

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

Hurricane season is upon us. It is imperative that we as a community, our friends and neighbors, educate ourselves and prepare for a disaster in the form of a hurricane. History has shown that a lack of hurricane awareness and preparation can leave devastating scars, both emotional and physical on a community. By knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take, you may reduce the effects of a hurricane disaster.

In a major disaster, emergency workers may not be able to reach you right away, and in some cases it could take 3 or more days for help to arrive. What would you do if you had no electricity, no gas, no water and no telephone service? Having a plan for your family and their needs will help ensure their safety and comfort during these difficult times

It is important that you have an Emergency Kit containing items that you may need before, during and after the storm. A majority of the items you may already have on hand, but now is the time to insure you have a good supply, which is stocked up and easily accessible. Adding a few items to your regular shopping list each week is the easiest way to complete your three-day hurricane kit. In this way you avoid the last minute rush and do not severely impact your grocery budget. Specific items may vary depending on where you live in the state, but generally a basic emergency supply kit should include:

- ***Water, at least one gallon per person per day for at least three days.***
- ***Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food***
- ***Can opener***
- ***Battery powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both***
- ***Flashlight and extra batteries***
- ***First aid kit***
- ***Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation***

The Florida Division of Emergency Management website has a feature that allows you customize a Family Emergency Plan that is specific to you and your family. Go to www.floridadisaster.org for additional information. Remember, the best way to make your family and home safer is to be prepared before a disaster happens!

Below are other helpful sites with valuable information to help you prepare for hurricane season.

National Hurricane Center
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>

FEMA
<http://www.ready.gov/>