

# 2024 Hurricane Guide



401 W. Venice Ave. • Venice, FL 34285  
941-486-2626 • [venicegov.com](http://venicegov.com)



Dear Resident,  
Hurricane season in Southwest Florida runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. The 2023 hurricane season incurred an estimated \$3 billion to \$4 billion in damage. Preparing for these inevitable disasters can save both money and lives.

Understanding the distinction between hurricane watches and warnings can be lifesaving. It is crucial to prepare well ahead of any forecasted hurricanes. Remaining composed before, during, and after a storm is paramount for safety.

This detailed guide, revised annually in cooperation with multiple City departments, is designed to assist with hurricane season preparedness. Despite the challenges this season may bring, using this guide will help you become more informed and prepared. Do not miss the free annual Hurricane Expo on May 17 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Venice Community Center at 326 S. Nokomis Ave. This event provides essential information and the chance to discuss any concerns with local authorities.

This guide includes storm preparation, City readiness, steps to take during and after the storm, along with useful checklists, contact numbers, and websites featuring QR codes for convenient access. You can access the 2024 Hurricane Guide online at [venicegov.com](http://venicegov.com) by searching for "hurricane guide," or pick up a copy from City Hall.

We trust you will find this guide valuable and encourage you to share it with your loved ones, friends, and colleagues. For further information or questions, please contact Public Information Officer Lorraine Anderson at 941-882-7401 or email her at [landerson@venicefl.gov](mailto:landerson@venicefl.gov). To arrange for a speaker to discuss hurricane preparedness with your organization, reach out to the Venice Fire Rescue at 941-480-3030 or email [venicefire@venicefl.gov](mailto:venicefire@venicefl.gov).

With regards,

Nick Pachota, Mayor  
City of Venice, FL

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# BEFORE THE STORM

A tropical cyclone is a weather system that forms over warm tropical waters and is characterized by a closed counterclockwise circulation in the Northern Hemisphere. It typically has a cluster of thunderstorms around the center and bands of showers and thunderstorms spiraling out from the center. The tropical cyclone is called a tropical depression, tropical storm or hurricane depending on the strength of the winds in the storm.

**WATCHES AND WARNINGS:** To ensure preparedness before winds escalate to tropical storm force, the National Hurricane Center releases watches and warnings for specific at-risk areas. Local National Weather Service offices may also issue additional watches and warnings to give precise details on potential threats such as floods, flash floods, and tornadoes.

## WATCHES

Issued 48 hours in advance of anticipated onset.

## WARNINGS

Issued 36 hours in advance of anticipated onset.

**STORM SURGE:** An abnormal rise in seawater level during a storm.

Storm surge danger is **possible**.

Storm surge danger is **expected**.

**TROPICAL DEPRESSION:** An organized weather system with a closed circulation that forms over tropical waters with maximum sustained winds of 38 mph or less.

Tropical depression conditions are **possible**.

Tropical depression conditions are **expected**.

**TROPICAL STORM:** An organized system of strong thunderstorms with defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 39–73 mph.

Tropical storm conditions are **possible**.

Tropical storm conditions are **expected**.

**HURRICANE:** An organized system of strong thunderstorms that blow in a large spiral around a calm center known as the “eye.” The winds reach a constant speed of 74 mph or higher.

Hurricane conditions are **possible**.

Hurricane conditions are **expected**.

**EXTREME WIND WARNING:** Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eyewall, are expected to begin within an hour.

Extreme sustained winds are **expected**. Take immediate shelter in the interior portion of a well-built structure.



Prepare your home and review your evacuation plan in case a Hurricane or Tropical Storm Watch is issued. Pay close attention to guidance from local authorities.

Finish all storm preparations at least 24 hours in advance and immediately leave the threatened area if directed by local officials. Know your evacuation location and route.

Hurricanes can occasionally generate tornadoes within the storm system. This typically occurs near the eyewall, where intense thunderstorms form. Storm surge flooding is frequently the most significant danger to life and property during a hurricane. Visit [nhc.noaa.gov/](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/) for more information.

# BEFORE THE STORM

Hurricanes are categorized by the Saffir-Simpson Scale, which rates storms from 1 to 5 solely on their maximum speed. However, this scale does not consider other dangerous factors including storm surge, heavy rainfall, and tornadoes.

## DID YOU KNOW!

At 45 MPH winds, all bridges to the island of Venice are locked DOWN (horizontal). They will not be locked in the UP (vertical) position. Boat traffic is strongly discouraged.

## Hurricane intensity

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale is a 1-5 rating based on the hurricane's intensity. The scale gives an estimate of the potential property damage and flooding expected from a hurricane. Wind speed is the determining factor in the scale

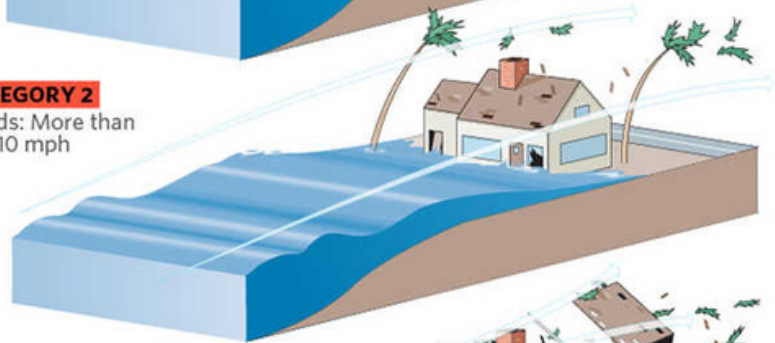
### CATEGORY 1

Winds: 74-95 mph



### CATEGORY 2

Winds: More than 96-110 mph



### CATEGORY 3

Winds: 111-130 mph



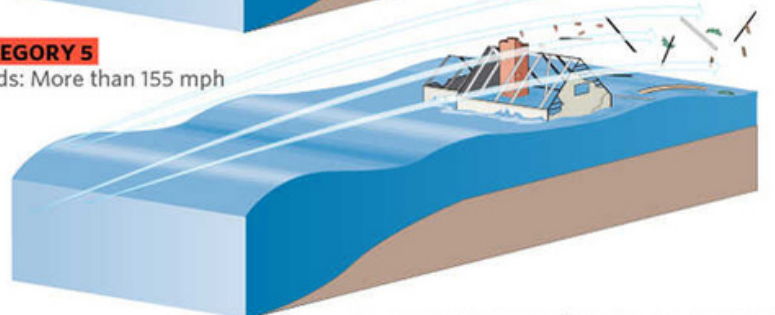
### CATEGORY 4

Winds: 131-155 mph



### CATEGORY 5

Winds: More than 155 mph



Sources: NOAA; National Weather Service, CEMA

# BEFORE THE STORM

Public safety and emergency preparedness is essential. The threat from extreme weather events highlights the importance of investing in preparedness. It is human nature to wait and see, but we want you to think about what *could* happen and prepare for it now.

## IMPORTANT CONTACTS

**Call or text 911** for life-threatening emergencies.

**Police Department non-emergencies:** 941-486-2444

**Fire Department non-emergencies:** 941-480-3030

**After hours:** 941-882-7510

**Water/sewer emergency:** 941-486-2770

**Power outage - FPL:** 1-800-4-OUTAGE (468-8243)

**City of Venice non-emergencies:** 941-486-2626

**Sarasota County Contact Center:** 941-861-5000, TTY 711, 1-800-955-8771 or dial 311

**Red Cross SWFL Chapter:** 941-379-9300

**Sarasota County Animal Services:** 941-861-9500

**City of Venice Solid Waste:** 941-486-2422

**Radio:** WENG 1530 AM, WBRD 1420, WWPR 1490 AM, WSMR 89.1 FM, WSLR 96.5 FM

**NOAA weather radio:** [FREQ: 162.40 Mhz FIPS Code 012115](#)

**TV:** SNN Comcast/Xfinity Channel 6, ABC Channel 7, WINK and Sarasota County Emergency Services on government access TV Comcast/Xfinity Channel 19 and Frontier Channel 32

**Online: City of Venice:** [venicegov.com](http://venicegov.com)

**Follow us on Facebook** at [facebook.com/CityofVeniceFlorida](https://facebook.com/CityofVeniceFlorida)

**Follow us on Twitter** @CityofVeniceFL

**Sarasota County:** [scgov.net/311](http://scgov.net/311)

**NOAA National Hurricane Center:** [nhc.noaa.gov](http://nhc.noaa.gov)

**Division of Emergency Management:** [floridadisaster.org](http://floridadisaster.org)

**American Red Cross:**

[Redcross.org/prepare/disaster/hurricane](http://Redcross.org/prepare/disaster/hurricane)

**FEMA mobile app:** [Fema.gov/mobile-app](http://Fema.gov/mobile-app)

**FEMA hurricane info:** [Ready.gov/hurricanes](http://Ready.gov/hurricanes)

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

**EMERGENCY ALERTS:** Sign up for [AlertSarasota](#) County, a notification system that contacts all registered residents with emergency messages via phone calls, emails, and text messages. To register, visit [venicegov.com](http://venicegov.com) and click on [AlertSarasota](#) County at the top of the homepage. Proceed to the Sign-Up tab or Jurisdiction Map to complete the registration process, which includes setting up a password and security questions. Stay prepared during hurricane season as the City may call with essential information on emergency conditions, hurricane evacuation centers, or other important updates.

## 2024 Hurricane Names

Alberto	Helene	Oscar
Beryl	Isaac	Patty
Chris	Joyce	Rafael
Debby	Kirk	Sara
Ernesto	Leslie	Tony
Francine	Milton	Valerie
Gordon	Nadine	William

NOAA weather radios offer essential hurricane updates and crucial tornado warnings. These radios are available for purchase online or at local home improvement stores. The City of Venice website offers current storm details, such as evacuation notices, flood zones, evacuation centers, and transportation plans. Evacuation centers are established solely for life protection and should only be used as a last resort.

*Heavy rainfall-induced flooding is the second most deadly consequence of tropical cyclones hitting land. The prolonged heavy rains associated with these cyclones can result in extensive flooding that reaches for miles inland. This flooding can persist for days following the storm's departure.*

## How the City Prepares for a Hurricane

When a hurricane watch is issued, the City of Venice activates its Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

- **Decision-makers convene:** The City's Emergency Services collaborate with Sarasota County's Emergency Services Department to begin emergency planning, according to the storm's intensity and path.
- **Communications:** Once a storm warning or watch has been issued, the City transitions all emergency-related communications on social media to the City's Facebook page [@CityofVeniceFlorida](#).
- **Closures:** City Hall, customer service areas, Humphries Park at the South Jetty, the Venice Fishing Pier, and other public City facilities are closed as determined by City officials.
- **Securing City-owned items:** Public Works secures and gathers City-owned items including trash cans, street furniture, and benches in parks and at the South Jetty. The Solid Waste division continues trash collection until it's unsafe due to high winds. Residents are advised to bring in trash cans and recycling containers from curbs to prevent them from being blown away.
- **Preparations:** City departments initiate emergency preparations for operational continuity. Sarasota County Emergency Management decides when evacuation centers will open and activates the transportation plan for these centers.
- **Drainage preparation:** Stormwater personnel ensure outfalls are functioning properly.
- **Contractor notification:** Within 24 hours of a hurricane watch being issued, all construction materials must be secured. The Building Department issues a notification to project managers and the City's building inspectors canvas the area notifying people to secure their sites.
- **Declaration of emergency:** The City declares a state of emergency in coordination with Sarasota County to facilitate reimbursement from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) after the storm.
- **EOC activation:** The City's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) coordinates with Sarasota County's EOC to acquire and distribute local, state, and federal resources, personnel, supplies, and information for operational continuity and expedited recovery.
- **Safety priority:** Emergency services halts dispatching services once winds reach a sustained 45 mph due to the hazard of flying debris and other safety concerns. All 911 calls are still recorded and prioritized; dispatchers assess and provide verbal instruction for emergencies when applicable.
- **Recovery phase:** Post-storm recovery efforts focus on health, safety, and welfare. Public safety and City departments conduct damage assessments, and TFIT "Tactical First In Teams" clear main roads. Utilities employees ensure lift stations and water pipes are functioning, while Venice Airport personnel clear runways for relief efforts.
- **Power restoration:** Florida Power & Light (FPL) initiates power restoration to residents and businesses without power. The City has backup power sources for critical facilities to maintain operations.
- **Debris management:** Debris cleanup prioritizes health and safety needs, with the process varying in duration based on storm severity.
- **Emergency management plan:** The City of Venice prioritizes mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery in its emergency management plan to ensure a sound and functional government. The City conducts an After Action Report (AAR) following each gray sky event to implement lessons learned for any changes.

## Secure Your Home

The following are suggestions for enhancing hurricane resistance at home. Remember the ABCs: Anchor Roof, Brace Entry and Garage Doors, Cover Windows and Have a Safe Room.

### Windows:

- Upgrade to hurricane-resistant windows or protect them with wood boards or metal shutters to prevent wind damage.
- Storm shutters provide the best protection against window and door damage.
- Avoid using tape, as it does not prevent glass breakage.

### Roof:

- Regularly have your roof inspected for loose shingles, debris, and leaks to maintain its integrity.
- Keep rain gutters and downspouts clear to prevent flooding issues.

### Doors:

- Reinforce entry and garage doors or consider investing in hurricane-resistant doors.
- Ensure at least one entry remains easily accessible even when doors are shuttered.

### Building Contractors:

- Must secure all construction materials and equipment within 24 hours of a hurricane watch being issued as per City regulations.
- Non-compliance could result in fines.

### Indoors:

- Establish a safe room without windows or glass doors, such as a bathroom or closet.
- Have an electrician install the main electrical panel above potential flood levels and know how to shut it off in emergencies.
- Turn off hot water heaters to reduce unnecessary stress on the plumbing system.
- Safeguard electrical outlets, switches, water heaters, washers, and dryers from potential flooding.

### Mobile or Manufactured Home:

- Have tie-downs regularly inspected, ensuring tightness, proper alignment, and no damage.
- Have support piers inspected to ensure they are in contact with the frame and replace corroded or damaged straps and ground anchors.

### Marine Vessels:

- Review marina policies for hurricanes and follow manufacturer guidelines for securing boats.
- Store trailer boats securely and away from water during storms to prevent capsizing.
- Avoid mooring parallel to the bank to prevent boat from overturning during receding tides.

For more advice on securing your property, visit [flash.org](https://www.flash.org). Additionally, the City offers property protection guidance; contact the Building Department at 941-486-2626 for more information. Consider consulting with a local contractor to prepare your home for potential hurricanes, floods, or retrofitting. These professionals are well-versed in strategies to reduce damage to your property. Making simple adjustments can lead to substantial savings on repair expenses.

## Secure Your Business

Visit [floridadisaster.biz](https://www.floridadisaster.biz) to create or update your Business Continuity of Operations Plan using a customized interactive website.

- Decide on the appropriate time to close your business, considering your employees' need to prepare their homes.
- Set up communication channels for employees to stay informed during changing situations.
- Develop an evacuation plan for the company, including employees and essential equipment.
- Identify an alternative work site.
- Provide training for your staff in various roles in advance of any potential disaster to ensure business operations continue smoothly.
- Protect important business documents by making online backups and keeping paper copies in a portable fire-safe and waterproof container.
- Regularly assess your business insurance coverage on an annual basis, regardless of the situation.

# BEFORE THE STORM

## Secure Your Property

Tips to boost your yard's hurricane resistance:

- Avoid leaving trash for collection at the curb when winds are high, as the Sarasota County landfill closes under certain weather conditions.
- Turn off pool pumps, remove hoses, and secure the pool to prevent damage.
- Secure all outdoor items by bringing them inside or fastening them down. Loose patio furniture, garden tools, and toys left outside can turn into hazardous projectiles during hurricanes.
- Trim trees and shrubs near your home to minimize flying debris risks.
- Secure fuel tanks, boats, and vehicles, and park your main vehicle in the garage or under the carport.
- Elevate machinery and equipment, such as pool pumps and ac units, above potential flood zones.
- Use shredded bark instead of small stones as ground cover to prevent rocks from becoming dangerous projectiles.
- Check if sandbags are available at specified locations in the City before the storm hits.
- Fix or replace any damaged fences.
- Preserve the stormwater drainage system's functionality by keeping ditches and drainage structures clear. Blocking these structures is against the law. Report any issues to the Engineering Department at 941-882-7410.

## Pet Plan

Here are some tips to ensure your pet's safety during emergencies:

- Prepare an emergency kit for your pet, including a carrier, for evacuation purposes.
- If your home is no longer safe, evacuate with your pet to keep them secure.
- Keep your pet indoors before and after a storm and create a safe area inside away from windows.
- Separate pets during a storm, regardless of their usual behavior.
- Consider using calming products like a Thundershirt to reduce your pet's anxiety. Introduce these items to your pet under calm conditions before a storm approaches.
- During emergencies, hurricane evacuation centers in the county provide facilities for domestic dogs and cats in a separate kennel area.
- Bring necessary supplies such as food, water, collar, leash, medication, and waste bags, and be ready to care for your pet at the center.
- Ensure your pet's vaccination records, proper ID collars, and rabies tags/licenses are up to date.
- Prepare for outdoor animals in case of evacuation by securing all outside fences, gates, and enclosures.
- Contact a local pet kennel to inquire about boarding options for pets during a hurricane.



## Tech Plan

It is essential to store important documents in both digital and physical formats to safeguard them from potential loss.

Follow these guidelines:

- Securely store passwords and access codes.
- Convert essential paperwork into digital files by scanning them using a scanner, mobile camera, or smartphone app. Capture images and videos of your property, belongings, and assets before and after any incident to support insurance claims.
- Back up your digitized data on external drives, USB sticks, and the cloud, ensuring regular updates for data synchronization and accessibility from anywhere. Remember to take your backup drives during evacuations.
- Store electronic devices in secure, dry locations. Storing documents in the cloud provides a backup option if your device is compromised.



## Pack Mindfully

### Prepare in advance for the storm by gathering the following items (but not limited to):

- Two weeks' worth of bottled water, nonperishable food, and a manual can opener. Aim for one gallon of water per person and pet daily, including water for cooking.
- Fill up bathtubs with water. Fill all coolers, refrigerator, and freezer with ice.
- Two-way radios, a NOAA weather solar/hand-crank powered radio with a tone alert, a cell phone with chargers, a battery-powered clock, and a backup battery in case of power outages.
- Plastic tarp, nails, and duct tape for temporary roof or window repairs.
- Mops, buckets, towels, and disinfectant.
- Dust masks, wipes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation.
- Wrench, pliers, or multi-use tools to turn off utilities, and an ax.
- Pet food, newspapers, cat litter, plastic bags, disinfectant, and other supplies.
- Consider purchasing an extra car battery and have jumper cables on hand.
- A fire extinguisher, matches in a waterproof container, and charcoal or an extra propane tank if you have a grill.
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels, and plastic utensils.
- Safety gear like a whistle, map, compass, signal flare, and distress flags.
- Trash bags (outdoor, indoor, and landscaping).
- Prescription eyeglasses and contact lens solution.
- Infant essentials like formula, bottles, diapers, wipes, creams, pumps and pump supplies.
- A list of the model, serial number, and manufacturer information of required medical devices.
- Sunscreen and bug repellent.

- Over-the-counter drugs, first aid items, vitamins, and non-prescription medications like pain relievers and digestive support medicines.
- Generator, gas, and gas cans.
- Wash and dry all laundry. Equip each person with a sleeping bag or warm blanket, a full change of clothing suitable for the weather, hats, gloves, scarves, and sturdy shoes.
- Water purification kit. Clean tap water for hygienic use can be stored for up to six months.

### Also pack these items, but separately, since these are items that are specific to evacuating.

- Flashlights for each member of your family and extra batteries.
- Insurance, Medicare or Medicaid cards, driver's license, or photo ID.
- Children's and pet's immunization and other important health and insurance records.
- Each family member's medications, along with dosage information and physician's contact information.
- Drinking water, snacks, special food items and nonperishable foods.
- Bedding, air mattress, and pillows.
- Comfort items or special items for infants, children, and pets such as toys, books, games, or puzzles.
- Change of clothing, durable shoes such as tennis shoes or boots, and rain gear.
- Personal protection, hygiene items, and feminine items (including hand sanitizer and wipes).
- First-aid kit and first-aid emergency book.
- Pet items such as crates, food, water, leashes, and pee pads.
- Personal cooler with ice for special needs/medications.
- Cash and coins.

**Your shelter-in-place location should contain enough items and equipment for self-sustainment. The Florida Department of Emergency Management recommends having at least 7 days of supplies for each person.**

## Prepare Now for Peace of Mind

**Insurance:** Properties in the City of Venice located in low-lying and coastal areas are prone to flooding. Contact the City's Engineering Department at 941-882-7412 to check if your property is in a flood zone. Find flood zone maps by searching "flood zone map" on [venicegov.com](http://venicegov.com). Standard homeowner insurance policies do not cover flood and wind damage. Venice residents receive a 20% discount on flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program, the Community Rating System discount.

**There is a 30-day waiting period for flood insurance to take effect.** Ensure your policies cover all hazards and save money for all deductibles. Insure your home based on reconstruction cost, not real estate value.

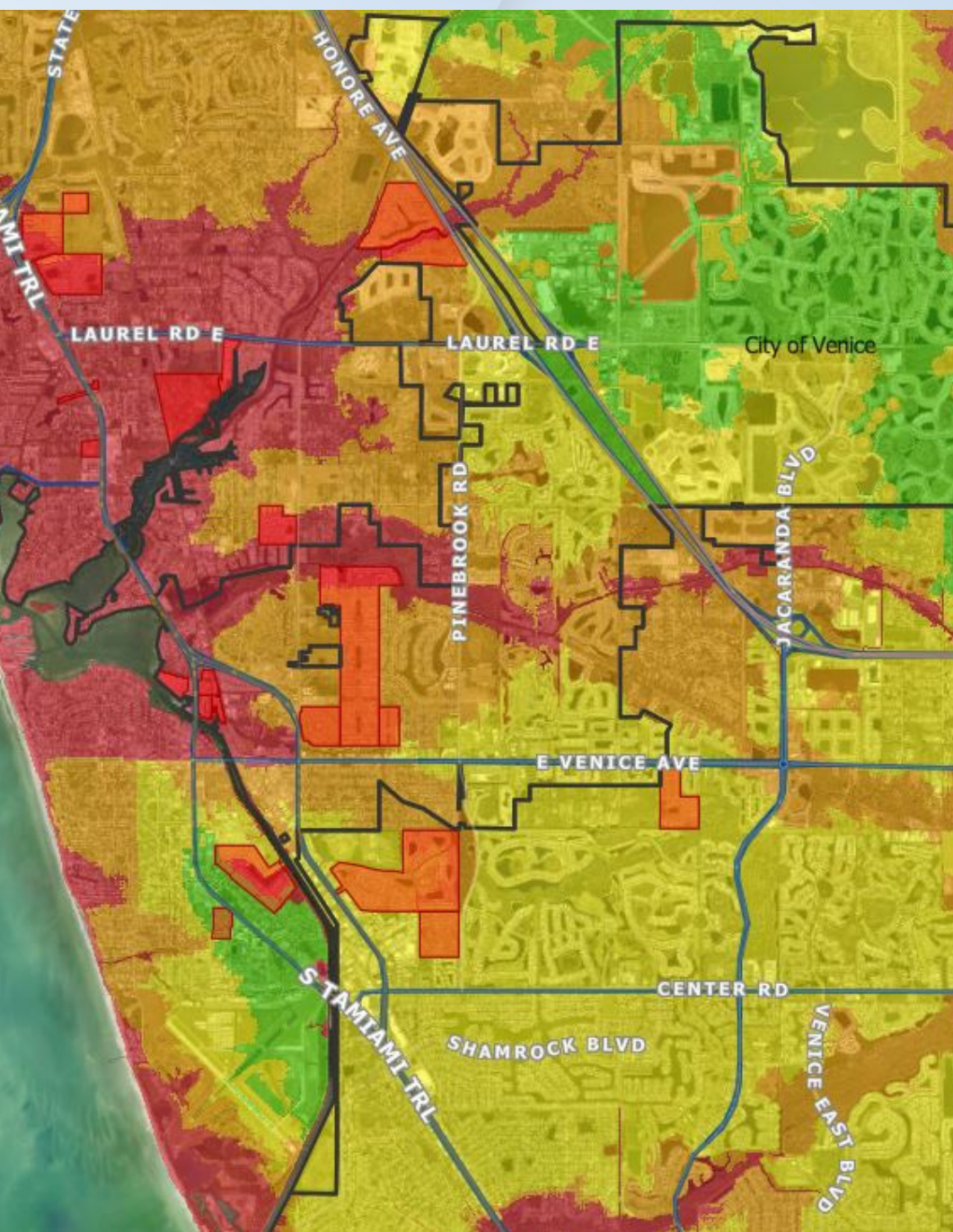
Contents coverage for condos and renters is available. ***Without flood insurance, government assistance may come as grants or loans from the Small Business Administration. Limited FEMA funds may also be available for assistance.*** Because of FEMA requirements, the City strongly encourages businesses, condominiums, and homeowners associations to carry insurance for debris collection after a storm event.

Visit [fema.gov/flood-insurance](http://fema.gov/flood-insurance). Complete an insurance needs assessment for flood, hail, wind, hurricane, homeowner's, and contents coverage.

After the storm has passed, it is common to face emotional situations. **In case of an emergency, dial 911, as all calls are logged for when emergency services are restored.** Here are suggestions to consider in advance for when the storm passes:

- Ensure the safety and whereabouts of all family members, including pets, using your family emergency plan from [ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://ready.gov/make-a-plan). If you are in a hurricane evacuation center, wait for officials' go ahead before leaving. Stay connected and designate an out-of-town contact for reuniting safely.
- Secure pre-storm, during storm, and post-storm items in accessible locations within your home.
- Consider taking a CPR or basic first-aid class before a storm, as medical services may not be available when winds exceed 45 mph.
- Prepare to assess home damage by having notebooks, pens, and a charged camera, and keep important documents in a waterproof container.
- Think about purchasing a generator, considering appliance size.
- Stock up on gas and gas cans before the storm due to potential shortages. Fill up vehicles with gas and never use a generator indoors.
- Safeguard and organize your prescriptions for emergencies.
- Keep cash, quarters, and traveler's checks handy, as banks may close after a severe storm.
- List important phone numbers, including family members, on your hurricane preparedness checklist for easy access, as phone systems can be overwhelmed post-disaster.
- Consider using text messages, social media, or two-way radios for communication.

## Evacuation Level Map



### Special Evacuation Level



### Storm Evacuation Level

#### Evac Level

- Evac Level A
- Evac Level B
- Evac Level C
- Evac Level D
- Evac Level E

### Storm Surge Potential

- Red = Cat 1 Surge height of 7ft
- Orange = Cat 2 Surge height of 15ft
- Yellow = Cat 3 Surge height of 26ft
- Green = Cat 4 Surge height of 33ft

**Know your home's evacuation level!** To find your evacuation level, visit [ags3.scgov.net/knowyourlevel/](https://ags3.scgov.net/knowyourlevel/) and enter your street address in the search bar at the top right. Remember, evacuation level maps differ from flood zone maps. Evacuation Level A (light red) is the first to be called. Dark red signifies a special evacuation zone for mobile, modular homes, and marine vessels, as well as RVs. These areas are required to evacuate during any hurricane evacuation order within the City of Venice. Never remain in a mobile home, marine vessel, or RV during a storm. Sign up for AlertSarasota (pg. 5) to receive alerts regarding the evacuation levels.

For additional support, contact 941-882-7412 or email Christina Rimes at [crimes@venicefl.gov](mailto:crimes@venicefl.gov).

# BEFORE THE STORM

## Evacuate or Shelter in Place

To ensure your safety during a storm, consider the following options if you live in a vulnerable area like a mobile home or RV and have been advised to evacuate. See page 11 for more information on evacuation levels.

Options for evacuation include:

- Staying with a relative or friend outside the evacuation zone.
- Booking a hotel/motel outside the evacuation area; arranging accommodations promptly, some places may relax pet restrictions during emergencies.
- Leaving the area entirely; if evacuating to another state, leave early to avoid congested interstates and potential fuel shortages.
- As a last resort, head to a public evacuation center; refer to page 13 for more information.

Familiarize yourself with multiple routes to the evacuation center before the storm hits. Remember that hurricane evacuation centers have limited space, so evacuate promptly when instructed by officials.

*If you are not in a high-risk area, your home was built after 2002, and do not reside in a mobile home/RV/vessel, you can choose to shelter in place.*

- Consider sheltering in place if you are not in a vulnerable area and have not been told to evacuate.
- Take extra precautions to safeguard your home during severe weather.
- Prioritize safety by not risking your life in an unsafe location or waiting until the last minute to evacuate.

Refer to pages 7-10 for securing your home, property, pets, and business.

## Help the Elderly and Disabled

Individuals who have disabilities, chronic illness, or medical conditions, or who lack family and friend support should make emergency plans. Do not hesitate to seek assistance by calling 941-861-5000 to register for the medically dependent or transportation dependent programs through Sarasota County, or reach out to volunteers when needed. Remember, aging adults who are caregivers may also need external support. Stress and anxiety can worsen health conditions, especially for those with heart disease or other illnesses. For older adults in nursing homes, assisted-living facilities, or residential centers, contact the administrator to understand the facility's disaster plan.

### Guidelines for home healthcare and homebound patients:

1. Inform your home health agency and oxygen provider of your location during a hurricane. Inquire about their care plans pre-, during, and post-hurricane.
2. If you are homebound without home health agency care, consult your physician for the best course of action.
3. If you rely on electric-dependent medical equipment, consult your doctor, and register with FPL at [fpl.com/support/medically-essential-service](https://www.fpl.com/support/medically-essential-service).
4. During evacuation, remember to bring medications, care instructions, equipment, and bedding.
5. Register for assistance or special needs hurricane evacuation centers in advance at [scgov.net](https://www.scgov.net) by searching "medically dependent" if you require support during evacuation.

### Online applications close 60 hours before landfall.

Qualifying medical needs include oxygen use or equipment requiring electricity.

Note: Special needs hurricane evacuation centers offer medical monitoring, not hands-on care. Bring one caregiver along.

## Hurricane Evacuation Centers

All identified hurricane evacuation centers are opened by Sarasota County at the same time. Never go to an evacuation center until local officials announce it is open. Hurricane evacuation centers are not hotels and will not be able to provide any conveniences such as bedding, cots, blankets, meals, or personal items. You will have no privacy and it will be crowded. There will be limited space, approximately 20 sq. ft. per person in a public classroom or hallway. Medically dependent (upon prior registration, at least 60 hours prior to storm landfall) will have approximately 60 sq. ft. for themselves, one caregiver and all necessary belongings; call 941-861-5000 to register. Smoking is prohibited. No weapons, alcohol, or illegal drugs. There may not be power available during the storm. Children under 18 MUST BE accompanied by an adult at all times.

***Going to an evacuation center should always be considered a last-resort measure.***

Hurricane Evacuation Centers	
Taylor Ranch Elementary School	2500 Taylor Ranch Tr. (off U.S. 41), South Venice
North Port High School	6400 W. Price Blvd., North Port
Heron Creek Middle School	6501 W. Price Blvd., North Port
Woodland Middle School	2700 Panacea Blvd., North Port
Atwater Elementary School	4701 Huntsville Ave., North Port
Fruitville Elementary School	601 N. Honore Ave., Sarasota
Brookside Middle School	3636 S. Shade Ave., Sarasota
Southside Elementary School	1901 Webber St., Sarasota
Riverview High School	1 Ram Way, Sarasota
Booker High School	3201 N. Orange Ave., Sarasota
Phillippi Shores Elementary School	4747 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota
Gulf Gate Elementary School	6500 S. Lockwood Ridge Road, Sarasota

*Evacuation center information will be updated on local radio and television stations, and on County and City social media.*

Transportation to evacuation centers is available through public transit operated by Sarasota County or one of their partners. Online registration is required at least 60 hours before storm landfall. Register at [scgov.net](http://scgov.net), keyword search “transportation plan.” Residents who pre-register will receive an automated phone message with information about the location of rally points and when the pickup will be.

Sarasota County library staff can also assist with registration. Unregistered evacuees or those needing a medically dependent evacuation center should call 311 within 60 hours prior to storm landfall. Evacuation centers have limited parking; consider carpooling. All transportation will cease when windspeeds sustain 45 mph, landfall is expected within 8 hours, or when evacuation centers are full.

Transportation Rally Points	
Garden Elementary School	700 Center Road, Venice, FL 34240
Laurel Park and Sandra Sims Terry Community Center	509 Collins Road, Nokomis, FL 34275
Pine View School – Athletic Court Facilities	1 Python Path, Osprey, FL 34229
Venice Community Center	326 Nokomis Avenue S., Venice, FL 34285

Pickup times will be impacted by the overall number of trips requested. Other passengers may share your ride. Limit two bags per person, and they must fit on your lap or under the seat. Domestic dogs or cats must be in a carrier. The evacuation center destination is selected by Sarasota County staff so it may not be in Venice. Their decision is based on storm conditions, evacuation efficiency, and availability of resources. Once it is safe to return to the passenger’s pickup location, they will be contacted to determine if return transportation is needed.

# DURING THE STORM

## Remaining Calm During the Storm

- **Stay indoors:** Only go outside in case of a home emergency like a fire. Remain indoors in your home or evacuation center until the storm has completely passed. If there is damage to your home, move to a safe area within the home and stay away from windows and glass doors.
- **Conserve water:** Limit water usage to prevent sewer overflows and backups.
- **Emergency kit:** Keep your emergency supply kit in an easily accessible location.
- **Stay informed:** Listen to the radio or TV for hurricane updates, as phone service or data may not be available during the storm. A NOAA weather radio is the most reliable communication source from officials. Check social media updates from the City but *conserve power on your electronic devices*.
- **Remain inside:** Even if it appears calm, avoid going outside. Wait for weather reports to confirm the storm's end; the eye of the storm can create a deceptive calm.
- **Window safety:** Avoid windows to prevent injury from broken glass or flying debris. Stay in a windowless room or seek shelter in a closet.
- **Be prepared to evacuate:** If authorities instruct you to leave or if your home sustains damage, be ready to relocate to an evacuation center or a neighbor's place.
- **Power outage:** Keep the refrigerator closed to retain cold air and prevent food spoilage. Limit electricity usage if feasible.
- **Generator safety:** Adhere to the manufacturer's guidelines when using a portable generator. Properly ground generators to avoid electric shock and never operate them indoors or near windows, doors, or vents. Place generators at least 20 feet away from windows and doors. Do not connect a portable generator to building wiring; plug appliances directly into the generator. Install a working CO detector in your home due to carbon monoxide risks.
- **Flood threat:** Turn off electricity at the main breaker if there is a risk of flooding. Unplug major appliances if power is lost.
- **Emergency calls:** Contact 911 for any emergencies, as calls are recorded and prioritized.



## Assessing the Damage

Wait for weather reports confirming the passing of the storm before leaving your home or hurricane evacuation center. Avoid damaged buildings, affected areas, and roads until they are deemed safe. Walking or driving around after a storm can lead to injuries or even loss of life. Keep your ID handy, as it might be required for access to your residence.

- Be prepared to be self-sufficient for seven days as recommended by the FDEM, due to potential dangers such as live power lines, gas leaks, fallen tree branches, flooding, damaged roads, and hazardous wildlife. Refrain from unnecessary sightseeing to allow emergency personnel to reach those in need. When driving, yield to emergency vehicles and if changing lanes is unsafe, slow down when passing.
- Remember, "**Turn Around Don't Drown!**" Never attempt to cross flooded roads, as vehicles can be swept away by just two feet of moving water. Avoid letting children or adults play in standing water, as it may be contaminated and attract pests like ants and snakes. Avoid the Gulf due to rip tides.
- Ensure pets are not left unattended.
- Be prepared for the possibility of prolonged unavailability of essential services such as electricity and phones. Grocery transportation and store access may also be delayed.
- Carbon monoxide poisoning from generators is a serious risk that is often overlooked. This gas can be fatal as it displaces oxygen. Always operate generators outside and at a safe distance from windows, doors, and vents to prevent this danger.
- Ventilate your home by opening doors and windows. If you suspect a gas leak, evacuate your home immediately and call 911. Do not restore power if your home has been flooded until it has been inspected by an electrician.
- If City Hall is damaged, an alternate work location will be chosen. Call 941-486-2626.



**Remember: One of the most significant hazards after a hurricane is the presence of downed power lines. It is crucial to never touch them. Always consider fallen power lines as live for safety purposes. Avoid walking or driving over any wires on the ground. To report any downed power lines, contact 911 or FPL at 1-800-468-8243.**



The time after a hurricane can be highly stressful, and it may take months for this tension to ease. Remember to take mental breaks in the weeks and months following a devastating storm. Continuously viewing images of storm damage can cause unwarranted stress and anxiety. If you feel the need to talk to someone, dial 211 to connect with a live person who can guide you to mental health resources. Support for mental well-being is accessible during this challenging period and seeking assistance from a professional or loved one can help alleviate stress.

# AFTER THE STORM

## Cleaning Up

To support the City of Venice in post-storm cleanup, adhere to these recommendations:

- Avoid placing debris near utility poles, power lines, water meters, fire hydrants, vehicles, mailboxes, fences, or storm drains.
- Keep debris for collection near the road (not on the road) as you would during regular collections.
- Be cautious when using chainsaws and seek professional assistance for large, uprooted trees. Please be patient, as trash collection may take days or weeks to complete. The City will not collect large tree trunks.
- Refrain from burning trash.

Sort items into separate piles according to the following categories:

- **Garbage:** Spoiled food, wet cardboard, and paper should be placed in your automated black trash cart.
- **Construction debris:** Building materials, drywall, lumber, carpet, furniture, mattresses, wood or plastic fence panels, and plumbing materials.
- **Vegetation:** Tree branches, leaves, and logs.
- **Household hazardous waste:** Oil, batteries, pesticides, paints, cleaning supplies, lawn chemicals, and compressed gas.
- **Appliances:** Refrigerators, washers, dryers, air-conditioners, stoves, water heaters, dishwashers, televisions, computers, radios, stereos, DVD players, phones, and other devices. Remember to remove contents and doors.
- **Recyclables:** Place recyclables in their designated cart at least 6 feet away from other trash piles.

**Due to FEMA guidelines, debris collection happens first on public streets and on public properties like parks.** FEMA will not allow the City to collect debris in manufactured home communities or at condos. FEMA also determines eligibility for debris collection in gated communities.

Stay healthy by following these recommendations:

- Throw out any food including canned items that were not maintained at a proper temperature or have been exposed to floodwaters. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Boil water before consuming if a boil water notice is issued. Stay up-to-date with all boil water notices through the City's social media. Heat water to a rolling boil for three minutes and cool before using.
- Flush the plumbing system by running all cold water faucets for at least five minutes after the boil water advisory has been lifted.
- Clean and disinfect all items that are wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage, bacteria, and chemicals.
- Air out your home by opening all doors and windows whenever you are present.
- Move out saturated porous items such as mattresses or upholstered furniture, especially those with visible mold.
- Tear out flooring, paneling, drywall, insulation, and electrical outlets saturated by floodwater.
- Wear a mask to prevent inhaling dust and wear protective gear such as work gloves, a hat, safety glasses, pants, and long sleeves.
- Take breaks during cleanup, especially in hot weather, and ensure you stay hydrated.





## Licensed Contractors

- It's crucial to hire licensed contractors and be wary of unsolicited individuals offering home repairs. Confirm a contractor's license at [myfloridalicense.com](http://myfloridalicense.com).
- Always insist on a written estimate or contract detailing start/completion dates and payment terms. Avoid paying the full amount up front and settle the final balance only after you are satisfied with the work.
- Avoid making payments in cash.
- Remember that permits are necessary for demolition, permanent repairs, reconstruction, roofing, or filling.
- Don't obtain permits for the contractor, as it may suggest improper licensing. Contact the City's Building Department for permit guidelines.
- If you suspect potential fraud by a contractor, contact the State of Florida Consumer Fraud hotline at 1-866-966-7226.
- Be cautious of price gouging, especially when someone offers to cut down trees or replace your fence.



## Unemployment Help

Individuals who lose their jobs due to a disaster and are ineligible for regular unemployment insurance compensation can apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA). For more information, visit [oui.doleta.gov/unemploy](http://oui.doleta.gov/unemploy). You can explore [floridajobs.org](http://floridajobs.org) and search for "apply for benefits." To address preparedness and adaptability in handling potential business interruptions, companies can use the U.S. Chamber Foundation's "Resilience in a Box" workbook. Discover more about this resource at [uschamberfoundation.org/resilience-box](http://uschamberfoundation.org/resilience-box).

## Public Assistance

In the event that the President declares a disaster, federal aid may be accessible. You can apply online at [disasterassistance.gov](http://disasterassistance.gov) or call 1-800-621-3362.

The FEMA Individuals and Households Program (IHP) offers financial and direct support to qualified individuals and households affected by a disaster with necessary expenses and critical needs that are uninsured or under-insured. For more details, visit [fema.gov/disasters](http://fema.gov/disasters).

- The Small Business Administration (SBA) extends loans to homeowners, renters, businesses, and organizations for repairing or replacing real estate, personal property, equipment, and business assets damaged in a disaster. The SBA's Office of Disaster Assistance provides low-interest, long-term loans for physical and economic damage from a declared event. For additional information, visit [sba.gov/disaster](http://sba.gov/disaster). Contact the SBA Disaster Assistance team at 1-800-659-2955.
- The Recovery Bureau of the State of Florida Division of Emergency Management strives to optimize disaster aid for eligible public entities, individuals, and families through various state and federal programs. Learn more at [floridadisaster.org/dem/recovery](http://floridadisaster.org/dem/recovery).
- The State Assistance Information Line (SAIL) is a toll-free hotline activated during emergencies to provide resources and accurate information on an emergency or disaster affecting the state. Reach out to the SAIL hotline at 1-800-342-3557.
- FEMA's Public Assistance (PA) Grant Program offers aid to state, tribal, and local governments, and specific types of private nonprofit organizations. All eligible applicants must submit a form through [FloridaPA.org](http://FloridaPA.org) within 30 days of a presidential disaster declaration.

# AFTER THE STORM

## QR Codes for Important Websites



Visit [venicegov.com](https://www.venicegov.com), keyword search "hurricane guide."



Visit [scgov.net](https://www.scgov.net), keyword search "evacuation map."

Visit [venicegov.com](https://www.venicegov.com), keyword search "evacuation shelters."



Visit [venicegov.com](https://www.venicegov.com), keyword search "flood zone map."



Visit [scgov.net](https://www.scgov.net), keyword search "evacuation shelter."



For individual or household programs through FEMA, visit [disasterassistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov).

Visit [nhc.noaa.gov/](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/) for hurricane information.



Visit [scgov.net/](https://www.scgov.net/), keyword search "hurricane recovery."



Visit [floridadisaster.org](https://www.floridadisaster.org), keyword search "hurricane."



Visit [floridadisaster.org/dem/recovery](https://www.floridadisaster.org/dem/recovery) for Recovery Bureau of the State of FDEM.

Visit [redcross.org/](https://www.redcross.org/), keyword search "hurricane."



To report a power outage: [fplmaps.com/](https://www.fplmaps.com/).



Visit [fema.gov/mobile-app](https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app), to download the FEMA mobile app.



For public assistance visit, [floridapa.org](https://www.floridapa.org).

Visit [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov), keyword search "hurricane."



Visit [nhc.noaa.gov/](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/) for marine forecasts.



Visit [fema.gov/](https://www.fema.gov/), keyword search "flood insurance."



Visit [scgov.net](https://www.scgov.net), keyword search "311" to download the app.

# READY CHECKLIST

Keep this checklist up to date, as your family's needs may change.

**Family phone numbers including out-of-state contacts:**

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**Insurance companies phone and policy numbers:**

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**Nearest evacuation center name and location:**

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**Evacuation route:**

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**FEMA helpline:** 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)  
**Red Cross helpline:** 1-800-733-2727  
**Police Dept. non-emergencies:** 941-486-2444  
**Fire Dept. non-emergencies:** 941-480-3030  
After hours: 941-882-7510  
**Water/sewer emergency:** 941-486-2770  
**Power outage - FPL:** 1-800-4-OUTAGE (468-8243)  
**Sarasota County Contact Center:** 941-861-5000,  
TTY 711, 1-800-955-8771, or 311

**Doctors phone numbers:**

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**Pet kennel name and number:**

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**Hotel information as an alternative to evacuation center:**

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- Food, water, and infant supplies
- Cash
- Gas and gas cans, generator
- Flashlights, batteries, and back-up chargers
- Important documents in waterproof container
- Supplies and tools for cleaning and repairs
- Safety gear
- Pet supplies
- Medications
- Extra clothes, blankets, and shoes
- Kitchen supplies and trash bags
- Personal hygiene items
- First-aid kit and first-aid book
- Insurance needs assessment
- Property inventory with photos
- Secure your home, property, and business
- Savings for all deductibles
- Family emergency and pet plan

