

# SURVIVING THE STORM

## IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY



## Timing is Critical to Good Planning

The National Hurricane Center rates storms by their wind speed using the Saffir-Simpson Scale of hurricane intensity. Based on the storm's wind speed, the hurricane is rated from a minimal Category 1 all the way to a powerful Category 5. While it might be easy to believe that the only storms worth worrying about are the more powerful ones, even the weaker ones can wreak havoc.

In 2012, slow moving Tropical Storm Debby brought coastal flooding, heavy rains and tornadoes to the Tampa Bay area. Even though the storm never achieved hurricane intensity, it caused damage, flooding and snarled traffic for three days. In October of the same year, Hurricane Sandy, with a Category 1 intensity, smashed ashore in New Jersey, becoming the second costliest hurricane in American history behind 2005's Hurricane Katrina.



Destruction from Hurricane Sandy, November 2012

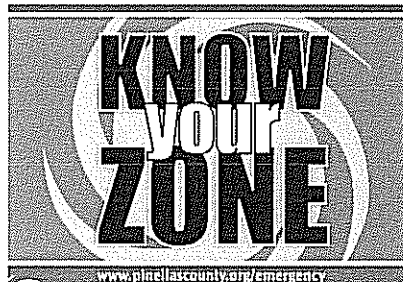
These storms teach us a valuable lesson – it doesn't matter what the hurricane's intensity – each storm is capable of causing tremendous damage. That's why now is the time to build a survival plan for

yourself, your family, business, pets and other important people and things in your life.

### KNOW YOUR INSURANCE

Knowing your insurance policy is just as important as knowing your evacuation zone. By reviewing your policy well in advance of a storm, you can confirm the coverage you are paying for and ensure it's adequate for your property. Will your policy pay full replacement cost of your items or just the depreciated value? Will your home be built back to current codes or will that cost you more out of pocket? Remember, no homeowner's policy covers flood. That coverage is available through the National Flood

Insurance Program at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov). It takes 30 days from when you purchase flood insurance until your policy goes into effect, so don't wait until the last minute!



### 5-DAY CONE ACTIONS

- ☐ Know your evacuation zone.
- ☐ Review your family disaster plan.
- ☐ Get your survival kit and important papers ready.
- ☐ Begin work to prepare your home and yard.
- ☐ If you live in an evacuation zone, know where you will go and how you will get there.
- ☐ If you have special needs, be sure your caregiver begins to implement your plan and, if needed, you are registered for a special needs shelter.

As a storm moves closer to land, the accuracy of the forecast increases. If Pinellas County is within the 3-day cone, residents should step up their preparations.

### 3-DAY CONE ACTIONS

- ☐ Double check your survival kit and make necessary purchases to avoid lines and traffic.
- ☐ Gather special supplies for infants, children, seniors and pets.
- ☐ Be sure you have all materials and tools necessary to shutter windows. Shop early.
- ☐ If your plans are to evacuate, make arrangements, book reservations and pack what you can in your vehicle.

About 48 hours ahead of a storm, forecasters will issue a Hurricane Watch for areas within the cone that can expect hurricane conditions. Again, because hurricanes can be erratic, everyone in that area must prepare as if the storm is headed directly for their home. If the storm changes path or speed, the time between a watch and a warning might be only six hours. During a watch, the

focus should be on preparing for the warning.

If you are in an evacuation zone or a mobile/manufactured home, the goal is to be fully prepared to leap into action within one or two hours of the warning being issued. If you live in a non-evacuation zone, the goal is to be able to complete all preparations within one or two hours after the warning.

### HURRICANE WATCH ACTIONS

- ☐ Fill vehicle gas tank.
- ☐ Get cash and secure papers and valuables.
- ☐ Refill medications. (See Page 5)
- ☐ Fill containers and tubs with water, even if evacuating – you may need the water when you return.
- ☐ Secure yard equipment and furniture.
- ☐ Shutter your windows.
- ☐ Help neighbors with their preparations.
- ☐ If your plans are to evacuate out of the local area, make final preparations to secure your home so you can leave as soon as an evacuation order is issued.
- ☐ If you are registered for transportation to a public shelter, be sure you have everything you need for your "go bag."

A storm will be about 36 hours from impact when the Hurricane Warning is issued. Generally, Pinellas County Emergency Management will issue official evacuation orders not long after a warning. Whenever any evacuation is ordered, all mobile- and manufactured-home residents must evacuate. For those not in mobile or manufactured homes, be sure to know your zone (See pages 6 and 7) so you can understand and follow official emergency instructions.

### HURRICANE WARNING ACTIONS

- ☐ Stay tuned to local news and get your weather radio ready.
- ☐ Complete any final preparations to evacuate or to shelter in your home.
- ☐ If your plan is to travel out of the local area and you can leave at this point, do so.

- ☐ If you are registered for transportation to a public shelter, have your "go bag" ready. Rescue workers will begin pick-ups shortly after an evacuation order is issued.

### Once an evacuation order is issued:

- ☐ Determine if your residence is affected by the evacuation order (does it include your evacuation zone or do you live in a mobile or manufactured home?)
- ☐ If you are evacuating locally, get to your shelter location within a few hours of the evacuation order. Be sure to check which public shelters are open. (See pages 6 and 7)
- ☐ If you are traveling out of the local area, leave as quickly as possible to avoid traffic jams.
- ☐ If you are not required to evacuate, prepare a safe room in your home and stay off the roads to enable evacuation traffic to clear the area.

Even when the storm is a hundred or more miles away, weather conditions can begin to deteriorate, and driving conditions will worsen.

The most important thing to remember is to do as much as you can before the warning is issued. Waiting until then will only give you about 24 hours to complete preparations and evacuate if you are required. If you are registered for transportation to a public shelter, you will only have a few hours after the Evacuation Order before your ride will arrive. Also, waiting until the warning to drive hundreds of miles increases your risk of being caught in the storm on the road. Remember there are safe shelter options within Pinellas County.

### RECOVERY ACTIONS

When the winds stop, there is still danger from the storm. Downed power lines, gas leaks and debris can make your neighborhood, and even your yard, a danger zone. Take the time to assess the situation and act carefully with safety first in mind. More people are killed during recovery than during hurricanes. If you have evacuated and are returning home, wait until you are told it is safe to re-enter the county and your neighborhood.

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# STAY CONNECTED THROUGH THE SEASON

## visit

[www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)

for hurricane news, evacuation maps, shelter information and more.

## sign up

on [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)

for the free, award-winning **Pinellas County E-Lert** electronic newsletter to receive current emergency news, preparation tips, educational opportunities and emergency notifications year-round.

## watch

PCC-TV

for hurricane programming and emergency operations center updates. Tune to Bright House 622, Knology 18 or Verizon 44.

## sign up

on your cell phone

to receive the community notification system's emergency text messages. Call (888) 689-8905 from your cell phone.

## call

the Citizens Information Center (CIC)

for information before, during and after the storm.

Only open during emergencies. Call (727) 464-4333.

## tune

your weather alert radio

to receive emergency weather alerts from the local National Weather Service bureau in Ruskin, Florida.

## request

a speaker or information for your organization, school or place of employment.

Call the Pinellas County Speakers Bureau at (727) 464-4600, or download a request form at [www.pinellascounty.org/speak](http://www.pinellascounty.org/speak).

## follow

Pinellas County's social media websites

for breaking news and information:



Twitter – [www.twitter.com/pinellasEM](http://www.twitter.com/pinellasEM)



FaceBook – [www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews](http://www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews)



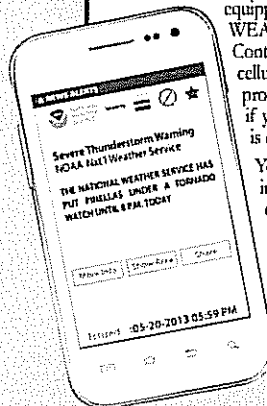
YouTube – [www.youtube.com/pcctv1](http://www.youtube.com/pcctv1)

## Get The Latest Weather Information FAST

Severe weather can often strike quickly, even during the early morning hours. An alarm from a weather alert radio or a Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA) equipped cell phone can mean the difference between life and death, since every minute counts.

Weather alert radios are widely available, and many phones are equipped with WEA technology. Contact your cellular service provider to see if your phone is equipped.

Your phone should also have all of your insurance, medical, family and other contacts on it. Be sure to sign up for text messaging information services in advance of the storm, and speak to your cell carrier for tips on how to preserve battery power. Have multiple ways to charge your battery – your car, a battery backup, a solar charger or other ways – should the power go out.

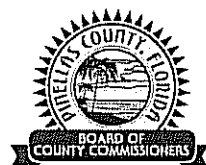


THE NEXT GENERATION OF HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS  
PINELLAS COUNTY'S

# eSeries

prepare to survive

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS



The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners wishes to thank you for reading this guide and arming yourself with information that can save your life and your property should a hurricane hit Pinellas County. Regardless of when the last storm impacted our coast or what the predictions are for the upcoming season, it only takes one storm to devastate our area.

A good hurricane plan is your best strategy against disaster, so **HAVE A PLAN!** Know whether your home is in an evacuation zone. If it is, you will need to evacuate from deadly storm-surge flooding when your evacuation level is ordered to leave by the county. Take steps to secure your property and care for your pets. Make sure you have adequate insurance. And finally, reach out a helping hand to the elderly and disabled. Don't assume they have a plan or have registered for special needs assistance. You can be the voice that encourages them to take these life-saving steps. Local authorities can help, but they need to know, before the storm threatens, who requires transportation, shelter or medical assistance.

**PREPARATION IS YOUR KEY TO SURVIVAL.  
REMEMBER, SURVIVING THE STORM IS  
EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY.**

## We've been lucky so far, but the fact remains...

Pinellas County is vulnerable to hurricanes.

Get the latest disaster preparedness information by watching **eSeries: Prepare to Survive**.

These 15-minute presentations cover a variety of topics, including:

- Special needs evacuation and sheltering
- Pet preparedness
- How to prepare your business
- What does insurance cover – and not cover

Log on to [www.pinellascounty.org/eseries](http://www.pinellascounty.org/eseries) or watch on PCC-TV.

For information, call (727) 464-3000.



[www.pinellascounty.org/eseries](http://www.pinellascounty.org/eseries)  
SCAN WITH SMARTPHONE APP

*Surviving the Storm*, the official guide for Pinellas County, is published on behalf of the Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners in cooperation with the Pinellas County Department of Emergency Management.

*Surviving the Storm* is a publication of the Pinellas County Communications Department

333 Chestnut Street • Clearwater, Florida 33756 • (727) 464-4600 • [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)

Funding for this guide was provided by Pinellas County Emergency Management. 70,000 copies were printed at a cost of \$5,895.00 or \$.0842 each.

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# MAKING INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT HURRICANES

## DO YOU NEED TO EVACUATE?

**Q** DO YOU LIVE IN A MOBILE OR MANUFACTURED HOME?

**if yes** Everyone in mobile and manufactured homes must always evacuate. . . . . pg 4

**Q** DO YOU LIVE IN AN EVACUATION ZONE?

**if yes** Know when to evacuate according to your zone, and plan where you will go. . . . . pgs 6-7

**Q** DO YOU HAVE SPECIAL NEEDS OR REQUIRE ASSISTANCE WITH EVACUATING?

**if yes** Make sure you have a plan and are registered for a special needs shelter or transportation. . . . . pgs 8-9

### IF YOU ARE EVACUATING, DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOU WILL GO AND HOW YOU WILL GET THERE?

Are you going out of town? . . . . . pg 1

If you plan to leave the area, leave as early as you can to avoid traffic jams and being stranded on the road when the storm makes landfall. Learn the forecasting terms.

Are you going to a host home? . . . . . pg 10  
Call ahead to confirm details.

Are you going to a shelter? . . . . . pg 12  
Have your evacuation kit ready.

Do you have personal transportation? . . . . . pg 4  
Make sure your vehicle is ready.

Do you need to register for special needs transportation? . . . . . pg 8

Will you take the bus? . . . . . pg 9  
PSTA (Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority) will run routes until it is unsafe to travel.

### IF YOU ARE STAYING IN YOUR HOME, DO YOU KNOW HOW TO PREPARE?

Prepare your home. . . . . pgs 4-5  
Make preparations early for your home, yard, vehicles, papers, medications, pets and supply kits.

If you stay... . . . . . pg 10  
Be a Host Home for someone who needs to evacuate.  
Make the offer within your circle of friends, place of worship or at work.

### CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS WHEN DECIDING TO STAY IN YOUR HOME:

- My home is not in an evacuation (or storm-surge) zone.
- Windows have hurricane shutters and the garage door is braced.
- My home is not a manufactured or mobile home.
- My home has a safe room large enough for all occupants.
- A disaster plan and supplies are in place for all members of the household, including pets.
- Vehicles have full tanks of gas.
- A survival kit is prepared with one week's worth of nonperishable food supplies and water. See Page 12 for checklist.
- A battery-operated radio is on hand with extra batteries, along with a cell phone and battery charger for the car.
- Tarps and plastic sheeting are available for emergency repairs.

## Should I stay or should I go?

When it comes to evacuating, there are many decisions to make. One of those decisions is whether to stay in Pinellas County or drive hundreds of miles to an out-of-town location. Finding high ground in Pinellas County is possible. The green areas on the map to the right are high enough not to be impacted by surge flooding from any hurricane. Even for a Category 5 storm, a structure in these areas that is hardened to withstand high winds can provide safe shelter. Evacuating to a shelter within the county has its advantages. You can avoid traffic jams and the uncertainty that comes with driving the crowded highways as other counties evacuate along with Pinellas. You can avoid going elsewhere in the state only to find that the storm has shifted and you are now in harm's way. And you will avoid the crowds when it comes time to head home. If staying in Pinellas County seems like a good decision, plan ahead to find safe shelter by asking friends, relatives or coworkers if they are willing to host you and your family during a storm or find a hotel or motel in the area in a non-evacuation zone.

### SURGE KILLS

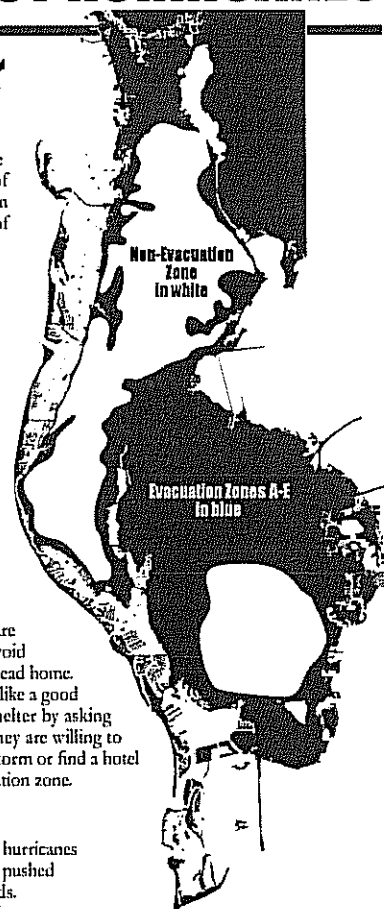
The greatest killer of people during hurricanes is storm surge — the dome of water pushed ashore by powerful hurricane winds. Storm surge isn't a gradual rising of water. It rushes in and out sweeping anything not secured back out to sea, people included. During Hurricane Katrina, residents of coastal Mississippi were caught off guard by storm-surge flood waters. Entire buildings were moved, and some of the people who didn't evacuate are still among the missing. Pinellas County is extremely vulnerable to surge flooding because of its coastal and low-lying geography. In fact, a Category 3 storm could flood 42 percent of the county's households.

Staying safe from surge flooding is easy. If a hurricane is predicted for Pinellas County and you live in a zone that has been ordered to evacuate, get out. Do not stay in an area at risk for surge flooding. Do not plan to escape to higher floors and do not wait until the last minute. Leave for higher ground and survive.

## STORM SURGE

5 feet  
4 feet  
3 feet  
2 feet  
1 foot

and you



# PREPARATION IS KEY FOR A SAFE HURRICANE SEASON

## PREPARE YOUR HOME

Some key tips: Preparing your home to withstand high winds can mean the difference between minor and major repairs after a hurricane. That's why it's so important to strengthen your home to resist high winds.

- ☐ If your roof needs replacement, a new one can be installed to meet stronger building codes adopted in 2002.
- ☐ Shutter your windows. Glass can be broken by flying debris. Protecting your windows can keep storm winds and rain out and your roof on. Duct tape provides no protection.
- ☐ Check weather stripping and caulking around windows and doors, replacing if necessary.
- ☐ Check your garage door. If your door needs replacing, look for a reinforced, wind-rated model.
- ☐ Think about other improvements. The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes has step-by-step instructions for reinforcing your home's roof, gable ends and other vulnerable areas.
- ☐ If you have questions about your home's storm readiness, consider having a home inspector review your home's condition.
- ☐ Double check your homeowner's insurance policy. If you are considering hiring help, be sure to use a licensed, reputable contractor. Before signing a contract, call Pinellas County Justice and Consumer Services at (727) 464-6200 or visit [www.pinellascounty.org/consumer](http://www.pinellascounty.org/consumer).

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Federal Alliance for Safe Homes: [www.FLASH.org](http://www.FLASH.org)  
 State of Florida: [www.mysafefloridahome.com](http://www.mysafefloridahome.com)  
 To create a personal family plan: [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)  
 Institute for Business and Home Safety:  
[www.disastersafety.org](http://www.disastersafety.org)  
 Hurricane Retrofit Guide for Homes:  
[www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation/rcmp/hrg/index.asp](http://www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation/rcmp/hrg/index.asp)



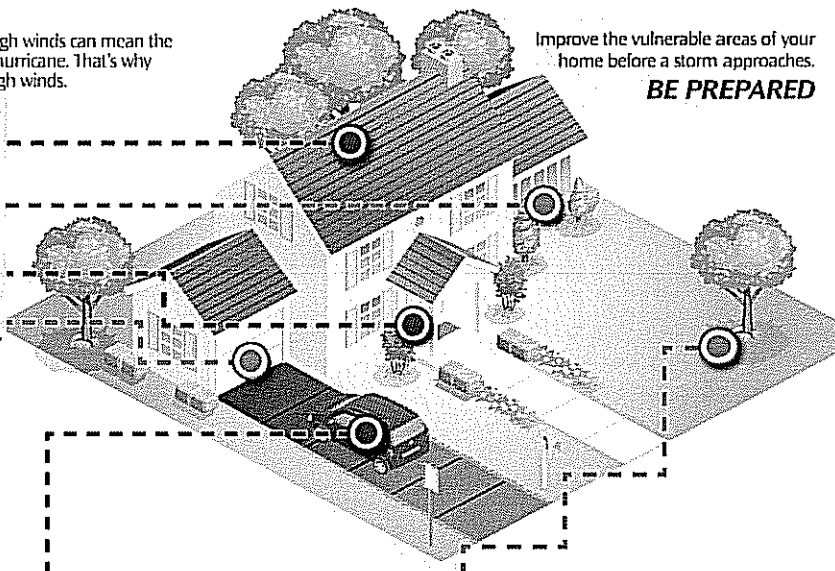
## MOBILE HOMES ARE NOT SAFE HAVENS

While mobile and manufactured homes are great places to call home, they must never be used as a shelter. Mobile and manufactured homes can be severely damaged from hurricane-force winds and flying debris. This was proved true during the storms of 2004 and 2005 when even homes built after 1994, to the tougher standards after Hurricane Andrew, sustained damage when they were flipped off their foundations or damaged by flying debris.

No matter the category of storm, whenever an evacuation order is given, all mobile- and manufactured-home residents must evacuate. Mobile- and manufactured-home residents need to have an evacuation plan in case a hurricane threatens. One word of caution – most mobile home park recreation centers are not rated to withstand high winds either. Ask your park's management what plans – if any – are in place for sheltering options and for evacuation notification.

### Annually check your tie down and anchoring system:

- ☐ Look for possible rusting of anchors and connections.
- ☐ Tighten the straps if necessary.
- ☐ Add anchors and straps where possible.
- ☐ Check for wood rot and termite damage at connections, joists and trusses – Investigators have found that failures at these points allows air to penetrate the home's air-tight envelope leading to structure failure.



Improve the vulnerable areas of your home before a storm approaches.

## BE PREPARED

## PREPARE YOUR VEHICLES

Personal vehicles can be an important tool to help you to prepare, to evacuate and to get supplies after a storm.

### To prepare your vehicle:

1. Get any basic maintenance (tune-ups, repairs) done before a storm threatens. Have your mechanic check belts, hoses, filters and vital fluid levels.
2. Keep your gas tank at least half full with gas. When a Hurricane Watch is issued, fill your tank.
3. Build a survival kit for your car, including:
  - ☐ A first aid kit
  - ☐ Nonperishable food and bottled water
  - ☐ A can of tire inflator
  - ☐ A basic tool kit
  - ☐ Jumper cables and road flares
  - ☐ A working jack and spare tire
  - ☐ A flashlight
  - ☐ DC to AC car power inverter
  - ☐ Chargers for cell phones and other devices
  - ☐ A map with shelter locations

## PREPARE YOUR YARD

Getting your yard ready to weather the storm can keep you and your home safe. High winds can turn even the heaviest items into deadly projectiles that can break through your windows, doors and even walls.

### To prepare your yard:

- ☐ Properly prune trees and shrubs before any storms threaten. Do not leave piles of branches that can become missiles in high winds.
- ☐ Keep your gutters and down spouts clear and in good repair.
- ☐ Replace rock mulch with shredded bark.
- ☐ Bring in all yard items such as furniture, toys, bird baths, bird feeders and barbecue grills when a Hurricane Warning is issued.

Do not drain your pool. Super chlorinate the water and turn off all electricity to the pool for the duration of the storm.

If you are doing any home renovations that require digging, call 8-1-1 before you start. This free service will help you locate underground utilities before you damage them. Not only will it keep you safe, it's the law!

## Top Three Tips to Save Your Home

While a thorough renovation of your home's structure will provide the best protection against the high winds a hurricane can bring, these three improvements can really make a difference:

### 1. BRACE YOUR GARAGE DOOR

After Hurricane Andrew, engineers looked at how the homes in South Florida failed during the high winds. Four out of five homes that had major structural damage lost their garage doors first. Older garage doors in good condition can be braced with retrofit kits available at most home centers. New garage doors must meet stringent wind load requirements.

### 2. PROTECT YOUR WINDOWS

By shuttering your windows with a code-approved, commercially available product or a minimum of 7/16" exterior plywood (FBC 2010 1609.1.2), you can increase your home's ability to withstand wind by one category of storm strength. In other words, a home that could survive a Category 2 storm can now handle a Category 3. If the wind gets into your home, it can force the roof upward, possibly allowing high winds to tear it off.

### 3. BRACE YOUR GABLE END ROOF

A gabled roof has two slopes that come together to form a ridge or a peak at the top. Homes with gabled roofs are more likely to suffer collapse of the end wall from high winds because they are often not braced properly during construction. To learn about bracing and other techniques, go to: [www.floridadisaster.org/hrg/index.asp](http://www.floridadisaster.org/hrg/index.asp).

## Sandbags

Pinellas County does not offer sandbags to residents of unincorporated areas of the county. Individual cities in the county may offer sandbag sites. Residents should check with their municipality for exactly what is offered, the latest information and updates. Officials urge residents not to rely on sandbags to save their homes from flooding.

A quick Internet search will show many companies that manufacture systems to help reduce flooding. One of the options is physical barriers mounted to the home's structure. Consumers are advised to check several sources, get customer reviews and check the license of any contractor installing a system at their home.

## PREPARE YOUR INSURANCE

Review your homeowner's or renter's insurance policy and ask yourself five important questions:

- What is my deductible?
- What is my hurricane deductible?
- Do I have flood insurance?
- Do I have enough coverage to replace my home and belongings?
- Do I have loss-of-use coverage for temporary housing expenses?

Homeowners should check with their insurance agent to see if any home improvements would qualify for a discount on their insurance premiums. Information about insurance policies can be found through the Insurance Information Institute at [www.iii.org](http://www.iii.org).

## PREPARE FOR STORM DEBRIS

Prepare now to prevent storm debris by trimming trees and cleaning your property before a storm threatens.

Should a storm impact the area, separate your debris into the following groups:

- Garbage – place garbage in containers and double bag additional waste, such as spoiled food, for pick up by your regular hauler
- Household goods – furniture, clothes, books, toys and carpets
- Yard waste – tree limbs and trunks
- Construction materials – drywall, roof shingles and aluminum
- Appliances – refrigerators, water heaters, televisions and computers

Some important things to keep in mind:

- Avoid stacking debris by utility poles, under power lines, on top of water meters, next to mailboxes or fences, or on storm drains.
- The county cannot enter private property to remove debris. Removal can be handled by a private contractor. If you contract to have the debris removed from your property, you must also pay for the disposal. Check your insurance policy to verify that you have debris removal as part of your coverage.
- Place all storm debris along the curb.
- Do not place storm debris in the street.

For disposal information visit

[www.pinellascounty.org/utilities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities) and click Solid Waste (on the left), or call (727) 464-7500.



## GET YOUR BOAT SHIP SHAPE

Boat owners need to have a plan to secure and protect their boats from hurricanes. For information on how to prepare your boat for a storm, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/boat\\_safety.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/boat_safety.htm)

A guide to moving your boat to a safe port when tropical winds threaten, *The FDOT Pinellas County Bascule Bridge Hurricane Plan*, is also available from Emergency Management by calling (727) 464-3800.

For more information, go to [www.boatsafe.com](http://www.boatsafe.com), or contact the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary at (727) 898-1324.

## GET YOUR PRESCRIPTION REFILLS!

One of the most important things to include in your emergency survival kit is your prescription medications in their original bottles. But what happens when an emergency is declared and your insurance company claims it is too early for you to get a refill? In 2006, the Legislature passed the Emergency Prescription Refill bill (Florida Statute 252.358 and 462.0275). This law requires all insurers and managed-care organizations to suspend refill-too-soon restrictions when a patient seeks a refill in a county:

- currently under a hurricane warning issued by the National Weather Service; or
- declared to be under a state of emergency in an executive order issued by the governor; or
- has activated its Emergency Operations Center and its emergency management plan.

This law also allows patients outside of these areas to get an emergency 72-hour refill if the pharmacist is unable to readily obtain refill authorization from the doctor. Please talk with your doctor and pharmacist now about how this new law can affect your prescriptions.

Make sure you are ready this hurricane season. In addition to having a supply of your medications on hand, ask the drug store to print you a prescription record of each one you take, including: the name of the doctor(s) who wrote the prescription(s), the name of the drug(s), dosage instructions and the name of the pharmacy where you had it filled.



## KIDS IN THE KNOW

Hurricane season can be a scary time for kids. It's confusing to evacuate and leave personal belongings behind. Adults in the home may be stressed by the weather updates. How can you help younger family members work their way through these stressful times?

Learning in advance will give kids a better understanding of what's taking place when disaster strikes. Some great resources for your family to check out together include:

## RENTERS NEED A PLAN TOO

As a storm approaches, homeowners are urged to prepare their homes to withstand heavy winds. But what should you do if you rent?

If you rent, here are some steps that you can take to prepare for a hurricane:

- ☐ Know your evacuation zone. Pinellas County government offers several ways to locate your zone. (See Page 6) Remember, be ready to evacuate when ordered.
- ☐ Prepare yourself for the possibility of damage to your personal property. Flood insurance and renter's insurance can help to replace your belongings should they be damaged. Be sure to take an inventory of your possessions.
- ☐ Ask questions of your landlord. Will your landlord take steps to protect the windows? If not, you will need to find another place to ride out the storm, even if you live in a non-evacuation zone.

Just as with homeowners, you have a responsibility to create a personal hurricane plan. Finding out now what you will need to do may save your life when a storm threatens.

[www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/helpingchildrencope.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/helpingchildrencope.htm)  
SCAN WITH SMARTPHONE APP

### Weather wiz Kids

[www.weatherwizkids.com](http://www.weatherwizkids.com)

See what makes weather tick in easy-to-understand terms and hands-on experiments.

### FEMA for Kids

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

Find ways to help prepare for hurricane season.

### Now Stuff Works: Hurricanes

[science.howstuffworks.com/hurricane.htm](http://science.howstuffworks.com/hurricane.htm)

Get answers to commonly asked hurricane questions from this award-winning website.

## Business Planning

Businesses that lack a continuity plan can find themselves out of business when a disaster closes their doors for a few days. Owners of both large and small businesses need to have secure storage plans for computer data and paper files, alternative sites for doing business, methods of communicating with employees and customers, and appropriate insurance. These are just a few items to consider when putting together a business continuity plan.

Pinellas County Economic Development can help with hurricane planning and recovery for local businesses. Visit [www.pced.org/hurricane](http://www.pced.org/hurricane).

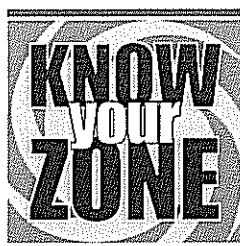
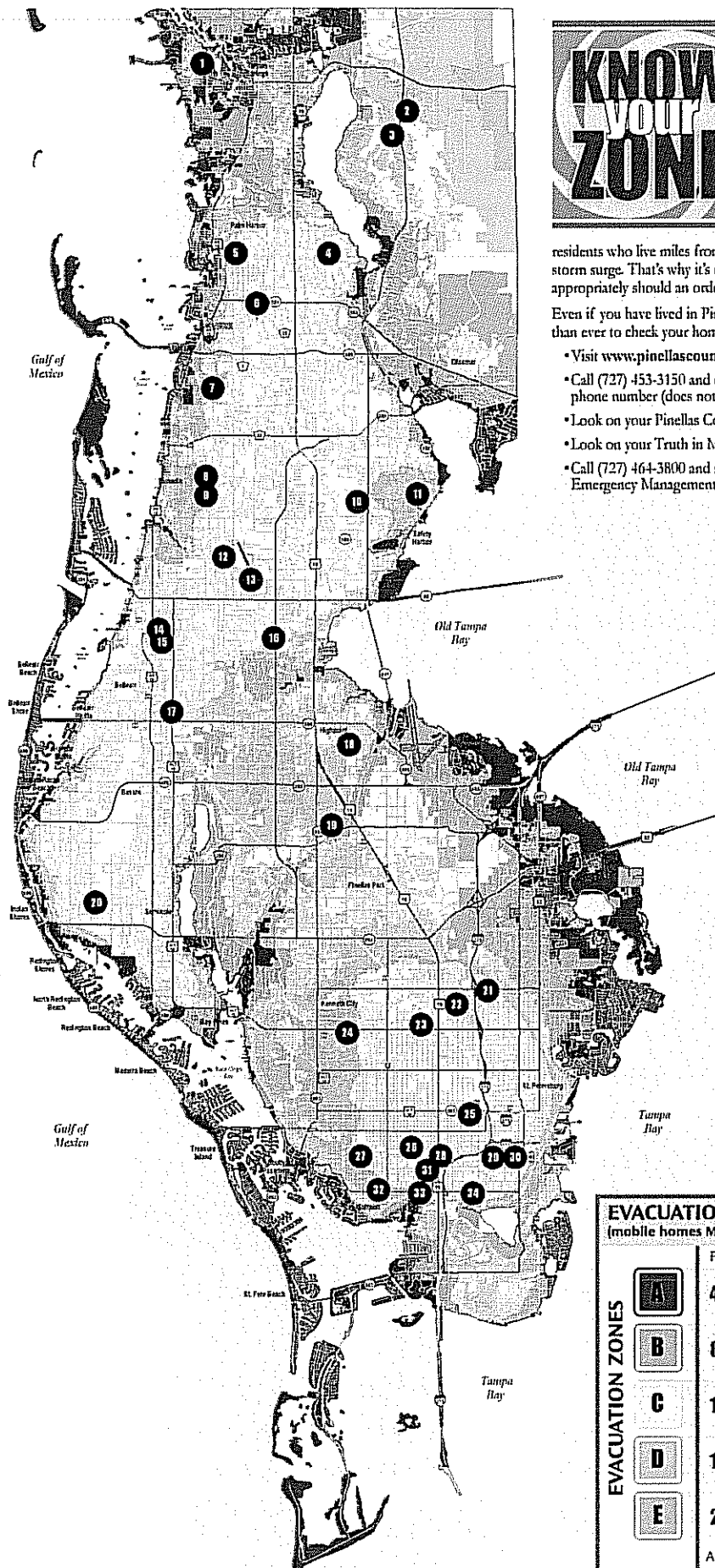
Business owners can also contact Emergency Management for planning assistance and to sign up to receive emergency situation reports that can help with evacuation planning and recovery. Find more information at [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency). Choose the Hurricane Information tab and go to Business.

### SOME ITEMS FOR A BUSINESS "GO BOX"

- ☐ List of important business phone numbers
- ☐ Insurance policies
- ☐ Backup files/tapes of electronic data
- ☐ Copies of essential business contracts and plans
- ☐ Photographs of the business, inside and out
- ☐ Property management contacts/repair vendors

**Know your Business Zone. WHY? zone = storm surge = vulnerability**





The deadliest hazards in a hurricane are not the high winds, heavy rains or possible tornadoes. The deadliest hazard is the storm surge – a dome of water pushed ashore by high winds. In a worst case scenario, this can mean a surge of 29 feet above the normal water level, causing tremendous damage and danger of drowning.

While those residents who can see the gulf or the bay have a visual reminder of how vulnerable they are to the water,

residents who live miles from these bodies of water can still be vulnerable to storm surge. That's why it's critical to identify your evacuation level and act appropriately should an order go into effect.

Even if you have lived in Pinellas County for a long time, it's more important than ever to check your home's evacuation level. To find your level:

- Visit [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)
- Call (727) 453-3150 and enter your 10-digit home phone number (does not work for cell phone numbers)
- Look on your Pinellas County water bill
- Look on your Truth in Millage (TRIM) notice
- Call (727) 464-3800 and speak with Emergency Management staff



[www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)  
SCAN WITH SMARTPHONE APP



#### EVACUATION GUIDELINES

(mobile homes **MUST** always evacuate)

EVACUATION ZONES	Potential Surge Heights (in feet)	
	<b>A</b>	4' to 8' Evacuate red areas and all mobile homes
	<b>B</b>	8' to 14' Evacuate red and orange areas and all mobile homes
	<b>C</b>	14' to 19' Evacuate red, orange and yellow areas and all mobile homes
	<b>D</b>	19' to 26' Evacuate red, orange, yellow and green areas and all mobile homes
	<b>E</b>	26' to 29' Evacuate red, orange, yellow, green and purple areas and all mobile homes
	Areas shown in white are non-evacuation zones.	

# PINELLAS COUNTY EVACUATION ZONE MAP AND SHELTER LIST

Not every shelter will open for every evacuation. Please check [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency) or call the Citizens Information Center at (727) 464-4333 or TDD (727) 464-3075.

## FLOOD ZONES AND EVACUATION ZONES DIFFER

Flood zones and evacuation zones are different. They measure different conditions that may not occur at the same time.

Flood zones are areas mapped by FEMA for use in the National Flood Insurance Program. Each flood zone designation, represented by a letter or letters, tells homeowners exactly what the risk is for flooding at their property over a period of years, regardless of the cause. By law, all homes in high-risk zones carrying a mortgage must be covered by flood insurance.

Evacuation zones, on the other hand, are based on hurricane storm-surge zones determined by the National Hurricane Center using ground elevation and the area's vulnerability to storm surge from a hurricane. The evacuation zones are marked from A through E, plus non-evacuation zones.

The flood zones and evacuation zones are determined by different methods and have different purposes. A home may be located in a non-evacuation zone, yet still be located in a flood zone because of a nearby stream or pond.

Residents must check both zones.

An important thing to remember is that flood losses are not covered by homeowners insurance policies. The National Flood Insurance Program makes federally backed flood insurance available to residents and business owners. Any flooding damage covered under the policy – whether or not a federal disaster declaration is made – will be reimbursed per the policy limits, which can include structural damage or the loss of contents.

For more information on flood zones, visit the National Flood Insurance Program at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov) or call (888) CALL-FLOOD (225-5356).

For more information on evacuation levels, check the map in this guide or visit [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency).

## RECOMMENDED AND MANDATORY EVACUATIONS

Should a hurricane threaten the Tampa Bay area, an evacuation order may be issued. What exactly does that mean?

An evacuation order is given to get people away from the deadliest part of a hurricane – storm surge. Evacuation levels are based on elevation above ground that could be inundated by the surge driven ashore during a storm. There is one notable exception to this: all mobile homes, regardless of their elevation, must be evacuated. They are vulnerable to the high winds of a hurricane and flying debris.

There are two types of evacuations that can be ordered. The first is a **recommended evacuation**. In the event of the approach of a tropical storm or a hurricane crossing the state and exiting over Pinellas County, the potential for storm surge may not be as great. In these cases, emergency managers may recommend that residents in mobile homes and historically flood-prone areas consider evacuating to higher ground and/or sturdier structures than they have available at home. This recommendation is made for the safety of those in areas known to be vulnerable.

The second type is a **mandatory evacuation**. Mandatory evacuations are issued when the probability of storm surge is high, and loss of life could occur if residents don't leave. These evacuations will be ordered up to a certain letter zone and will always include mobile homes. It is incredibly important that if your home is in an evacuation level, you know your level, plan for a 'stay' and 'go' option and, if your level is ordered to go, move quickly but safely outside of the evacuation area.

It is illegal to stay in a home under a mandatory evacuation order. Under Florida Statute 252.38, the local authority has the ability to take necessary steps to provide for the health and safety of people and property. Chapter 252.50 sets refusal to follow an evacuation order as a second-degree misdemeanor.

Does this mean the police will drag you out of your property? No. They will be too busy helping those who will be following the evacuation order, although they will likely ask for next of kin or an emergency contact. However, this statute does provide law enforcement the basis to remove anyone who is impeding the flow of an evacuation.

Remember, emergency managers are counting on you to be prepared and do the right thing to keep yourself and your family out of dangerous situations. Please know your evacuation zone and have a plan for where you will go should something happen this hurricane season.

NORTH COUNTY	1	Tarpon Springs Middle School 501 N. Florida Ave. • Tarpon Springs	🏠
	2	Brooker Creek Elementary School 3130 Forelock Road • Tarpon Springs	🏠
	3	East Lake High School 1300 Silver Eagle Drive • Tarpon Springs	🏠
	4	Carwise Middle School 3301 Bendley Drive • Palm Harbor	🏠
	5	Palm Harbor University High School 1900 Omaha St. • Palm Harbor	🏠
	6	Palm Harbor Middle School 1800 Tampa Road • Palm Harbor	🏠
	7	Dunedin Community Center 1920 Pinhurst Road • Dunedin	🏠
	8	Dunedin Highland Middle School 70 Patricia Ave. • Dunedin	🏠 🐕
	9	Dunedin Elementary School 900 Union St. • Dunedin	🏠
	10	McMullen-Booth Elementary School 3025 Union St. • Clearwater	🏠
	11	Safety Harbor Middle School 901 First Ave. N. • Safety Harbor	🏠
	12	Clearwater Fundamental Middle School 1660 Palmetto St. • Clearwater	🏠
	13	Skycroft Elementary School 10 N. Corona Ave. • Clearwater	🏠
	14	Belleair Elementary School 1156 Lakeview Road • Clearwater	🏠
	15	Ross Norton Recreation Center 1426 S. MLK Jr. Ave. • Clearwater	🏠
	16	Oak Grove Middle School 1370 S. Belcher Road • Clearwater	🏠 🐕
	17	Largo High School 410 Missouri Ave. • Largo	🏠
SOUTH COUNTY	18	High Point Elementary School 5921 150th Ave. N. • Clearwater	🏠
	19	Pinellas Park High School 6305 118th Ave. N. • Pinellas Park	🏠
	20	Bauder Elementary School 12755 86th Ave. N. • Seminole	🏠
	21	John Sexton Elementary School 1997 54th Ave. N. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	22	Lealman Intermediate 4900 28th St. N. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	23	New Heights Elementary School 3901 37th St. N. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	24	Northside Baptist Church 6000 38th Ave. N. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	25	St. Petersburg High School 2501 Fifth Ave. N. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	26	Fairmount Park Elementary School 575 41st St. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	27	Boca Ciega High School 924 58th St. S. • Gulfport	🏠
	28	Gibbs High School 850 34th St. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	29	John Hopkins Middle School 701 16th St. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠 🐕
	30	Campbell Park Elementary School 1051 Seventh Ave. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	31	Jamerson Elementary School 1200 37th St. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠
	32	Gulfport Elementary School 2014 52nd St. S. • Gulfport	🏠
	33	Thurgood Marshall Middle School 3901 22nd Ave. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠 🐕
	34	James Sanderlin Elementary School 2350 22nd Ave. S. • St. Petersburg	🏠

🏠 General Shelters

🐕 Special Needs Shelters

🐕 Pet-Friendly Shelters  
Must register pets in advance



**We're on Twitter:**

[www.twitter.com/pinellasEM](https://twitter.com/pinellasEM)



**Follow us on Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews](https://www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews)



**See our hurricane videos on YouTube:**

[www.youtube.com/pcctv1](https://www.youtube.com/pcctv1)

# CARING FOR OUR MOST VULNERABLE CITIZENS

Residents with special needs, the elderly, the homeless and those without transportation require extra attention in order to stay protected in weather emergencies.

Though Pinellas County government has education programs in place to help these citizens prepare and find safe shelter, the responsibility for storm preparation rests with individuals and their families or caregivers. That planning needs to happen early. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE STORM IS RAGING.** Emergency personnel may not be able to respond when high winds make road travel hazardous. Plan for safe shelter now.

Even if you don't have special needs, you can help others who do. Look around your neighborhood, workplace or place of worship and reach out to offer a hand. Serve as a host home, help to answer questions or pick up a few extra survival kit items for someone else.



## Residents With Special Needs Should Register

Residents with certain medical conditions can get help during an evacuation. Three special needs shelters are designated for those requiring MINIMAL medical assistance.

### INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Register now. Contact Pinellas County Emergency Management, your local fire department or your home healthcare provider.
- Once registered, you will be contacted for more information. After a medical needs review, your eligibility will be assessed. If you don't qualify for a special needs shelter, other options will be discussed with you. If you are registered and need transportation to a shelter, your local fire department will contact you before an evacuation.
- If you have your own transportation to a special needs shelter, registration is not required, but it is strongly recommended.
- You may bring your caregiver and/or family with you to a special needs shelter.
- You are not obligated to go to a special needs shelter once registered, if you make other safe and secure arrangements later.
- **Service animals** that have been individually trained to do work or perform a task for a person with a disability are allowed in any shelter; there is no registration requirement.
- **Pets** are only allowed in pet-friendly shelters with prior registration (see Page 10). If you are registered for a special needs shelter and you have no other options for your pet, call Pinellas County Animal Services at (727) 582-2298 to register your pet. Animal Services will make arrangements for your pet to be taken to a host home.

## Register Now

To register for a special needs shelter and/or transportation, do one of the following:

- Submit a form online at [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency).
- Call Pinellas County Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800.
- Call your nearest fire department or home healthcare provider.

## What to Expect From a Special Needs Shelter

Medical personnel from the Pinellas County Health Department and School Board will staff special needs shelters. Oxygen is available, but air conditioning may not be available if power is interrupted.

Before going to a shelter, arrange to bring at least a two-week supply of any medications you need along with any needed portable equipment. If you have special diet requirements, be sure to pack your own special nonperishable snacks. For your own comfort, bring items such as sheets, pillows and blankets. Cots are available on a limited basis and are not guaranteed. Air mattresses are a good option to add to your supplies.

Special needs shelters do not have hospital beds.

## Advice For Residents With Special Needs

Whether you go to a special needs shelter or not, here's some good advice to keep in mind when preparing for hurricane season:

- Start a personal support network of people you can count on during an emergency.
- Create an emergency health information card that is customized to you.
- Complete an emergency contact list with names and phone numbers of family members, friends, doctors, insurance information and hospital preferences.
- Conduct an ability self-assessment. Know what you can and cannot do. Talk with your health care provider about a realistic plan.
- Maintain a current list of your prescription medications and at least a two-week supply of each. (See *Get your prescription refilled* on Page 5)
- Keep important equipment and assistive devices in a consistent, convenient and secured place.
- Write a set of commonly used instructions in advance of emergencies. Such as: "I have a hearing impairment", "I need a \_\_\_ medication at \_\_\_(time)" or "Contact a friend/relative/physician." Keep with contact list.

Assistance at a special needs shelter is limited to basic medical monitoring, oxygen and some backup electricity. The shelter will be inside a school and will likely be crowded and noisy. Cots may not be available for everyone. While this is a safe location to ride out a storm, it is not for everyone. Many citizens require more comfortable accommodations as mobility restrictions make it impossible to sleep on the floor or a cot. In these cases, the Host Homes program is an excellent alternative (see story on Page 10), or a hotel or motel located in a non-evacuation zone.

## Special Needs Shelters

**Dunedin Highland Middle School**  
70 Patricia Ave.  
Dunedin

**Oak Grove Middle School**  
1370 S. Belcher Road  
Clearwater

**John Hopkins Middle School**  
701 16th St. S.  
St. Petersburg

## Did You Know...

- Service animals that have been individually trained to do work or perform a task for a person with a disability are allowed in hotels, motels and public shelters. Don't forget to pack their supplies too.
- Wheelchair users need to have more than one exit from their residence that is wheelchair accessible. Practice how to escape from your home.
- Wear medical alert tags. Also keep available special instructions for emergency personnel in a brief and direct format, such as: "I am deaf, please write down your instructions" or "Please take my medication from the refrigerator." It may be difficult to write if you are in an emergency situation.
- The National Weather Service has information on its website to help the hearing impaired utilize NOAA weather alert radios for emergency weather notifications. Go to [www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/special\\_need.htm](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/special_need.htm).
- Keep cash available in case you need to buy special supplies.
- Be an advocate for yourself! Practice how to quickly explain your condition and your adaptive equipment to someone who is helping you.



## Looking for Volunteers to Help with Pet Pick-ups

A love of animals and enthusiasm for helping others are qualities adult volunteers need to assist special needs citizens who must evacuate their homes during an emergency such as a hurricane. Pinellas County Animal Services in Largo is welcoming applications to volunteer with transportation teams that take pets to safe locations during a declared emergency. This service helps special needs citizens who might otherwise decide not to evacuate because of their pets. With this service, these citizens feel more comfortable about leaving their homes, knowing their animals are safe.

Volunteers help transport pets of special needs citizens to safe, predetermined locations. Those interested in volunteering should call Pinellas County Animal Services at (727) 582-2600. Helpers need to fill out a Pinellas County volunteer application and must complete specialized training.



## On Track With Transportation

For those who need to evacuate, but don't have their own transportation, a hurricane can cause additional anxiety. Pinellas County officials want to make sure that everyone can get to safe shelter.

If you sign up for the special needs registry, you will be asked about your transportation plans. If you need a ride to a shelter, your local fire department will be in contact with you to make arrangements when the time comes to evacuate.

If you don't require special needs transport, PSTA buses will run nearly all their routes until it's no longer safe to travel. During an evacuation, buses will also run from transfer stations to local shelters. All rides are free during an evacuation. Prepare in advance by locating your nearest bus stop.

Some people may not qualify for special needs transport, cannot ride the bus and have no other means of transportation to evacuate. If you are in that situation, contact your local fire department or the Department of Emergency Management, in advance, for special assistance. Take advantage of the help that is there for you. Don't stay in a dangerous situation just because you don't have transportation.

Call the PSTA InfoLine (727) 540-1900. For route information during a storm, go to [www.psta.net](http://www.psta.net)



## Helping Seniors



Older adults, especially those living alone, have unique concerns that should be addressed before a storm nears Pinellas County. Increased stress and anxiety can be a factor leading to more incidents of illness, particularly for those seniors with heart disease or respiratory troubles.

If you are an older adult who doesn't require special needs assistance, you don't have to ride out the storm alone. Many senior communities are in non-evacuation zones, so start a hurricane club

with other people from your neighborhood, social group or place of worship. Meet to discuss preparations such as who might serve as a host home and make a list to divide up supplies to gather before a storm.

Sign up on your cell phone at (888) 689-8905 for free community notification service to get up-to-date storm information. This news can be passed along through a phone tree to friends and neighbors. If a Hurricane Warning should be issued, the phone tree would then advise all members to meet at the host home and remind them to bring their emergency supplies.

It bears repeating that, regardless of age, if you live in a mobile or manufactured home, you must leave when the evacuation order is given. A clubhouse is likely not a safe place to weather a storm either due to wind or storm surge. Get together with others in your neighborhood to find host homes in non-evacuation zones.

If you are an older adult living in a nursing home, assisted living facility or boarding home, contact the administrator to learn about emergency preparations. Let your friends and family members know about the facility's plans and give them important contact information before a hurricane threatens the area.

If you are homebound, discuss your plan with your caregiver.

**Look around.**  
If you know an elderly person, don't assume he or she has a plan. Ask. Offer assistance. You might be saving a life.

## Special Needs Supply List

### Some additional items to be considered:

#### Wheelchairs

- ☐ A patch kit and extra inner tubes
- ☐ Gloves in case of broken glass or debris
- ☐ An extra battery and/or a converter for charging the battery

#### Personal supplies

- ☐ Two-week supply of dressing materials, nasal cannulas or suction catheters
- ☐ Two-week supply of prescriptions
- ☐ Cooler for refrigerated medications
- ☐ Special dietary foods

#### Visual impairments

- ☐ Talking or Braille clock
- ☐ An extra white cane, magnifier and glasses
- ☐ Fluorescent tape to mark your disaster supplies

#### Hearing or speech impairments

- ☐ Extra batteries for hearing aids
- ☐ Pencil and paper for communicating emergency information
- ☐ Power converter for your laptop
- ☐ Preprinted key phrases you would use in an emergency

## Things to Know and Do

- ☐ Learn how local authorities will warn you of a pending disaster.
- ☐ Build a support network of friends, family and neighbors. Let them know your needs in an emergency situation and how they can assist you with your plan.
- ☐ Connect with a local neighborhood group such as CERT (Community Emergency Response Team), neighborhood watch, neighborhood association or a nearby place of worship.
- ☐ Make sure your local fire department knows your needs. Register if you need transportation or a spot in a special needs shelter.
- ☐ A NOAA weather alert radio can wake you when severe weather is threatening.
- ☐ Carefully monitor weather conditions throughout hurricane season.
- ☐ If you are going to a public shelter, wear comfortable clothes and sturdy shoes. Have your "go bag" ready and let an out-of-town contact know where you are going.
- ☐ Take at least two week's worth of medication with you.
- ☐ Be sure to get your prescriptions refilled. (See *Get Your Prescription Refills!*, Page 5.)
- ☐ Have a list of contact numbers and a copy of your personal medical information, including a list of medications.
- ☐ If you stay home, never use candles when the electricity goes out. Stick to flashlights and battery-operated lanterns.
- ☐ Help your friends and neighbors by sharing this information!

# HOST HOMES

*shelter from the storm*

Take a moment to remember the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina's surging flood waters.

The truth is that Pinellas County is at risk for severe storm-surge flooding. Despite ongoing education, there are citizens who live in evacuation (or storm-surge) zones in Pinellas County who still do not have plans for safe shelter when a storm approaches.

If a Category 3 hurricane is headed to Pinellas County, about 391,000 people would need to evacuate surge-vulnerable areas or mobile homes. With approximately 74,000 public shelter spaces, alternative shelter is needed. Some people may stay in the county at a hotel or a relative's house in a non-evacuation area. Others may be able to leave early enough to drive hundreds of miles out of harm's way.

But for others — many of whom are elderly or pet owners — additional local opportunities are needed. For them, organizations that set up a voluntary Host Homes program can help.

Employers, places of worship, civic organizations and community groups are among the organizations that can establish their own voluntary Host Homes programs that they operate for their own employees or members. It gives an opportunity for those within an organization who live in a secure home in a non-evacuation area to open their home to a fellow member of the same organization who must evacuate.

Keeping the host/guest matches within the organization takes away some of the fear associated with the thought of helping strangers. It allows the volunteer coordinators the freedom to run the program according to the needs of the participating organization.

In particular, faith organizations can reach out to their elderly and disabled members to make sure those members have safe shelter. A bonus is that members are matched with fellow members who can offer moral support and comfort during a scary and uncertain time.

The program can also benefit pet owners who might otherwise stay home with their pets regardless of the danger.

Host Homes is not a government program; it is a voluntary program for community organizations. Pinellas County has prepared a toolkit and additional information to help organizations get started.

To find out more go to:  
[www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)



## Host Home Courtesy

When visiting someone's home please be a gracious guest. Offer supplies and to help at mealtimes. Keep yourself and guest area neat. Be appreciative and respectful of their needs.

## PLAN AHEAD FOR YOUR PET



Pinellas County pet owners have options when it comes to pet-friendly emergency shelters. Pinellas County schools and Pinellas County government have three pet-friendly shelter locations. (Per federal law, service animals are allowed in any public shelter.) Those registering for special needs shelters should read Page 8 for more information on pet sheltering.

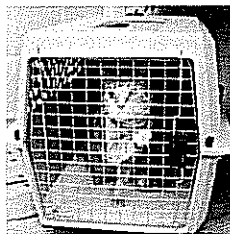
Each of these facilities is substantially built, has a large indoor gym and separate air handlers to ensure the comfort and safety of allergic citizens who shelter there. Pet shelters accept only cats and dogs, and availability is limited. Please consider these shelters as a last resort in your planning process.

Animal shelters, such as Pinellas County Animal Services, the Humane Society and the SPCA, cannot accept your pets during emergencies.

Don't assume that a boarding kennel or hotel/motel will accept your pet. Check ahead and look for kennels in non-evacuation zones.

### Things to do:

- ☐ Take your pet when you evacuate. Do not leave your pet at home!
- ☐ Ask friends or family living outside of evacuation areas if they can keep your pet.
- ☐ Keep a pet carrier (portable kennel) for each pet — one that allows your pet to stand and turn around. The carrier should be marked with your pet's identification.
- ☐ Make sure all your pet's vaccinations are current and have proof available of its current county-issued license.
- ☐ If you must use a kennel as a last resort, make sure it is not in an evacuation zone and reserve space as soon as possible. Kennels require proof of vaccinations.



## POST-DISASTER ANIMAL COLLECTION

After a storm, stray animals will be collected and staged at temporary collection sites prior to transfer to more permanent shelters. The location of these collection sites will be determined based on prevailing conditions. Every effort will be made to inform the public of these locations so that animals can be returned to their owners as quickly as possible. Once the site(s) have been determined you should look for your pet(s) at the location nearest your home and where you last saw your pet. To report a lost pet, call Pinellas County Animal Services at (727) 582-2600.

## HORSE & LIVESTOCK OWNERS NEED A PLAN

Horse and livestock owners need to have preparations in place well in advance. Pinellas County does not provide any public areas to leave these animals during evacuations, so residents need to make arrangements to shelter their horses. The Sunshine State Horse Council has an informative Web page that provides guidance on how to prepare your horse to weather the storm. Visit [www.floridahorse.com/hurricane/hurricane](http://www.floridahorse.com/hurricane/hurricane).

## PET SHELTERS Register

The Pinellas County School Board and Pinellas County government provide these three pet-friendly shelter locations:

**Dunedin Highland Middle School**  
70 Patricia Ave.  
Dunedin

**Oak Grove Middle School**  
1370 S. Belcher Road  
Clearwater

**Thurgood Marshall Middle School**  
3901 22nd Ave. S.  
St. Petersburg

Residents must preregister themselves and their pets for these shelters, as space is limited. Mobile home residents are given first priority. Find a registration form online at [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/petpreparedness.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/petpreparedness.htm) or call (727) 582-2150.

## PET-FRIENDLY HOTELS/MOTELS

Call Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater at (727) 464-7200 or check the following websites during an evacuation:

[www.visitstpetclearwater.com](http://www.visitstpetclearwater.com)  
[www.floridapets.net](http://www.floridapets.net)  
[www.petswelcome.com](http://www.petswelcome.com)  
[www.LetsGoPets.com](http://www.LetsGoPets.com)  
[www.petfriendlyhotels.com](http://www.petfriendlyhotels.com)  
[www.petfriendlytravel.com](http://www.petfriendlytravel.com)  
[www.1clickpethotels.com](http://www.1clickpethotels.com)  
[www.travelpets.com](http://www.travelpets.com)  
[www.dogfriendly.com](http://www.dogfriendly.com)

Check with other hotels also; many have emergency policies and will accept pets during an evacuation.

**Download a Pet Identification Form from the Pinellas County Animal Services website**  
Follow the heading Pet Hurricane Planning, fill out the form and tape it to your pet carrier or kennel. This form will contain all needed information about your pet for your stay at Pinellas County pet-friendly shelters.



[www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices)  
SCAN WITH SMARTPHONE APP

## Pet Disaster Supply Kit

- ☐ Proper identification
- ☐ Immunization and medical records
- ☐ County-issued rabies tag
- ☐ Food and water (2-wks. supply)
- ☐ Food/water bowls
- ☐ Carrier or portable kennel
- ☐ Medications
- ☐ Muzzle, collar and leash
- ☐ Manual can opener
- ☐ Current photo of pet
- ☐ Favorite toys and blanket
- ☐ Cat litter/pan and scoop
- ☐ Grooming items
- ☐ Plastic bags to handle waste
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Disinfectant

# You're Prepared and the Storm is Bearing Down

NOW WHAT? TIPS FOR DURING AND AFTER THE STORM

## DURING a storm

### WHEN THE STORM'S IMPACT IS FELT

While the approach of a hurricane can be an anxious time, living through the storm can be terrifying. If you live in an ordered evacuation zone, you should already be at your safe place (host home, hotel or shelter). If you are not evacuating, it's time to brave the storm.

Here are some important tips to remember:

- Stay tuned to local news or PCC-TV for updates.
- Close interior doors. Secure and brace external doors.
- If power goes out, use your weather radio for alerts. For light, use flashlights, battery-operated lanterns or chemical light sticks. Avoid burning candles and do not run a generator inside.
- Stay indoors and most importantly, stay calm.
- Parents should extend greater patience and understanding to children having difficulty coping with the situation. Be honest about the danger, and reassure them that you are focused on their safety. Do your best to keep them entertained or occupied.
- Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm and winds may pick up again.

### IF YOUR HOME IS BREACHED

Even though you have taken the necessary precautions to protect your home, the exterior can be breached. Debris can break through windows, and trees can crash through your roof. When this happens, take these immediate actions:

- Take refuge in a small interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level of your home. Remember, the center of your house is the safest.
- Lie on the floor under a table or other sturdy object if you cannot make it to a safe room.
- Consider leaving your home ONLY if remaining poses an imminent threat to your life.
- Wait until the storm has passed to tend to any damage.



### DRIVING SAFELY

A hurricane can turn a familiar road into an unfamiliar and dangerous one very quickly.

#### Driving safety tips:

- Do not drive through standing water. You will not know the depth of the water nor will you know the condition of the road under the water.
- Match your speed to road conditions. Cars can quickly become uncontrollable when driving on damaged, debris-choked roads.
- Visibility may be limited. Large trucks and increased traffic on congested roadways can obstruct your line of sight.
- Maintain a safe distance from the car in front of you.
- Traffic patterns may be shifted in work zones; obey posted work-zone speed limits at all times. Be aware of equipment and workers.
- Constantly scan for pedestrians who can quickly lose their footing.
- Obey all "road closed" signs. Just because you can't see road damage doesn't mean it is safe.
- Treat any intersection with non-working traffic signals as an "all way" stop. Be prepared to stop at every intersection.
- Not all damaged or destroyed road signs will have been replaced.
- Be prepared to yield to a pedestrian or another driver or to stop unexpectedly.
- Know where you are going and give yourself ample time to get there.
- Drive with car lights on, and slow down.

## AFTER a storm



After the storm, it's time to assess the damage. Keep your battery-operated radio close for news reports about damage, road closures, power outages and other emergency instructions. With three to seven days of uncertainty, depending on the storm, you'll need to rely upon what you've stored for food, water, medications and entertainment. If the county is hit with a Category 3, 4 or 5 hurricane, it could be weeks or months before life gets back to normal. Use the following safety steps during recovery:

### GENERATOR SAFETY

Home generators provide limited power during a prolonged power outage. Use them to keep a refrigerator cold, run a fan, recharge your cell phone or operate a microwave oven. Generators can help make your storm recovery more comfortable, but they can also kill if not used correctly. Read instructions carefully and fully understand how to use your specific generator.

#### Generator dangers:

**Carbon Monoxide (CO) hazard**  
Carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless gas produced from burning fuel, is deadly in very small amounts.

- Always use generators outdoors, away from doors, windows and vents. NEVER use them in homes, garages, basements, crawl spaces or other enclosed or partially enclosed areas, even with ventilation.
- Install battery-operated or battery-backup carbon monoxide alarms in your home. Test these alarms often and replace batteries when needed.

#### Electrical hazards

Generators create electricity, which can kill if you receive a shock.

- Keep the generator dry. Operate on a dry surface in an open area. Dry your hands before handling it.
- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty, outdoor-rated extension cord that is free of cuts or tears and has all three prongs.
- NEVER plug the generator into a wall outlet. This practice, known as backfeeding, can cause electrocution risk to utility workers and others served by the same utility transformer.
- If necessary to connect a generator to house wiring for appliances, have a qualified electrician install needed equipment and teach you how to use it.

#### Fire hazards

Generators use flammable fuels, increasing the chance of an accidental fire that can threaten your life and property.

- Before refueling the generator, turn it off and let it cool.
- Always store fuel outside of living areas in labeled containers.
- Store fuel away from any fuel-burning appliance.

### CHAINSAW SAFETY

While it is necessary to clear downed trees and branches, use great caution when operating a chainsaw. Safety tips to help keep you safe and injury-free:

#### Before starting the saw

- Read your owner's manual.
- Wear proper safety gear, including eye and hearing protection, heavy work gloves and work boots.
- Check controls, chain tension and all bolts and handles to ensure they are functioning properly.
- Fuel your saw at least 10 feet from sources of ignition.
- Clear debris that may interfere with cutting.

#### While running the saw

- Keep both hands on the handles.
- Make sure you have secure footing.
- Do not overreach or cut directly overhead.
- Be prepared for kickback.

### FOOD SAFETY GUIDELINES

Power outages caused by hurricanes can present health concerns from food spoilage.

#### Tips to help keep you safe:

- Before the storm, take an inventory of the items in your refrigerator and freezer. Put this list on the refrigerator door so you know where everything is located.
- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. Minimal freezer-door openings can keep frozen items safe for about two days.
- Refrigerated foods should be safe if the power is out for no more than four to six hours. Discard any food that has been above 40°F for two hours and any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture. Never taste food to determine safety!
- If power will be off more than six hours, transfer refrigerated foods to an insulated cooler filled with ice or frozen gel packs. Keep a thermometer in the cooler to be sure the food stays at 40°F or lower.

For more information about food safety, call the Pinellas County Health Department at (727) 824-6900, or visit [www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com).

### RESTROOM FACILITIES

Improper disposal of human waste can lead to outbreaks of cholera, dysentery and other diseases.

#### Tips for a sewer outage:

- When instructed, do not use or flush your toilet. Powered sewer lift stations may be out of order, which could lead to a sewage back-up into homes.
- Use a chemical toilet if one is available.
- Create an emergency toilet by using your toilet bowl or a five-gallon plastic bucket with a tight-fitting lid. Line with a heavy-duty trash bag and use household bleach as a disinfectant. If using your toilet bowl, first turn off water and flush one time to empty before lining with trash bag.
- DO NOT use kitty litter in your emergency toilet. This cannot be flushed after the sewage system is operational.
- Once given the OK, dispose of the emergency toilet's contents into your household commode.
- Thoroughly sanitize your emergency toilet with bleach before storing or disposal.
- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water after handling the emergency toilet.

### DRINKING WATER

A boil-water order can be issued during a hurricane or any other significant event that affects the drinking water supply. This means there is a possibility of some microbial contamination in tap water. While there are advanced and expensive filters and specialized water treatment tablets on the market that can make your water safe to drink, there are two methods that are typically used by homeowners:

#### Boiling

Boiling is the most effective way to kill bacteria, viruses and parasites in water. According to the Florida State Health Department and the Center for Disease Control, a pot of water that has been brought to a full rolling boil for one minute is enough to kill pathogens and make the water safe to consume. Let the water come to room temperature before drinking.

#### Bleach

Bleach is a less effective way to sanitize water but it can work if you don't have access to power or cooking fuel. Add 1/8 tsp. of common unscented household bleach (containing 5.25% sodium hypochlorite) to a gallon of water and let the water stand for at least 30 minutes.

Remember, these methods work with water that is clear but possibly contaminated, not with murky water taken from a ditch, for example.

For more information, visit the Center for Disease Control's food and water safety page at [www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/foodwater).

### CURFEWS

After the storm passes, authorities may announce a curfew. This is a safety measure, usually initiated because roads are still blocked with trees or downed power lines. To assist in the recovery efforts and to keep everyone safe, it is important to comply.

## Evacuation Kit

If you are evacuating to a public shelter: Pack your essentials, but pack light as space is limited. It is possible you may only have a space that measures 5 feet by 2 feet. Remember, a public shelter is not a cruise ship; it is a life boat with the mission to save lives.

### Suggested items for a "go bag":

- ☐ Important papers and valid ID
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Phone list
- ☐ Medications and copies of prescriptions (or prescription record printed by pharmacy)
- ☐ Nonperishable food
- ☐ Special nonperishable dietary food
- ☐ Several gallons of drinking water to keep in your vehicle. A minimum of one gallon per person per day.
- ☐ Bedding for a small space
- ☐ Personal hygiene items
- ☐ Change of clothes
- ☐ Eyeglasses
- ☐ Infant or child necessities (wipes, diapers, bottles, medications)
- ☐ Quiet games, toys or reading materials



### If you are evacuating to stay with friends or relatives or in a host home:

Take your "go bag" and ask in advance what you can bring for food and water and what kind of space you'll have for your possessions and vehicles.

### Prepare your home when you leave:

Regardless of where you are evacuating, before you leave your home, be sure to do the following:

- ☐ Take your valuables and important papers
- ☐ Turn off all utilities (water, electricity, gas) at the main switch
- ☐ Lock windows and doors
- ☐ Fill your gas tank
- ☐ Advise friends or relatives of where you are going

## Document Checklist

### Personal papers to take with you:

- ☐ Driver's license or ID card
- ☐ Important numbers and emergency contacts
- ☐ Credit cards and list of creditors
- ☐ Medical records and blood type
- ☐ Prescription record (printed by pharmacy. List doctors, medications, dosages, prescription numbers, etc.)
- ☐ Cash
- ☐ Bank account numbers
- ☐ List of savings and investments, including CDs, stocks, bonds and mutual funds
- ☐ Household inventory: paper copy, photos, flashdrive, video tape and/or computer disk
- ☐ List of insurance policies with company names, policy types and policy numbers
- ☐ Doctor's contact information
- ☐ Copy of wills, trust documents and living wills
- ☐ Titles for your house, car and other property
- ☐ Birth, marriage, divorce, death and adoption certificates and passports
- ☐ List of advisors, such as accountant, attorney and religious leader
- ☐ Education and military records
- ☐ Other special papers that would be difficult or impossible to replace if lost

## Survival Kit

If you are staying home during a hurricane: Here's a list of items to consider for your survival kit. Keep items in airtight plastic bags or containers. Replace stored water every six months and double-check battery expiration dates.

### Suggested items for a "stay kit"

- ☐ One-week supply of fluids to drink and food that requires no cooking
- ☐ Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- ☐ Nuts, beef jerky and trail mix
- ☐ Raisins, peanut butter and granola bars
- ☐ Formula or baby food
- ☐ Canned juices or sports drinks
- ☐ One gallon of water per person per day
- ☐ Non-electric can opener
- ☐ Utility knife
- ☐ Cups, plates and plastic utensils
- ☐ Cooler and ice
- ☐ Pet food

### Sanitation

- ☐ Portable toilet (five-gallon bucket, heavy trash bags, chlorine bleach)
- ☐ Toilet paper and moist towelettes
- ☐ Feminine supplies
- ☐ Personal hygiene items

### Kids' supplies and entertainment

- ☐ Favorite nonperishable snacks
- ☐ Powdered milk
- ☐ Stuffed animal or favorite toy
- ☐ Blanket and pacifier
- ☐ Diapers and wipes
- ☐ Card and board games
- ☐ Books

### First aid supplies

- ☐ Adhesive bandages, gauze pads and tape
- ☐ Soap and antibacterial hand gel
- ☐ Antiseptic
- ☐ Latex gloves, scissors and tweezers
- ☐ Thermometer
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Over-the-counter pain reliever
- ☐ Anti-diarrhea medicine/laxative
- ☐ Anti-itch cream

### Clothing and bedding

- ☐ One complete change of clothing and shoes per person
- ☐ Sturdy shoes or work boots
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Blankets and sleeping bags
- ☐ Sunglasses

### Tools and emergency supplies

- ☐ Flashlight and battery-operated lanterns
- ☐ Battery-operated radio
- ☐ Extra batteries
- ☐ Matches or lighter in a waterproof container
- ☐ Compass and local maps with shelter locations
- ☐ A shut-off wrench and other tools
- ☐ Paper and pencil
- ☐ Plastic sheeting and tarps
- ☐ Elastic cords or rope
- ☐ Insect repellent

## Important Contact Information

### Pinellas County Information

(727) 464-3000 / V/TDD (727) 464-4062 [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)

### Pinellas County Emergency Management

(727) 464-3800 [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)

### Pinellas County Citizens Information Center \*\*

(727) 464-4333 / TDD (727) 464-3075

### Find Your Evacuation Level \*\*\*

(727) 453-3150 [gis.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone](http://gis.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone)

### Community Notification Service \*

(888) 689-8905

### Pinellas County

#### Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater

(Hotel/motel evac info inside Pinellas County) [www.visitstpetclearwater.com](http://www.visitstpetclearwater.com)

#### St. Petersburg-Clearwater International Airport

(727) 453-7800 [www.fly2ple.com](http://www.fly2ple.com)

#### Pinellas County Animal Services

(727) 582-2600 / TDD (727) 582-2636 [www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices)

#### Pinellas County Communications

(727) 464-4600 [www.pinellascounty.org/communications](http://www.pinellascounty.org/communications)

[www.pinellascounty.org/tv](http://www.pinellascounty.org/tv)

#### Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board (For contractor information)

(727) 582-3100 [www.pccbl.com](http://www.pccbl.com)

#### Pinellas County Economic Development

(727) 464-7332 [www.pced.org](http://www.pced.org)

#### Pinellas County Health Department

(727) 824-6900 [www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com)

#### Pinellas County School Board

(727) 589-6000 / School Bus Info Line (727) 587-2020 [www.pcsb.org](http://www.pcsb.org)

#### Pinellas County Sheriff's Office (non-emergency)

(727) 582-6200 [www.pcsoweb.com](http://www.pcsoweb.com)

#### Pinellas County Department of Environment and Infrastructure

Water (727) 464-4000 / Solid Waste (727) 464-7500

[www.pinellascounty.org/utilities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities)

#### Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)

(727) 540-1900 [www.psta.net](http://www.psta.net)

### State of Florida

#### Florida Highway Patrol

\*FHP (Mobile Phone) / (727) 570-5010 [www.flhsmv.gov/fhp](http://www.flhsmv.gov/fhp)

#### Florida Division of Emergency Management (non-emergency)

(850) 413-9969 [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)

#### Florida Attorney General's Office (To report price gouging)

(866) 966-7226

### Federal

#### Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

(800) 621-3362 [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

#### NOAA Weather Alert Radio

SAME code for Pinellas County: 012103

#### National Hurricane Center

[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)

#### National Weather Service/Tampa Bay Area

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

### Utility Companies

#### Bright House Networks

(888) 289-8988 [brighthouse.com/tampa-bay/default](http://brighthouse.com/tampa-bay/default)

#### Clearwater Gas

(727) 562-9980 [www.clearwatergas.com](http://www.clearwatergas.com)

#### Duke Energy (To report outages)

(800) 228-8485 [www.duke-energy.com](http://www.duke-energy.com)

#### Knology

(727) 239-0211 [www.knology.com](http://www.knology.com)

#### People's Gas

(877) 832-6747 [www.peoplesgas.com](http://www.peoplesgas.com)

#### TECO (To report outages)

(877) 588-1010 [www.tampoelectric.com](http://www.tampoelectric.com)

#### Verizon

(800) 837-4966 [www.verizon.com](http://www.verizon.com)

### Other Agencies

#### American Red Cross

North County (727) 446-2358

[www.redcross.org/fl/tampa-bay](http://www.redcross.org/fl/tampa-bay)

#### United Way

(813) 274-0900 [www.unitedwaysuncoast.org](http://www.unitedwaysuncoast.org)

#### Federal Alliance For Safe Homes (FLASH)

(877) 221-7233 [www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org)

#### Institute of Business and Home Safety (IBHS)

(813) 286-3400 [www.disastersafety.org](http://www.disastersafety.org)

#### Insurance Information Institute

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

#### 2-1-1 Referral Line

211 - [www.211tampabay.org](http://www.211tampabay.org)

\* Sign up to receive text messages on your cell phone regarding hurricane evacuations and recovery, as well as any other major emergencies within Pinellas County. Your service provider may charge you for these messages based on your plan. Call (888) 689-8905.

\*\* Only open during emergencies

\*\*\* Find your hurricane evacuation level using your home telephone number.