl.net/754/Watch-Live-Pasco-TV)

[petswelcome.com](http://petswelcome.com)

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

[redcross.org](http://redcross.org)

[salvationarmyusa.org](http://salvationarmyusa.org)

[stopthebleed.org](http://stopthebleed.org)

[tampabayprepares.org](http://tampabayprepares.org)

[usda.gov](http://usda.gov)

[voa.org](http://voa.org)

[weather.gov](http://weather.gov)

**Tell us how we're doing!  
 Take the Citizen Survey today!**

