

SURVIVING THE STORM

IT'S EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

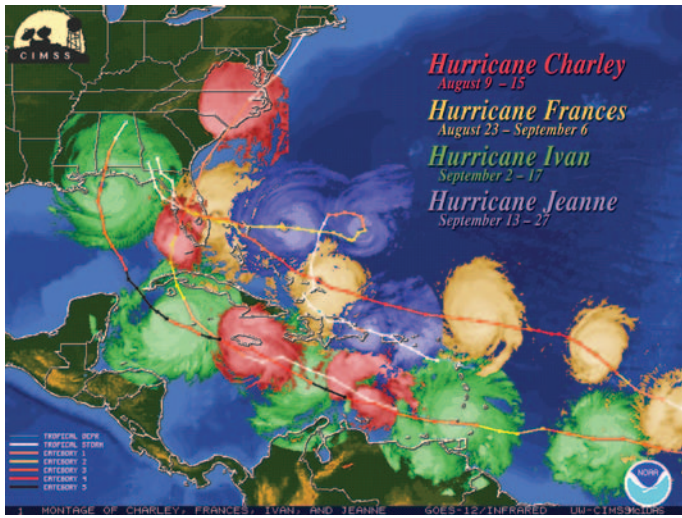
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Timing is Critical to Good Planning

If you were in Florida during the busy 2004 Atlantic hurricane season, you probably made a hurricane survival plan. Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne threatened the sunshine state in a brief but chaotic six-week period, each weaving its tale of misery and destruction.

Now, eight years later, many aspects of that plan may be out of date for you and your family. Children have grown, pets may have passed from or entered our homes and our own status may have changed considerably. Take this time to look at your hurricane survival plan with fresh eyes to make sure you



Compilation of 2004 storms

are ready to meet the challenges of the 2012 Atlantic hurricane season.

If you're new to the area, or if you don't have a plan, now is the time to begin the process of creating one for yourself, your family, business, pets and other important people and things in your life.

It is critical to have this planning in place when forecasters start tracking storms. A "5-day cone" and "3-day cone" are created to show the forecast path for the center of the storm with as much as a 300-mile "cone of

uncertainty." Because the storm could track anywhere within the cone, everyone in that area needs to begin preparations. When Pinellas County is within the 5-day cone, implementation of your emergency plan through initial preparations should begin. Survivor or victim, the answer rests with you.



www.pinellascounty.org/emergency

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 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 your 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.