



# ALL HAZARDS PREPAREDNESS GUIDE



NATURAL



ACCIDENTAL



INTENTIONAL



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# How do I prepare to survive a disaster?

Getting ready for a hurricane or other disaster comes down to three basic steps:

1 ▶ **Connect to emergency information.**



2 ▶ **Determine your risk.**



3 ▶ **Plan & prepare.**



Hurricane season is June 1 to Nov. 30. Learn what you need to know. Then plan and prepare—and replace panic with peace of mind.

## How will I know when something is happening?

**Connect to emergency information by identifying at least two places you can count on to get news and important updates.**


- **Alert Pinellas.** Sign up to receive emergency notifications via phone, text or email at [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas).
- **Ready Pinellas app.** Personal assistance with preparedness planning, evacuation zone lookup, checklists for when a storm is approaching and more.

- **The Pinellas County website.** During an emergency visit [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org) for hurricane news and links to evacuation maps, shelter information and more.
- **Citizen Information Center.** Call (727) 464-4333 for information before, during and after the storm or other county emergencies (*only open during emergencies*).

- **E-News.** Emails about county news. Sign up at [www.pinellascounty.org/news\\_subscription.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/news_subscription.htm).

- **NOAA Weather alert radio.** Receive automatic alerts from the National Weather Service when dangerous weather is in your area.

**Follow us on social media:**


 **Facebook** ([www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews](http://www.facebook.com/pinellascountynews)) for general county information, breaking news, preparedness tips and emergency updates


 **Twitter** ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)) to sign up to receive tweets via text message:

@pinellasem for preparedness information and emergency updates

@pinellasconews for general county information and emergency updates

@pinellastraffic for real-time traffic updates

 **Nextdoor** ([www.nextdoor.com](http://www.nextdoor.com)) to join our partnership site in your neighborhood and receive emergency notifications that impact your area.

 **YouTube** ([www.youtube.com/pccvtv1](http://www.youtube.com/pccvtv1)) for videos on how to prepare for emergencies and historical hurricane information

- **Pinellas County app.** Includes Know Your Zone, county news, PSTA bus information and road/traffic signal/code enforcement and other issue reporting.

- **News media.** Use reliable sources of information to receive official county news and weather updates via radio, newspaper, TV, online and mobile app.

- **Download news and weather apps.** Enable the notifications feature so you will receive breaking news and emergency alerts.

- **Watch Pinellas County Connection Television (PCC-TV).** Visit [www.pinellascounty.org/tv](http://www.pinellascounty.org/tv) or watch on Spectrum 637, WOW! 18 or Frontier 44.



# How do I know my risk?



## Know your zone.

Knowing your evacuation zone (also referred to as evacuation level) is the first step to knowing your risk and making your plans. Evacuations will be called according to "evacuation levels." Check your evacuation zone at [www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone](http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone).

If you live in a mobile home you are considered to be in a Level A evacuation zone/level, no matter where you are located in the county, and must go when evacuations are ordered for mobile homes or a Level A or higher.

Evacuation orders issued by Pinellas County are for the entire county, including cities and unincorporated areas.

There are several ways to find out your evacuation zone:

- [www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone](http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone)
- Ready Pinellas mobile app
- Utility bill
- Property Appraiser records
- (727) 453-3150 (automated for landlines only)

Evacuations are ordered for storm surge risk as shown on the map at the right.

## EVACUATION GUIDELINES (mobile homes MUST always evacuate)

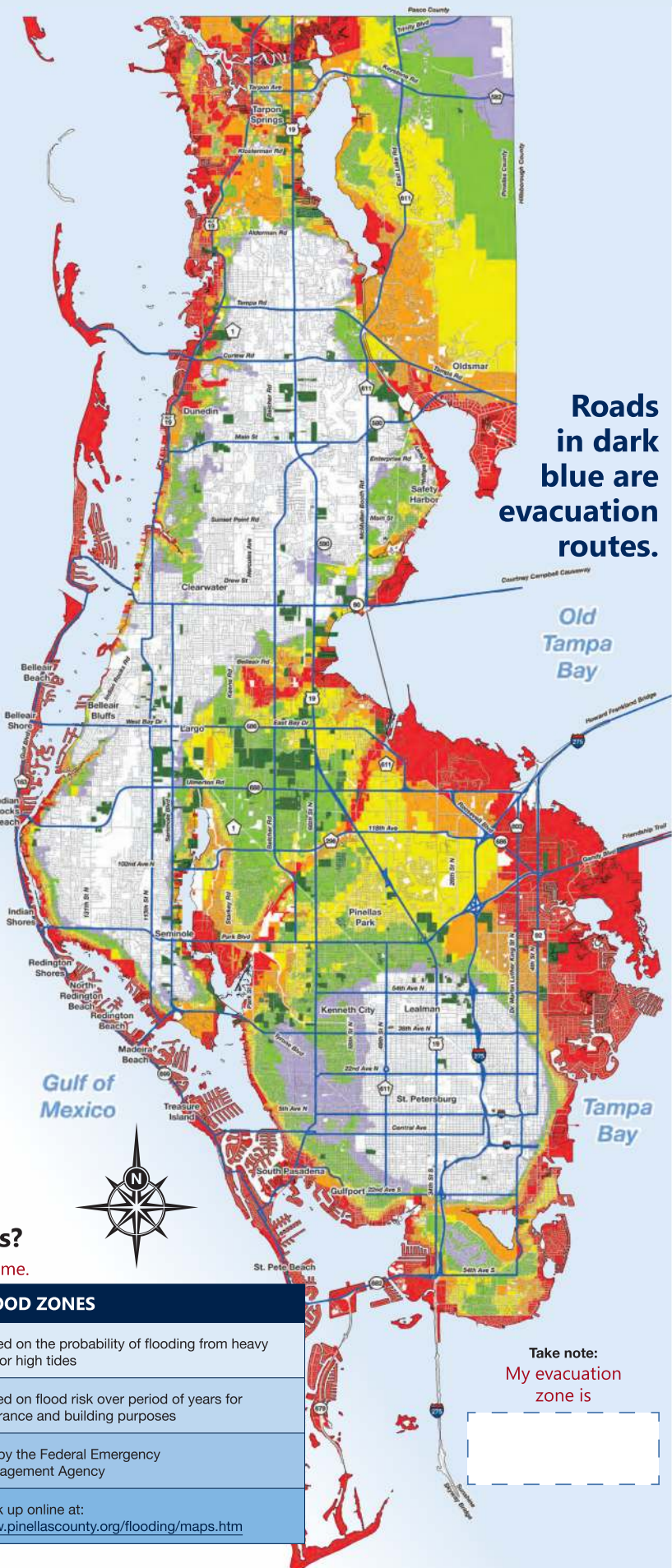
Potential Surge Heights (in feet)	
	Mobile Home Parks (mobile homes MUST always evacuate)
<b>A</b> Up to 11'	Evacuate red areas and all mobile homes
<b>B</b> Up to 15'	Evacuate red and orange areas and all mobile homes
<b>C</b> Up to 20'	Evacuate red, orange and yellow areas and all mobile homes
<b>D</b> Up to 28'	Evacuate red, orange, yellow and green areas and all mobile homes
<b>E</b> Up to 35'	Evacuate red, orange, yellow, green and purple areas and all mobile homes
	Areas shown in white are non-evacuation zones.
Evacuation Routes	

## What's the difference between evacuation zones & flood zones?

Evacuation zones and flood zones are not the same.

EVACUATION ZONES	FLOOD ZONES
Based on Tropical Storm and Hurricane scenarios	Based on the probability of flooding from heavy rain or high tides
Based on ground elevation and proximity to water	Based on flood risk over period of years for insurance and building purposes
Determined by the National Hurricane Center	Set by the Federal Emergency Management Agency
Look up online at: <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone">www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone</a>	Look up online at: <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/maps.htm">www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/maps.htm</a>

## 2018 Evacuation Zones



Roads in dark blue are evacuation routes.

Old Tampa Bay

Gulf of Mexico

Tampa Bay

Take note:  
My evacuation zone is

# How should I plan & prepare?

## Review your insurance coverage.



Not all insurance policies are created equal. Check your policy or talk to your agent to make sure you have sufficient coverage and to determine if any home improvements would qualify for a discount on premiums. Information on insurance policies can be found through the Insurance Information Institute at [www.iii.org](http://www.iii.org).

## Questions to ask in reviewing your insurance coverage

- What is my standard deductible?
- What is my hurricane deductible?
- Do I have flood insurance?
- Do I have windstorm insurance?
- Do I have enough coverage to replace my home and belongings?
- Do I have loss-of-use coverage for temporary housing expenses?
- Do I have coverage to rebuild up to current building elevation codes?



## Flood insurance

Homeowners insurance policies DO NOT cover damage from rising flood waters. If you own a home in a flood zone, your mortgage company will require you to carry a separate flood policy. Even if you don't live in a flood zone, consider the additional coverage. Learn more about the National Flood Insurance Program at [www.floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov). Remember: a new policy takes 30 days to take effect. For flood insurance technical assistance, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/insurance.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/flooding/insurance.htm).

## Hurricane windstorm insurance

Insurance that covers damage from wind requires an entirely different policy. Different carriers have different waiting periods, so do not wait until a storm is approaching to purchase this.

## Other insurance

Consider insurance for mobile homes, cars, boats and businesses to protect against storm damage and flooding.

## Why do I need to evacuate?



### Run from the water.

Evacuations are based on the forecast depth of the storm surge. Storm surge is a dome of water that is pushed on land by the force of the wind. It happens fast and is extremely powerful, rushing over land and overtaking everything in its path. **It is the greatest killer of people during hurricanes.** Because the water comes fast, evacuations are done well in advance.

- Six inches of storm surge can knock people off their feet.
- One foot of storm surge can float many vehicles. Two feet can sweep a car off the road.
- Storm surge can undermine, tear apart, or move buildings.

- Debris in the water makes it even more dangerous.

Water in your house is powerful. Consider that three feet of water in a 1,500-square-foot home weighs 135 tons. Compare that to an average pool, which holds 21 tons. **You do not want to be in your house when it fills with water.**

**If you wait until the storm surge is coming to evacuate, it is too late.** If you are NOT ordered to evacuate prior to a storm, no surge is expected at your location.

You can see an illustration of how storm surge would affect your property with the Storm Surge Protector on [egis.pinellascounty.org/apps/stormsurgeprotector](http://egis.pinellascounty.org/apps/stormsurgeprotector) or through the Ready Pinellas mobile app.

**If you live in a high rise building in an evacuation zone** don't make the mistake of thinking you will be safe if you stay on an upper floor. The higher the elevation, the stronger the winds will be. If water destroys the ground floor it can jeopardize the safety of the entire building. You also will be cut off from any assistance. When ordered to evacuate, evacuate.

### Hide from the wind.

Hurricane wind speed is described in categories from 1 to 5. The wind scale below will give an idea of what damage to expect for each category.



Storm surge is the greatest killer of people during hurricanes.



Hurricane Irma Miami, Florida

#### Storm Surge:

An abnormal rise in sea level accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm.



Category	Sustained Winds	Wind Damage
<b>1</b>	74-95 mph	<b>Very dangerous winds will produce some damage:</b> Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding, gutters. Snapped tree branches. Power outages likely.
<b>2</b>	96-110 mph	<b>Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage:</b> Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many trees snapped or uprooted. Near-total power loss.
<b>3</b> (major)	111-129 mph	<b>Devastating damage will occur:</b> Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking & gable ends. Many trees snapped. Electricity & water unavailable for days to weeks.
<b>4</b> (major)	130-156 mph	<b>Catastrophic damage will occur:</b> Well-built framed homes can sustain severe damage, including roof structure & some exterior walls. Most trees snapped. Power outages for weeks or months. Most of the area uninhabitable for weeks or months.
<b>5</b> (major)	157 mph or higher	<b>Catastrophic damage will occur:</b> High percentage of framed homes destroyed, total roof failure & wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks or months. Most of the area uninhabitable for weeks or months.

In 2017, Hurricane Irma only had wind gusts to category 1 strength in Pinellas County, yet power was out for several days for many residents. Do not underestimate a hurricane or even a tropical storm.

## Strengthen your home.

Adding storm shutters, garage door braces and hurricane straps to the roof will make your home safer from wind damage and could lower your insurance costs. See page 9 for tips on preparing your home for a hurricane.



## Decide whether you will use sandbags.

Sandbags may be helpful during flooding events if the sandbags are stacked correctly. Commercial flood barriers may be a better option and are available online or from home improvement stores. Do NOT rely on sandbags to save your home or business from major flooding. **They are not effective for fast-moving hurricane storm surge.**

**If you plan to use sandbags or other flood barriers, buy them now.** They sell out quickly when a storm is coming.

During some flooding events, the county and municipalities may make sandbags available to residents; however, quantities may be limited. Check [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org) or your city/town hall for updates. Most sandbag giveaway sites are self-service. You fill the bags with sand and load them into your vehicle.

Remember, sandbags generally don't work in a massive storm surge and flood, so if a hurricane is coming soon, don't waste precious preparation time on sandbags.



For a 5'x3' area you'll need 55 sandbags, properly stacked.

### Elevation

#### Stair-Stepped



### Plan

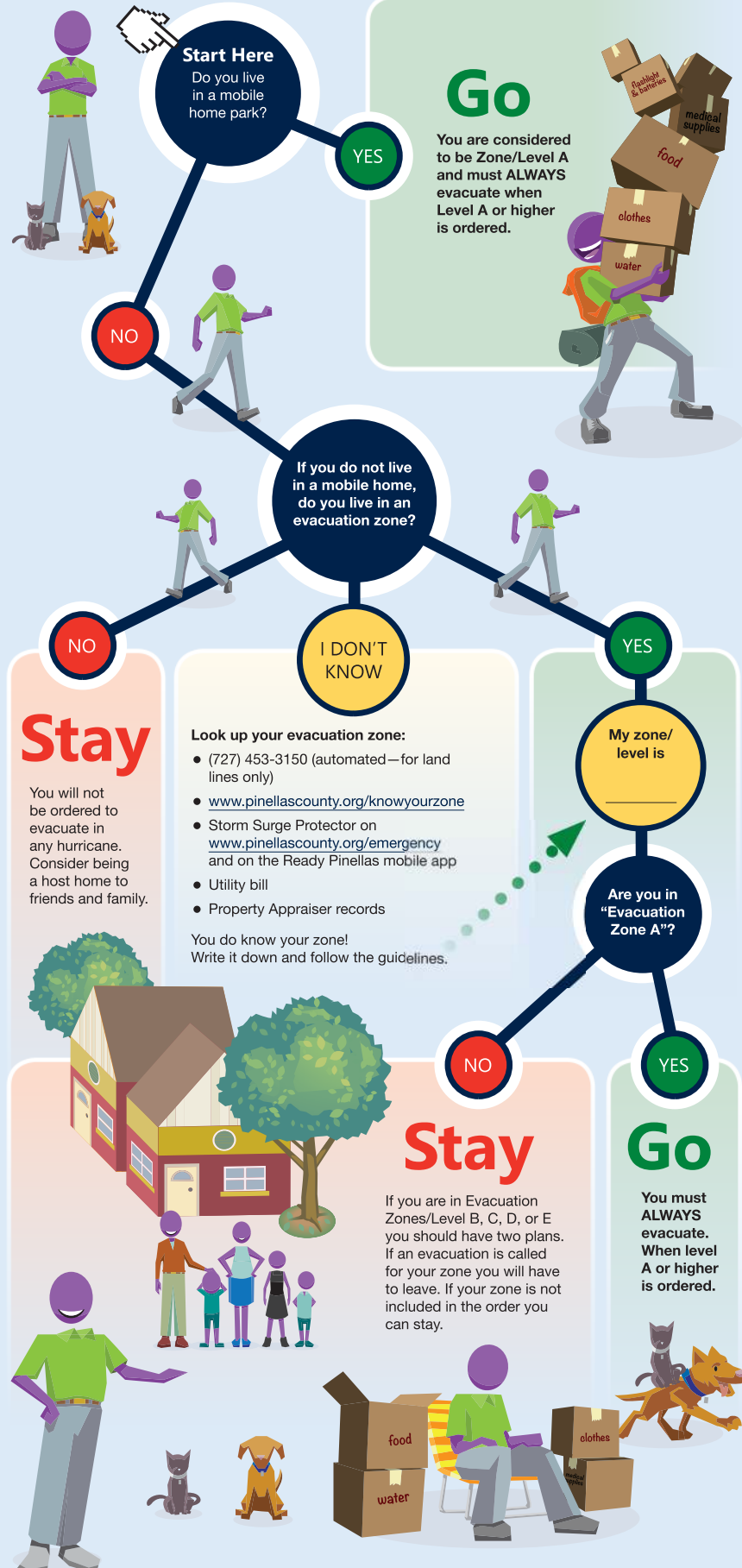
#### Overlapped



For information on the proper use of sandbags search for "U.S. Army sand bag techniques" online.

# Should I stay or should I go?

Use this guide to see if and when you would have to evacuate.



# Stay or go?

## What are my options?

### Staying home?

If you live in an area that is not being evacuated, staying home could be your best option. Staying at home also avoids the hardship of trying to re-enter the county after the storm, when bridges may be damaged and traveling limited.

Before the storm arrives, check on others in the neighborhood to make sure that they are ok and have what they need. If you know someone who may need special needs assistance, tell them to contact their local fire department or call

Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800.

If you can shelter at home, please consider being a host home by offering in advance to host friends, family, colleagues or others you know who need a place to shelter. Start a hurricane club with other people from your neighborhood, social group or place of worship. Companionship during a hurricane can be a great comfort, and teamwork to prepare and stock up for the event makes the work much easier.

### I may have to evacuate, where will I go?

Once you know you may have to evacuate you have several options: family and friends, host homes, leaving town, hotels and public shelters. Public shelter should be your last resort.

Remember, you only need to evacuate to higher ground. The best evacuation plan could be a 15-minute ride to one of your options. Think 10s of miles, not 100s.



### Host home

Not everyone has friends or family who live in non-evacuation areas or higher evacuation levels like levels D and E. Those with nowhere to go often are forced to stay in a public shelter, or worse, they stay at home, which could be a deadly decision. That is why the host home program is one of the greatest services that an organization can provide its members.

By using the tools provided on the Pinellas County website, you can match up people who have to evacuate with people who do not. Churches, civic groups, community organizations and other agencies can easily provide this service. Learn more at [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/hosthomes.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/hosthomes.htm).

#### Businesses can also consider opening up the facility to employees and families.

All host homes should consider welcoming pets. Be clear on the "rules" if you do so. Even if you require that they stay in a carrier, they will still be safe and the owner will be grateful. If you can't host anyone but have room for pets, consider making the offer to shelter one or two. This would give the pet owner more options for their own evacuation plans.

If you are invited to stay at a host home for the duration of the hurricane, be a part of the preparations, helping to secure the house and yard, gather emergency supplies and even sharing the cost of a generator so that you can all be more comfortable in the days that follow a hurricane.

### Leaving town

If you decide to evacuate the county, plan to leave days ahead of the hurricane—generally before an evacuation order—to beat overbooked flights and jam-packed highways.

Plan on traveling to an area that is nowhere near the hurricane's potential path. There are many examples of people evacuating to other parts of Florida, or to a state to the north, where the hurricane ends up hitting the hardest. The path of a hurricane changes—

often at the last minute—and a single storm can be hundreds of miles wide.

After the hurricane passes, you may not be able to get back into the county right away. Flights may be canceled, highways closed and bridges damaged. Traffic may be restricted until it is safe.

If you know you have to be available right after the storm, consider other options.

### Hotel

Be sure to make reservations early and call ahead to confirm. Look for pet-friendly lodgings for your cats and dogs and check pet policies. Check the evacuation level of the hotel you plan to use to make

sure it will not need to evacuate. Choose wisely and remember to leave early enough so that you can travel safely.

### How will I get there?

If you have to evacuate, be ready to leave your home early because all of these services will stop when conditions get dangerous.

- **If you are in need of transportation to a shelter,** PSTA buses run free to shelters during evacuations as long as it is safe. They also run regular routes. Buses will stop running just before the winds increase to give staff time to reach safety.
- **If you need transportation or have special medical needs,** call Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800 or your local fire department. They can pre-register you for a ride to a regular shelter

or for a special needs shelter. You also may register online at [www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds](http://www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds).

- **If you are driving to your safe place,** be sure to fill your gas tank as early as possible, get cash and bring your Go Kit. Your goal should be to have all preparations done by the time an evacuation order is issued so you can leave as soon as the order comes out.
- **If you plan to use taxis or other commercial transportation services, do so early.** These drivers may have to evacuate themselves and may stop providing transportation during an emergency.

## Why are shelters a last resort?

Think of a shelter as a lifeboat, not a cruise ship.



#### What public shelters are:

- Safe places to go during dangerous weather.
- Located at public schools, community centers and churches.
- Crowded—in a major evacuation, each person could have a two-foot by five-foot space.
- Noisy, bright and busy.
- Uncomfortable, especially when they lose power.



#### What public shelters are NOT:

- Quiet.
- Clean.
- They do not take reservations.
- They do not have cots or air mattresses or mats.
- Most do not have generators, expect it to get warm.
- They do not have much room so only bring your Go Kit with supplies we recommend (see page 11).

Be safe and take shelter during the storm. Consider other options first, but you will never be turned away if you go to an open shelter.



#### What do I need to bring to a shelter?

- Change of clothes for three to five days.
- While food and water is supplied, you must bring your own food if you have any dietary needs (Diabetes, gluten free, allergies, etc.). Consider bringing some of your own comfort foods and snacks as well.
- Medication (2 week supply).
- Twin-size air mattress, chair or yoga mat to sleep on.
- Ear plugs, sleeping mask.
- Important papers.
- Flashlights.




**For special needs sheltering, please see additional items on page 8.**

# What public shelters might be open?




## Not all shelters are open for all evacuations.

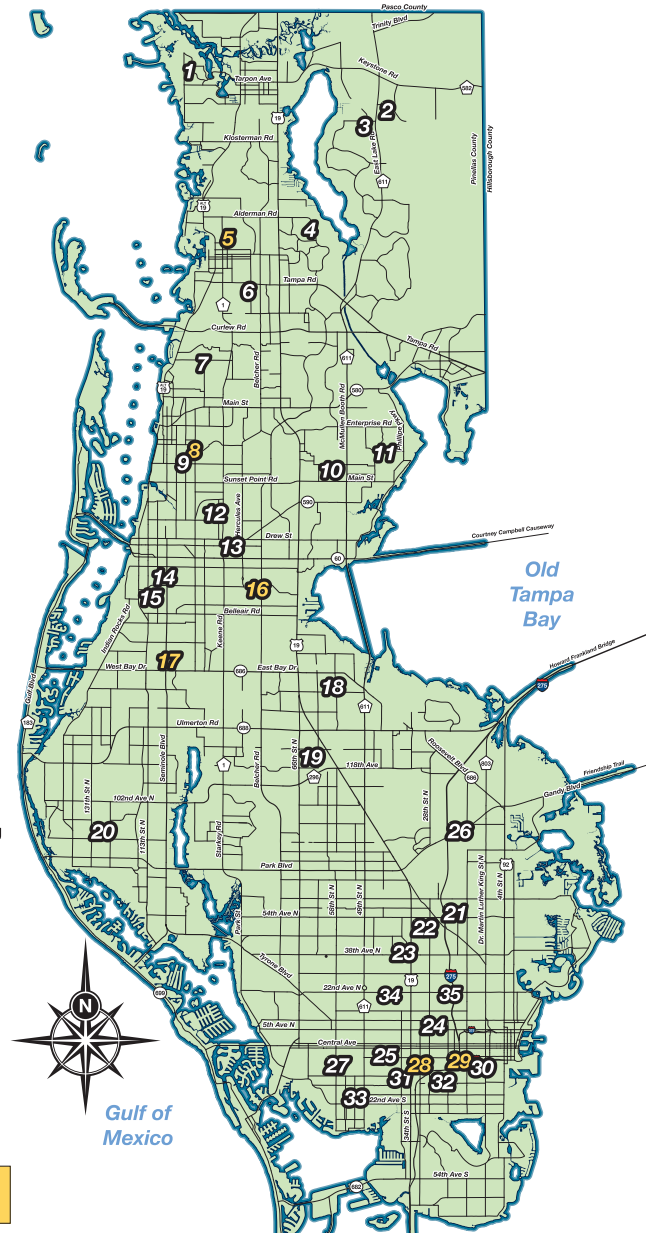
Check the website [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org) before heading to a public shelter to make sure it is open. Updates on open shelters will also be provided to local media.

### 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 Bentley 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 Pinehurst 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) Skycrest 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

### South County

- 17) Largo High School    
410 Missouri Ave. N. • Largo
- 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 School  
4900 28th St. N. • St. Petersburg
- 23) New Heights Elementary School  
3901 37th St. N. • St. Petersburg
- 24) St. Petersburg High School  
2501 Fifth Ave. N. • St. Petersburg
- 25) Fairmount Park Elementary School  
575 41st St. S. • St. Petersburg
- 26) First Baptist Church of St. Petersburg  
1900 Gandy Blvd. N., 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) St. Petersburg College  
Midtown Campus  
1300 22nd St. S. • St. Petersburg
- 33) Gulfport Elementary School  
2014 52nd St. S. • Gulfport
- 34) Thurgood Marshall Middle School  
3901 22nd Ave. S. • St. Petersburg
- 35) James Sanderlin Elementary School  
2350 22nd Ave. S. • St. Petersburg



 **Pet-Friendly Shelters**

 **Special Needs Shelters** (see page 8)

## Why do I always have to evacuate if I live in a mobile home?

### Remember that mobile homes are not safe in a hurricane.

- Hurricane Andrew destroyed 90 percent of the mobile homes in Miami-Dade County in 1992.
- Even newer mobile homes, built under tougher laws, can't withstand the force of hurricane-force wind gusts or tornadoes. In addition, carports,

awnings and parts of the homes become missiles in the wind, making the mobile home parks themselves dangerous places to be.

- Despite new tough laws, Hurricane Charley devastated Punta Gorda's mobile home parks are not safe to stay in due to debris.
- Community centers in mobile home parks are not safe to stay in due to debris.

If an evacuation is ordered, all mobile homes must evacuate. Plan and prepare now to take shelter somewhere else.

#### To protect your mobile home:

- Replace rusted anchors and connections.
- Tighten straps.
- Add anchors and straps if needed.
- Fix wood rot and termite damage at connections, joists and trusses.

#### Before you evacuate:

- Put shutters/plywood over windows.
- Remove loose items from around your unit.
- Lower TV and radio antennas.
- Lower/remove awnings.
- Elevate belongings if your park often floods.

## If you rent, discuss plans with your landlord.

Renters and landlords need to talk about responsibilities for protecting the home in the event of a hurricane. There may be cases when the landlord wants renters to evacuate even if an evacuation is not ordered. Landlords and tenants should put their agreement in writing. It may even be included in the lease.

#### For renters

- Consider getting insurance to protect your personal belongings. The landlord's insurance does not protect anything that you own.
- Always share emergency contact information, in writing.
- If you will evacuate, let your landlord know where you will be.
- Find out where your landlord will be staying.

#### For landlords

Take steps to make your rental storm-ready. As the storm approaches, secure your rental:

- Shutter windows.
- Make sure your tenants are safe and have the supplies they need if they will shelter there.
- Make sure your tenants know their responsibilities.
- Take care of your responsibilities.
- Check on your tenants before and after the storm.

# What are “special needs” shelters?

Pinellas County's special needs shelter program is intended for those who need transportation and/or require MINIMAL medical assistance. Registration is required for those needing transportation.

## Three ways to register for a special needs shelter:

- 1) Fill out a form at [www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds](http://www.pinellascounty.org/specialneeds).
- 2) Call Pinellas County Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800.
- 3) Call your nearest fire department. If you have a home health care provider, discuss this with them.

Once you are registered, a medical needs review will determine your eligibility for a special needs shelter. If you do not qualify, other options will be discussed with you.



The county has three special needs shelters for residents. Plan ahead and communicate with friends, family or caregivers if you will need extra help

evacuating and sheltering during a storm.

If you have your own transportation, registration is NOT required but is strongly recommended.

If you make other arrangements after you register, you are not obligated to go to the shelter.

Keep in mind that the shelter will be inside a school and will likely be crowded and noisy. It will be safe, but it is not for everyone.

If you live in a nursing home or assisted living facility, contact the administrator about emergency plans. Let friends/family know the plan and share important contacts with them.

If you are homebound or receive home health services, discuss your plans with your caregiver.

## Important things to know when going to a special needs shelter:

- It is recommended that you bring a family member or a caregiver with you to the shelter.
- Personnel from Pinellas County Schools and Florida Department of Health provide staffing at special needs shelters.
- Assistance is limited to medical monitoring, oxygen and some backup electricity.
- Oxygen is available, but the shelter could lose air conditioning in a power outage.
- Bedding is not available in large amounts. Bring a twin-sized air mattress. Residents who are unable to sleep on the floor should consider a hotel or a host home. (See page 6.)
- Bring your “Go Kit.”
- Let an out-of-town contact know where you are going.
- Wear comfortable clothes and sturdy shoes.
- Service animals that are trained to assist a person with a disability are allowed in any shelter, hotel or motel—no registration required. Remember to pack their supplies too.

Your pets will not be allowed to be with you in the special needs shelter. It is important to make prior arrangements for your pets. Dogs and cats with no arrangements will be cared for by Pinellas County Animal Services, who will bring your pet to the Pinellas County shelter and return them to you when you return home.

### What to take to a special needs shelter:

- Any durable medical equipment or supplies you may need such as:
  - Portable oxygen.
  - Wheelchair, walker or cane.
  - Eyeglasses.
  - Hearing aids with batteries.
  - Nebulizer.
  - Oxygen concentrator.



- Medications in the original container (2-week supply). During a state of emergency, there is no time requirement for refills.
- Printed updated list of prescriptions/dosages. (Ask your pharmacist.)
- Wearable medical alert tag.
- Blanket, pillow, cot, folding chair or air mattress. (Special needs shelter cots are limited in number.)
- Complete change of clothing for several days.
- Activities (cards, games, books).
- Special dietary items (sugar-free, low sodium, gluten-free, etc.) with can opener if required.
- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, wipes, soap, hairbrush, adult diapers).
- Talking or braille clock.
- Pen and paper.
- Flashlight and batteries.
- Portable radio and batteries.
- Phone and backup battery.
- Earplugs, headphones, sleep mask.
- Important papers, valid ID, insurance card.
- Printed list of contacts.
- Written instructions or orders regarding your care.



## How do I prepare for my pets?

Just like other members of the family, pets need to be part of your disaster plan. If you have to evacuate, do you know if pets are allowed where you are planning to stay? If you are staying home, what will your pet need if your family must survive without basic necessities after a storm?



### Sheltering With Your Pet

- If you will evacuate during a storm, make sure the host home, hotel or shelter where you are going accepts your type of pet.
- Call Visit St. Pete/Clearwater at (727) 464-7200 for options or search the web for pet-friendly hotels in the area. Some hotels have emergency policies to take pets in an evacuation.
- Do not assume a kennel will take your pet in an emergency. Call ahead to find kennels in non-evacuation zones that could take your pet. Kennels require proof of vaccinations.
- Animal shelters, such as Pinellas County Animal Services or SPCA Tampa Bay, CANNOT accept your pets during an emergency.
- If you plan to stay with a family member or friend outside the evacuation zone, ask them now whether you can bring your pet.

### Horses.

- There are no public park areas to leave horses during an evacuation, so it is important to make arrangements in advance. More information is available from the University of Florida/IFAS

Extension <https://vetmed-extension.sites.medinfo.ufl.edu/files/2011/10/Hurricane-planning-for-horse-farms.pdf>

### Build a go kit for your pet.

- Download the county's pet identification form at [www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices), fill it in and tape it to your pet's kennel.
- Immunization records.
- County rabies tag.
- Food & water with bowls (two-week supply) – can opener if needed.
- Carrier or portable kennel (with room to stand and turn around).
- Muzzle, collar and leash.
- Medications.
- Toys/blanket.
- Cat litter, pan and scoop.
- Plastic waste bags.
- Disinfectant.
- Paper towels.
- Take a photo of your pet to keep with you.

Remember, if you must evacuate, you may have to care for your pet for an extended period of time. Plan accordingly.

**If you do not yet have a carrier for your pet, purchase one now.** They may not be available later in the season.

### Post-disaster lost pets

After a storm, stray animals will be picked up and taken to temporary collection sites and then transferred to more permanent sites that will be announced to the public. If you lose your pet, look in the area around your home or call Animal Services at (727) 582-2600.

### Volunteer for pet pickup

Residents who will be brought to special needs shelters will have their pets cared for by Animal Services. Can you help the county transport pets for citizens with special needs during an evacuation? Call Animal Services at (727) 582-2600 for more information.

## Should I involve my kids?

Definitely! Make plans with the whole family.

- Let children help build your emergency preparedness kit (see page 11).
- Use matter-of-fact language to discuss safety steps you will take.
- Play “let’s pretend” games with young children to help them work out “what if” situations.

## Helpful Links

Becoming Storm Smart • Pinellas County Emergency Management <https://youtu.be/qtnHzrm-fEo>  
Pinellas County Hurricanes for Kids Activity Book [www.pinellascounty.org/kids](http://www.pinellascounty.org/kids)  
Kids Get a Plan • Florida Division of Emergency Management [www.kidsgetaplan.com](http://www.kidsgetaplan.com)

Owlie Skywarn • National Weather Service [www.weather.gov/owlie](http://www.weather.gov/owlie)

Ready for Kids • National Hurricane Center [www.ready.gov/kids](http://www.ready.gov/kids)

Weather Wiz Kids [www.weatherwizkids.com/weather-hurricane.htm](http://www.weatherwizkids.com/weather-hurricane.htm)

# How can I prepare my home?

There are several simple steps to making your home storm ready, and they do not have to be expensive fixes.

## \*Brace Your Gabled Roof

Gabled roofs—two slopes that come together to a peak at the top—are prone to failure if not properly braced in construction. High winds could cause your end wall to collapse. See the Florida Division of Emergency Management's Hurricane Retrofit Guide for advice: [www.floridadisaster.org/hrg](http://www.floridadisaster.org/hrg).

## \*Protect Your Windows

Your best option is to install impact resistant windows or hurricane shutters. Otherwise, be ready to cover your windows with commercial exterior plywood—7/16" minimum—when a storm is approaching. Duct tape provides NO protection.

## Prepare Your Yard

Rock mulch, sagging tree limbs and yard furniture are among the objects that could become deadly missiles in high winds. Keep your trees pruned, clean out your gutters on a regular basis, and when a storm is coming...

- Dispose of any piles of loose tree limbs or debris.
- Bring in all large yard items, such as furniture, grills and bird baths.
- Do not drain your pool. Super chlorinate the water and turn off the electricity.  
Note: The bottom of the pool is one storage option for outdoor furniture.

## Check Seals

Replace any worn out weather stripping or caulk around windows and doors.

## \*Brace Your Garage Door

Old garage doors in good condition can be braced with retrofit kits while new doors must meet stringent wind requirements. After Hurricane Andrew, engineers determined four out of five homes that suffered major structural damage lost their garage door first.

## Prepare Your Vehicle

- Keep up with your car's maintenance.
- Keep gas tank half full—fill tank during a Hurricane Watch.
- Build a survival kit for your car: first aid, non-perishable food/water, tire inflater, tool kit, jack and spare tire, jumper cable, road flares, flashlight, DC/AC power inverter, mobile device chargers, map with shelter locations.

**\*Protecting windows, gable roofs and garage doors are the most important steps to take.**

# Should I get a generator?

A fuel-powered generator can keep your appliances going after a disaster and would keep you more comfortable. You can buy a small one to run your medical equipment. But keep in mind, generators come with the dangers of carbon monoxide, electrical shock and fire.

### Follow these safety measures:

- Use generators outdoors and away from windows

and doors to avoid carbon monoxide exposure. NEVER operate a generator indoors. NEVER use a generator in an attached garage, even with the garage door open.

- Plug appliances directly into the generator or use a heavy-duty, three-pronged extension cord.
- NEVER plug the generator into a wall outlet—this can cause electrocution.

# How do I secure my boat?

No matter how seaworthy you or your boat is, do not ever consider staying with your boat in a hurricane. Make preparations early and evacuate for your safety. Monitor weather and sea conditions closely. If watches or warnings are issued, do not venture onto the water.



Follow the tips below to minimize damage to your vessel during a hurricane.

## Marina Slip or Private Dock Storage

- Create a hurricane plan for your boat and file a copy with the marina operator.
- Take a photographic inventory of your boat and its contents.
- Purchase and stow mooring line for the storm—the line should be about twice the diameter of normal line.
- When a storm is approaching, remove loose items on the deck—Bimini tops, dinghies, etc.—and store them on land. Shut off fuel lines at the tank.
- Keep batteries charged; make sure bilge pumps are operating properly.
- Keep insurance up-to-date.
- Secure hatches and doors.
- Double up on mooring lines and spring lines to secure the boat in its mooring.
- Use several cleats to distribute the load on the boat.
- Allow extra line for tide and storm surge.
- Where lines will rub, use several feet of chafing gear—such as a reinforced radiator hose—on both sides of where the lines will rub to protect them.
- Disconnect electrical, water and other dock connections.
- Remove valuables.

## Land Storage

- Store boat and trailer in a secure covered building, such as a garage, if possible.
- If left outside, secure using ground hooks and straps.
- Fill boat partially with water for stability. Keep water away from engine/batteries.
- Put wooden blocks between trailer frame and springs for extra support with added weight.

## Anchored Storage

- Remember the boat's position may change drastically during the storm.
- Anchor on the lee side of protective land rather than mooring to a dock.
- Use two anchors and no stern anchor.
- Line length should be six to nine times water depth for storm surge shift.
- Keep batteries charged; make sure bilge pumps are operating properly.
- Batten down the hatches!

## Drawbridges

During the approach of a hurricane, Pinellas County's 10 drawbridges will operate in a modified mode to give preference to evacuating vehicle traffic until the bridges go into lock-down position to ensure barrier islands are evacuated and to protect the bridges from wind damage.

The U.S. Coast Guard will coordinate with local and state agencies to issue a special marine advisory when the bridge operations will be modified.

The 10 drawbridges are located at Pinellas Bayway, Tierra Verde, Corey Causeway, John's Pass, Tom Stuart Causeway, Indian Rocks, Dunedin Causeway, Beckett Bridge, Park Boulevard and Treasure Island.

# What should I do to prepare my business?

A hurricane or other major disaster could shut down your business for weeks. It is critical to plan ahead for a possible evacuation and determine how your business would recover in the aftermath of a catastrophe.

## Sign up for emergency notifications

- Sign up for emergency notifications and other news from Pinellas County Economic Development at [www.pced.org/subscribe](http://www.pced.org/subscribe).
- Make sure members of your workplace are signed up for Alert Pinellas, [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas).

## Get help with business disaster planning

You can get help preparing a comprehensive business continuity, emergency preparedness and disaster recovery plan at no cost. Schedule an appointment with the Florida Small Business Development Center at Pinellas County Economic Development at [www.pced.org/sbdc](http://www.pced.org/sbdc).



## Steps to prepare your business

- Assess your risk—internally and externally—especially your business' evacuation zone. (See page 3)
- Analyze your critical business functions.
- Plan for an alternate location; expect to work with limited or no water, sewer or power for at least two weeks.
- Communicate your disaster plan to employees; specifically, when you will shut down operations and send them home, as well as your plans for reopening and your expectations of them.
- Consider supply chain preparedness.
- Back up your data and practice restoring your technology.
- Create an employee, vendor and key client communication plan; share this plan and test it with your employees.
- Assemble an emergency kit.
- Review your business insurance coverage. Does it include business interruption coverage that would compensate you for lost income if your company is unable to operate because of disaster-related damage? If not, talk to an agent about whether this coverage is a good option for you.
- Keep cash on hand in the event you must work without electricity.
- Secure your building as a storm is approaching.
- Turn off electricity, water and gas if your business is in an area being evacuated.
- Prepare a Go Kit with key contacts, insurance policies, important documents and a photo inventory of the interior and exterior of the business.
- Consider making your business a host home shelter for employees if you are located outside the evacuation zone. (See page 6.)

## ID for re-entry

- Business owners and critical employees will need identification such as an employer-issued photo ID or corporate placard to gain access to their facilities in a disaster area.
- Business owners should also be prepared to show a license, utility bill or lease document with the property's address.
- Provide staff with an emergency personnel list on company letterhead, including contact information. State the need for early access and the forms of identification your company has provided to key personnel.
- Barrier island business owners need an Emergency Access Permit to re-enter after a mandatory evacuation. (See page 13.)

## Business go kit

- Key contact list—employees, key customers and clients
- Insurance policies and agent contact information
- Backup files/drivers for electronic data
- Copies of contracts, plans, etc.
- Photo inventory of business inside and outside
- Property management contacts and repair vendors

## Loan assistance to get back to business

### SBA disaster loans

Once a disaster has been declared, the U.S. Small Business Administration provides low-interest disaster loans to businesses of all sizes, private non-profit organizations and even homeowners and renters. SBA disaster loans can be used to repair or replace real estate, personal property, machinery and equipment, and inventory and business assets. For more information, visit [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).

### Bridge loans

Should disaster strike, Pinellas County Economic Development will help businesses apply for Florida's emergency bridge loan program. This program provides a source of expedient cash flow to businesses impacted by a catastrophe so they can begin repairs and replace inventory. For more information, visit [www.floridadisasterloan.org](http://www.floridadisasterloan.org).

# Build an Emergency Preparedness Kit



## Basic Supplies

- ☐ Water—at least one gallon of water per person per day for drinking, and one gallon per person per day for hygiene and cooking
- ☐ One-week supply of fluids to drink and non-perishable food that does not require cooking, for example: dried fruit, canned tuna fish, peanut butter, etc. *(Remember comfort foods.)*
- ☐ Non-electric can opener
- ☐ Medications and copies of prescriptions *(Ask your pharmacist for a printout. Get refills without having to wait, once the governor declares a state of local emergency that includes Pinellas.)*
- ☐ Rain gear
- ☐ Flashlight or lantern
- ☐ Battery-operated or hand-crank radio
- ☐ Extra batteries
- ☐ First aid supplies—over-the-counter pain reliever, anti-diarrhea medicine/laxative, anti-histamine, anti-itch cream, antiseptic
- ☐ Sanitation—wipes, antibacterial hand gel, soap, toilet paper, hygiene supplies, feminine supplies
- ☐ Extra batteries for medical devices such as hearing aids, etc.
- ☐ Eyeglasses and extra contact lenses
- ☐ Extra bottled oxygen if dependent on it
- ☐ Small generator for electrically dependent equipment like an oxygen concentrator or nebulizer
- ☐ Cash for when ATMs are out of service—small bills will make purchasing easier
- ☐ Books, cards, board games for entertainment
- ☐ Full tank of gas in vehicle
- ☐ Cell phone with charger, extra battery backup, solar charger
- ☐ Contacts in mobile device and in print for backup
- ☐ Information downloaded to your mobile device *(contacts, maps)*
- ☐ A paper map
- ☐ Paper and pencil
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Insect repellent

## Basic Supplies for Pets

- ☐ Enough pet food and water for two weeks
- ☐ Identification/chip *(remember to update)*
- ☐ License
- ☐ Immunization records
- ☐ Photo
- ☐ Collar and leash
- ☐ Medications for two weeks with instructions
- ☐ Toys/blanket
- ☐ Cat litter, pan, scoop
- ☐ Plastic waste bags
- ☐ Disinfectant
- ☐ Paper towels
- ☐ Carrier or crate
- ☐ Newspaper or other lining



## If You Go

### Host Home or Hotel Go Kit

#### In addition to basic supplies:

- ☐ Pillow and blankets
  - ☐ Air mattress, sleeping bag, floor mat or other as needed
  - ☐ Food and water. Find out from the host what you can bring, including the perishable food you have left.
  - ☐ Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils
- Check with your host to see what they need.

### Public Shelter Go Kit – General

#### In addition to basic supplies:

- ☐ Wearable medical alert tag
- ☐ Blanket, pillow, cot, folding chair or twin-size air mattress
- ☐ Complete change of clothing for several days
- ☐ Special dietary items *(sugar-free, low sodium, gluten-free, etc.) with can opener if required. (common food and water is supplied)*
- ☐ Personal hygiene *(toothbrush, wipes, soap, hairbrush, adult diapers)*
- ☐ Earplugs, headphones, sleep mask

### Special Needs Shelter Go Kit

#### In addition to basic supplies:

- ☐ Any durable medical equipment or supplies you may need such as:
  - ☐ Portable oxygen
  - ☐ Wheelchair, walker or cane
  - ☐ Eyeglasses
  - ☐ Hearing aids with batteries
  - ☐ Oxygen concentrator
  - ☐ Nebulizer
- ☐ Medications in the original container *(2-week supply)*. There is no time requirement for refills once the governor declares a state of emergency.
- ☐ Blanket, pillow, cot, folding chair or air mattress *(available cots are limited in number)*
- ☐ Complete change of clothing for several days
- ☐ Personal hygiene *(toothbrush, wipes, soap, hairbrush, adult diapers)*
- ☐ Talking or Braille clock
- ☐ Pen and paper for communicating emergency information
- ☐ Earplugs, headphones, sleep mask
- ☐ Written instructions or orders regarding your care
- ☐ Pet Go Kit *(Pets do not stay with you—see page 8)*

## If You Stay or When You Return

### Stay Kit for Home

#### Even if you are evacuating, these supplies will be needed when you return.

- ☐ Two weeks of fluids to drink and non-perishable food that does not require cooking, for example: dried fruit, canned tuna fish, peanut butter, etc. Remember comfort foods
- ☐ Paper plates, plastic cups and utensils
- ☐ Cooler with ice *(Make extra ice in plastic bags and plastic food storage containers and keep it in the freezer to keep food cold longer.)*
- ☐ Insect repellent
- ☐ Sunscreen
- ☐ Tarps
- ☐ Rope or elastic cord *(for tarps if necessary)*
- ☐ Whistle to signal for help
- ☐ Tools, including wrench to shut off water, utility knife for sheeting and duct tape, hammer and nails to make temporary repairs
- ☐ Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air
- ☐ Sheets of plastic and duct tape to seal windows and doors if ordered to do so
- ☐ Matches or lighter in waterproof container
- ☐ Large garbage bags
- ☐ Portable toilet—use one from a boat or camper, or make one using a 5-gallon bucket with lid, trash bags, chlorine bleach
- ☐ Household chlorine bleach with medicine dropper to disinfect or treat water. *(Do not use scented, color safe or bleach with added cleaners.)*
- ☐ Extra gas if you have a generator and somewhere safe to store it
- ☐ Extra propane or charcoal for outside grill
- ☐ Battery-powered fan
- ☐ Camera to take photos/video of damage

### Important Documents

- Take photos of your documents for backup.
- Put paper copies together in a sealed plastic bag.
  - ☐ Driver license or ID card
  - ☐ Emergency Access Permit for barrier island residents/businesses
  - ☐ Social Security card
  - ☐ Important numbers and emergency contacts
  - ☐ Medical records – pharmacy prescription record, doctors, medications, dosages, blood type
  - ☐ Insurance policies for home, health, flood, auto, renters
  - ☐ Titles to house, cars
  - ☐ Pay stubs for disaster assistance eligibility
  - ☐ Household inventory for insurance claims – photo or video documentation stored online
  - ☐ Other irreplaceable papers, such as birth, marriage, divorce, death and adoption certificates; passports; military records; wills; trust documents
  - ☐ Account numbers for bank, credit cards, savings and investments.
  - ☐ This All-Hazards Preparedness Guide for reference, which you can also download from [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency).

# The storm is coming.

## What does “in the cone” mean?

The National Hurricane Center uses a graphic of a cone to show the probable track of a storm on weather forecasts. You can use it as a guide for the type of preparations you should make.

The closer the hurricane is, the more accurate the forecast. But be aware that hurricanes often shift direction at the last minute, so you need to be prepared if you are anywhere near the cone. Do not let your guard down.

As you make your preparations, remain calm. After all, you have learned about hurricanes and hazards, you know your risks and what you plan to do, and have made the preparations to do it.

This information is also part of the Ready Pinellas mobile app.



Apple App Store



Google Play



### 5-day cone

If Pinellas is in the 5-day cone it means a storm is on a probable path to reach our area in five days.

#### Implement your plan.

- Know your zone. If you do not already know your zone, look it up. ([www.pinellascounty.org/knownyourzone](http://www.pinellascounty.org/knownyourzone))
- Review your family disaster plan.
- Get your survival kit and important papers ready.
- Begin to prepare your home and yard.
- If you have special needs, have your caregiver begin to implement your plan. If needed, be sure you are registered for a special needs shelter.
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order if you do not wish to. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida there is no way to tell this many days ahead exactly where the storm will hit.

### 3-day cone

If Pinellas is in the 3-day cone it means a storm is on a probable path to reach our area in three days.

#### Step up your preparations.

- Double check your survival kit and make any last necessary purchases.
- Gather special supplies for infants, children, seniors and pets.
- Be sure you have all materials and tools necessary to shutter windows.
- If your plans are to evacuate, make arrangements, book reservations and pack what you can in your vehicle.
- Refill medications. (If the Governor has declared a state of emergency that includes Pinellas you can get a 30-day refill without the insurance company's usual restrictions.)
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order if you do not wish to. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida there is no way to tell this many days ahead exactly where the storm will hit.



### Hurricane watch

(48 hours ahead)

Prepare as if the storm is headed directly for your home. Be ready for a Hurricane Warning within a few hours if the storm remains on track and continue implementing your disaster plan.

- Fill vehicle gas tank.
- Get cash, secure papers and valuables.
- If you could not refill your medications in the 3-day cone timeframe try again now. 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.
- If your plans are to evacuate the area if you are ordered to, secure your home so you can leave as soon as an evacuation order is issued.
- If you are registered for a special needs shelter and will be getting transportation, be sure you have everything you need for your Go Kit.
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida, there is no guarantee that area will not be hit by the storm if its path changes.
- Be prepared for an evacuation order to be issued at anytime.

### Hurricane warning

(36 hours ahead)

- Stay tuned to local news and get your weather radio ready.
- Complete 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, go. You can expect traffic to get heavier as the hurricane nears.
- If you are registered for a special needs shelter and will be getting transportation, be ready to leave. Rescue workers will begin pick-ups shortly after an evacuation order is issued.
- If you are going to a host home, assist with home preparations and bring emergency supplies there.
- You do not need to wait for an evacuation order. Just remember, if you plan to evacuate to somewhere else in Florida there is no guarantee that area will not be hit by the storm if the forecast changes.
- Be prepared for an evacuation order to be issued at anytime.

### Evacuation order

Listen carefully to the evacuation order. What LEVEL (or zone) is being told to evacuate?

#### Are you in that LEVEL?

**NO** I do NOT live in an evacuation level/zone that is included in the evacuation order.

If you do not live in the evacuation level/zone that is being told to evacuate, you do not have to leave your home. Review your plan and your decision on whether you will stay or go. (See page 5)

**YES** I live in an evacuation level/zone that is being ordered to evacuate.

**YES** I live in a mobile home.

If you answered YES you must evacuate.

### Steps Before You Leave



- Turn off the water and gas utilities.
- Lock windows.
- Close all doors.
- Tell friends and neighbors where you are going. If you are evacuating locally, get to your shelter location within a few hours of the order.
- If you are going to a host home, go there now.
- Be aware of your evacuation time range. Evacuations will be issued with beginning and end times. The end time means that sustained tropical storm force winds are expected to arrive by that time and all evacuations should be complete.
- Stay safe during the storm.

## How will I get official information during and after a disaster?

When the Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated during a disaster, residents can find around-the-clock updates:

- Citizen Information Center: (727) 464-4333 (only open during emergencies)
- Pinellas County Website: [www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)
- Pinellas County Facebook, Twitter and Nextdoor

- Pinellas County Connection TV: Spectrum Channel 637; Frontier Channel 44; WOW! Channel 18
- Radio, television stations and newspapers
- Alert Pinellas: Sign up at [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas)

If modern technology is not available, speak with your neighbors and visit your local library or city hall for the latest news.



# The storm is here. What should I expect?

Hurricane Irma gave us a small taste of what life could be like in the case of a major hurricane. Power outages and heat were two of the biggest challenges. Expect these conditions to last days and even weeks.

If...	Then...
<b>The Power Goes Out</b>	<b>You will need a battery-powered radio, flashlight, batteries, cell phone and battery charger, non-perishable food, water.</b> Check your emergency kits to make sure you can make it at least a week without power. You will need ways to cook or boil water in the weeks to follow, like an outside grill or camp stove. If you can find an open store you will need cash. You also will want items to keep you occupied: books, board games, etc.
<b>The Power Stays Out for Six Hours</b>	<b>If there is food in the refrigerator,</b> move perishable foods into an ice-filled cooler. Put a thermometer in the cooler to make sure it stays below 40°F. Meats and other perishable foods can stay above 40°F without spoiling for two hours.
<b>The Power Stays Out for Two Days</b>	<b>If there is food in the freezer,</b> it can be stored safely for two days if you keep the freezer door shut. Once the storm passes, cook any unspoiled food outside and consider sharing with your neighbors.  From this point forward you will need non-perishable food. <i>(When you know a hurricane is coming, if you have a lot of frozen food, use it to prepare your meals. Otherwise you risk having it spoil in a power outage.)</i>
<b>The Water Supply Is Affected</b>	<b>It is always possible that the drinking water supply could be affected during a disaster.</b> Monitor the news for boil water notices, which means there is a possibility of contamination. In this case you should be prepared to disinfect the water.  Boil—Bring a pot of water to a rolling boil for one minute to ensure bacteria, viruses or parasites are gone.  Bleach—Add 1/8 tsp. of unscented bleach per gallon of water and let stand for 30 minutes; bleach should contain 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. This is less effective than boiling, but will work if there is no way to boil water.  Bleach can also be used as a disinfectant for cleaning by mixing nine parts of water to one part bleach.  If water is out, use your emergency supplies.
<b>There Is a Sewer Outage</b>	<b>If a sewer outage is announced, DO NOT flush your toilet.</b> Powered sewer lift stations may be down, which could cause a sewage backup in your home. Use a portable toilet, like one used on a boat or camper, or set one up by using one of the following methods: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● <b>5-gallon bucket</b>—Line with heavy-duty trash bag and use household bleach as disinfectant. Make sure it has a tight lid.</li><li>● <b>Toilet bowl</b>—Turn off your outside water supply first and flush once to empty before lining with a trash bag.</li></ul> Do not use kitty litter. It cannot be flushed after the sewer system is running. Once given the OK by officials, dispose of the emergency toilet's contents into your household commode. Thoroughly sanitize your emergency toilet with bleach before storing or disposal.
<b>Phone, Cable &amp; Cell Service Is Down</b>	<b>Use a battery- or crank-powered radio</b> —radio broadcasts are usually the last communication source to go down. Get a portable radio and lots of batteries. Tune in to National Weather Service advisories. Severe weather alerts are transmitted through the NOAA Weather Alert Radio. Local radio stations usually report on emergency situations and AM stations can broadcast longer than FM stations.  Pinellas County FM HAR 96.3—Use your radio to tune in to the county station for information on local traffic.  Mobile Text Messaging—Texting often works when other services do not. If your phone's digital clock works, then you can send and receive texts.  Chargers and batteries—Keep your phone and other devices charged. Make sure you have the connection you need to plug into a vehicle, even if you do not own your own car. Invest in a backup battery charger. There are many models, including solar-powered. Do not forget the basic spare batteries for your radio, flashlight and other emergency items. Make sure your extra batteries have not expired.  Apps—Mobile apps were invaluable during Irma. In addition to Pinellas County apps, know which others could be useful, like GasBuddy to find open gas stations or local weather apps. If you have WiFi even if your phone's data is down, check <a href="http://www.pinellascounty.org">www.pinellascounty.org</a> for information on new county apps.
<b>Your Home Is Breached</b>	<b>Take refuge in your safe room</b> —an interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level of your home. 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 is more dangerous than the weather outside.  Wait until the storm has passed to tend to any damage.

# The storm has passed. Now what?

## Can I start driving once a storm passes?

Do not attempt to travel after the storm passes until officials say it is safe to do so.



- There will be trees, electrical wires and other dangers on the roads.
- Without power, traffic lights will not be working, making driving very dangerous. Emergency personnel will be busy trying to get to the calls they could not answer during the storm. You put them in more danger by being on the road.
- It is highly likely that your workplace, children's schools and stores will be closed. Many roads and bridges are likely to be closed or blocked.
- Emergency crews will be dispatched as soon as conditions are safe to begin clearing major roads of debris and open up routes to reach hospitals, fire stations, police stations and other critical facilities.
- Be patient and stay home until it is safe to travel.

**Once officials say you can drive, you should still be very careful.**

- Traffic lights may still be out. Treat all intersections and locations where there is usually a traffic light as an all-way stop sign.
- Roads may still be littered with debris.
- Many routes may be flooded. NEVER drive through standing water. Remember: Turn around. Don't drown.

## Will I be able to get back home?



After an evacuation, many parts of Pinellas County may be inaccessible due to damage, flooding or debris blocking major roadways. Access into the county may be closed. Coming home immediately is not a guarantee.

- Stay tuned to social media and local news for updates on flooded areas, road closures and re-entry points before attempting to return to the county, your home or your business.
- Be prepared with proper ID that identifies you and the address of your residential or business property for re-entry after a storm.
- If you live or own a business on a barrier island, an Emergency Access Permit will make accessing the island after a mandatory evacuation faster and easier. You can get a permit from your City Hall and visit [www.pcsoweb.com/emergency-access-permit](http://www.pcsoweb.com/emergency-access-permit) for more information. If you do not have an Emergency Access Permit, you will be required to wait in line at the law enforcement checkpoint to show identification or other proof of residency, ownership, or employment every time you want to access the island.

## What is my responsibility during recovery?

**Be prepared to take care of yourself and each other for at least a week.** If a hurricane were to devastate the county, it could be a week before roads are opened and rescue workers can deliver water and basic food to the area. It could take weeks to restore basic services and for many grocery stores and other businesses to be able to open again. **In other words, you may be on your own for quite a while, and you should prepare for this. This is your responsibility.**

### Neighbors helping neighbors

From Texas to Puerto Rico to the Florida Keys, last year's hurricane season brought devastation to



many areas. But the goodness of people was shown over and over, as neighbors helped each other through the worst of each storm and aided in recovery. Here in Pinellas County, after Hurricane Irma passed, neighborhoods got together to share power and food. Community centers and faith communities answered the call to provide cooling stations, and others with power opened their doors to allow people to cool off and recharge their devices.

This is what will get us all through any disaster: working together.

## Will there be help after a hurricane?

### Disaster assistance

Following a disaster, organizations will come into the area to help. Check the county website for updates and listen to the news for announcements.

Disaster assistance is not meant to get people back to where they were before the storm. It is meant to get people through the disaster.

It is your responsibility to arrange for loans, insurance, contractors and the other items of business that you will need to get back on your feet. Get your business in order now and put your important documents together.

### FEMA

After a disaster, if a Presidential Disaster Declaration is issued, survivors must register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) if they feel they need help from any of the FEMA disaster assistance programs. Applicants will be asked to apply for a Small Business Administration Loan, even if they are not a small business. (See page 10)

- If the loan is approved, then a low-interest loan is available to help you pay for repairs.
- If the loan is not approved, then you are referred back to FEMA, who determines your eligibility for additional disaster help.

## Report price gouging

In a declared state of emergency, it is illegal to sell necessary goods or services at increased prices.

- Once you start purchasing gas and other items, and hiring contractors, be on the lookout. Make sure the professional you are hiring is a licensed contractor.

**If you believe a business or individual is price gouging, call Pinellas County Consumer Protection** at (727) 464-6200 or report it to the Florida Attorney General's Office at (866) 966-7226 or through [www.myfloridalegal.com](http://www.myfloridalegal.com).

## When will the debris be picked up?



Pinellas County (for unincorporated areas) and each municipality may have different procedures for debris pickup. That's why residents may receive different directions about dealing with yard debris, regular trash and bulk items.

- Normal daily schedules and processes will likely vary after a storm.
- The type of storm will also make the difference as to whether large items will be picked up, if yard debris will be in piles or bagged, etc. Be patient as urgent needs will be taken care of first.
- For information and instructions after the storm, check the website of your city or the county, follow them on social media or stay tuned to local news.
- Those who live on private roads may need to make additional plans for a location to dispose of debris.
- Contractors that you hire to do work such as cutting a tree down, fence work, flooding repair or removal of household items are responsible for debris removal. That is included in your fee so be sure that they are licensed and that they fulfill their responsibilities.



## How can I help?

There are new programs that give faith communities and other organizations the opportunity to help others in their time of need. By working with Emergency Management, interested groups can receive guidance on preparedness, disaster training and even become a shelter during a storm or afterward for displaced residents or emergency workers coming in from other areas. Preparation is key to success.

### Billboard Emergency Alert System (B.E.A.S.)



Private businesses and organizations often have large digital signs to advertise or tell people about community events. The B.E.A.S. program invites sign operators to work with Emergency Management to share important information and alerts using their signs. If you own or manage a digital sign along any road in the county, you can be a part of saving lives in Pinellas County. Find out more at [www.pinellascounty.org/beas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/beas).

### Adopt-A-Shelter



The Adopt-A-Shelter Program is an opportunity for non-profit, faith-based or private organizations to offer shelter to those in need.

During dangerous weather, you may be able to open your facility as a shelter to your employees, congregations or the public. Or maybe your group would like to be trained and help at a public shelter. After the storm, there will be displaced residents and out-of-state rescue workers who need a place to stay. To talk about how you can help, call Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800.

### Faith-based communities



Faith-based congregations are in a unique position to help with disaster assistance. They have great resources, facilities and talented, committed and skillful members. Most importantly, we trust our faith leaders to give us good information and advice that we can count on. Faith communities can help in many ways: hosting a speaker to educate members about personal preparedness; starting a host home program to help members find shelter; or offering your facility as a shelter to your members or the public, during or after a disaster. You can help with childcare, getting neighborhoods cleaned up and distributing information. To find out how you can get involved, call Emergency Management at (727) 464-3800.

## What should I do when I return home?



- Avoid downed lines; there is no way to tell if they are electrical and if they are still live. Be sure to report downed lines to the power company.
- Avoid flooded areas and standing water.
  - Water may be contaminated or electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
  - Flood waters can contain raw sewage, bacteria, viruses and other germs that can cause disease.
- Use caution in areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Do not enter a home that has major damage to the roof and/or walls. There is no way to know if it is safe.
- Watch for critters such as snakes, raccoons, opossums and insects that may have moved into your evacuated home, since they too look for shelter and relief from flood waters.
- Keep kids and pets with you. There could be dangerous conditions in the neighborhood, such as downed power lines, fallen trees and debris.
- Photograph and list all damaged or lost items including their age and value where possible. Take photos of water in the house. Adjusters need evidence of the damage to prepare your estimate.
- Contact your insurance agent before starting work.
- Remove wet contents immediately to prevent mold. Wet carpeting, furniture, bedding and other items holding moisture can develop mold within 24 to 48 hours. Clean and disinfect everything that got wet. Mud left from floodwater can contain sewage

and chemicals. For information on cleaning up after a flood, go to [www.floodsafety.com/national/property/cleanup](http://www.floodsafety.com/national/property/cleanup)

- Get required permits before you start any home repair, improvement or construction.
- Hire a licensed contractor. Do not sign an Assignment of Benefits contract as a condition of having your home repaired.
- File your flood insurance claim as soon as possible.
- Service damaged septic tanks, cesspools, pits and leaching systems as soon as possible. Damaged sewage systems are serious health hazards.
- Take extra care to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in standing water and to protect yourself from bites. Use the 3 Ds: Drain water when possible; Dress in light colors and cover all parts of the body; and Defend with DEET, Picaridin or Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus repellents.

# What else should I prepare for?

Preparedness for any hazard, whether natural or manmade, is all about understanding the threats, planning ahead, and being ready to put that plan into action. Many other hazards provide little or no warning or preparation time. If anyone is hurt or if you need immediate help, call 9-1-1.

For more detailed information on these hazards and others visit [www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/other\\_hazards.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/other_hazards.htm)

## Some things you should always have:

- A safe room inside your home, workplace, school and other locations where you spend time.
- At least two ways to get emergency notifications. Sign up with Alert Pinellas at [www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas) and know where to get reliable news.
- An emergency plan for home, business, school and other locations you frequent.
- A Go Kit in case of evacuation.
- A Stay Kit in case you have to shelter in place. This should include plastic sheeting and duct tape.
- A safe meeting place in the neighborhood that your whole family knows.
- Emergency contacts (*mobile and printed*).
- Awareness of your surroundings. Even while doing outdoor activities, take note of locations that might be good for a safe shelter if needed.
- Good communications about emergency plans.
- A two-week supply of food and water at home in case you need to shelter in place.
- Nonprescription drugs such as pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, fluids with electrolytes and vitamins.



## Thunderstorms and lightning

### When Thunder Roars Go Indoors

Florida has over a million lightning strikes per year. Pinellas County has regular storms—especially in the summer—that come up fast can lead to grave danger for those not paying attention. To avoid getting hurt by lightning:

- Check the weather before you go and keep an eye on the sky.
- If you see dark clouds approaching and hear thunder, find a safe place to take cover, like restrooms in a park, a shelter on the beach or even a business near to you.
- Get off of any elevated structures.
- Do not lie flat on the ground.
- Do not stand under a tree.
- Get as far away from water as possible.
- Stay away from anything that conducts electricity.



## Tornadoes

### Duck and Cover

When you get a tornado warning on your emergency weather radio or from Alert Pinellas you will not have much time: about 12 minutes.

- Find your safe room now and make sure everyone in your home knows it. Look for an internal room with no windows as low in the building as possible. Many use a bathroom or a closet. The safe room can also be used when a shelter in place order is given.
- If you are in a car, park safely, get out and seek shelter. Cars are easily overturned. Do not try to outrun a tornado.
- If you are in a mobile home, you must get to a safer place. Identify a safe place now, perhaps the community restrooms, laundry room or community center.
- If you find yourself out in the open, lie down in a ditch or culvert, or if all else fails, lie flat on the ground.



## House fire

### Get Out, Stay Out, Call for Help

If a fire starts in your home, you may have as little as two minutes to escape.

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, inside bedrooms and outside sleeping areas.
- Test smoke alarms every month and change the batteries twice a year.
- Talk to your family about a fire escape plan and practice it. Have two ways to escape.
- Keep items at least 3 feet away from anything that gets hot.
- Do not smoke in the home.
- Turn heaters off when you leave the room.
- Keep matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Never leave a burning candle unattended.
- If a fire occurs, get out quickly and call for help. Never go back in for anything or anyone.



## Wildfires

In Pinellas County, wildfires can occur in open spaces, parks, preserves and even in your backyard. Drought and freezes raise the chances of fire. Wildfires can be caused by lightning but usually they are started by humans—either by accident or intentionally.

- Maintain the outside of your home and keep it free of anything that will easily burn, such as firewood. Prune vegetation and clean gutters regularly.
- If you see a wildfire, call 9-1-1. Do not assume someone else has reported it.
- If you think you may have to evacuate, get your Go Kit, seal doors, cover vents, close gas valves and turn off pilot lights.
- If ordered to evacuate, do it immediately.
- Do not return home until officials say it is safe.



## Suspicious behavior

### If You See Something; Say Something

While we may not be able to predict an act of terrorism or shooting, we can be alert to suspicious behavior and let officials know when we observe something we think could be a threat. If you see something that you think is suspicious, contact your local law enforcement agency.



## Active shooter

### If an active shooter is in your vicinity:

- 1) Run—If there is an accessible escape path, attempt to evacuate the area.
- 2) Hide—If evacuation is not possible, find a place where the active shooter is less likely to find you.
- 3) Fight—As a last resort, and only when your life is in imminent danger, attempt to disrupt and/or incapacitate the active shooter.

For additional resources visit:  
[www.ready.gov/active-shooter](http://www.ready.gov/active-shooter)



## Pandemic disease

It is a small world and infectious diseases can spread quickly by human contact, animals, insects or food. You can help prevent the spread of infectious disease:

- Get routine and travel-related child and adult vaccines.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water or alcohol-based sanitizer.
- Avoid close contact with sick people.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose or mouth – that is how germs spread.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Stay home if you feel ill.
- Use a face mask if advised to.
- For additional information visit:  
[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) or [www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com).

## What if we're told to shelter in place?

Shelter in place means to stay in the building you currently occupy and protect yourself there. Make sure you are receiving your emergency notifications and tune in to local broadcasts for official instructions.

There are many reasons you might be told to shelter in place. It could be that there was a chemical spill in the area or that a violent act is suspected. It may only be a matter of hours, not days, that you will be asked to stay sheltered.

If you are notified of an emergency and do not know what to do, play it safe and shelter in place. After a hurricane, shelter in place. Officials will let you know when it is safe.

### What to do if you are home or at work

- Get everyone into the safe room (interior room with the least number of windows possible).

#### If instructed to do so:

- Seal all windows and doors with plastic and duct tape.
- Turn off air conditioning and other ventilation systems.
- Remain indoors until officials say it is safe.
- Stay updated and be sure you are signed up through Alert Pinellas  
[www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas)

### What not to do:

- Leave home, work or the building you currently occupy—for any reason, even to get your kids from school. Schools have emergency plans and will keep your children safe until the danger passes. You may put them and yourself in great danger if you attempt to get them.

### What if I am driving?

- Safely park your car as soon as possible and go inside the nearest public building.
- If there are no buildings in the area, park safely (preferably in shade), close your windows, and if instructed to do so, shut off your air conditioning/heat/fan and seal the vents if possible. Use only recirculated air. Listen for emergency notifications on your mobile device and listen to the radio for updates.



# IMPORTANT CONTACTS

## Emergency preparedness:

**Alert Pinellas Emergency Notification Service**  
[www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas](http://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas)

### Find Your Evacuation Level

(727) 453-3150 (*use home phone*)  
[www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone](http://www.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone)

**Pinellas County Citizen Information Center** (*open only during emergencies*)  
(727) 464-4333

**Pinellas County Emergency Management**  
(727) 464-3800  
[www.pinellascounty.org/emergency](http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency)

### Municipalities

[www.pinellascounty.org/municipalities.htm](http://www.pinellascounty.org/municipalities.htm)

## Other county numbers

**Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County**  
(727) 824-6900  
[www.pinellashealth.com](http://www.pinellashealth.com)

**Pinellas County Animal Services**  
(727) 582-2600  
[www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices](http://www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices)

**Pinellas County Consumer Protection**  
(727) 464-6200  
[www.pinellascounty.org/consumer](http://www.pinellascounty.org/consumer)

**Pinellas County Economic Development**  
(727) 464-7332  
[www.pced.org](http://www.pced.org)

**Pinellas County Information Line**  
(727) 464-3000 / V/TDD (727) 464-4062  
[www.pinellascounty.org](http://www.pinellascounty.org)

**Pinellas County Schools**  
(727) 588-6000  
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 Solid Waste**  
(727) 464-7500  
[www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste](http://www.pinellascounty.org/solidwaste)

**Pinellas County Utilities**  
(727) 464-4000  
[www.pinellascounty.org/utilities](http://www.pinellascounty.org/utilities)

**Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA)**  
(727) 540-1900  
[www.psta.net](http://www.psta.net)

**St. Pete-Clearwater International Airport**  
(727) 453-7800  
[www.fly2pie.com](http://www.fly2pie.com)

**Visit St. Petersburg/Clearwater**  
(*Hotel/motel evacuation info inside county*)  
[www.visitstpeteclearwater.com](http://www.visitstpeteclearwater.com)

## State of Florida

**Florida Attorney General's Office** (*price gouging*)  
(866) 966-7226  
[www.myfloridalegal.com](http://www.myfloridalegal.com)

**Florida Division of Emergency Management**  
(*non-emergency*)  
(850) 413-9969  
[www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)

**Florida Highway Patrol**  
\*FHP (*mobile phone*) / (727) 570-5010  
[www.flhsmv.gov/fhp](http://www.flhsmv.gov/fhp)

## Federal agencies

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**  
(800) 621-3362  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

**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)

**NOAA Weather Alert Radio**  
Specific Area Message Encoding (*SAME*) code for Pinellas County: 012103

## Utility companies

**Clearwater Gas**  
(727) 562-4900 (*general*)  
(727) 462-6633 (*gas leaks*)  
[www.clearwatergas.com](http://www.clearwatergas.com)

**Duke Energy** (*report outages*)  
(800) 228-8485  
[www.duke-energy.com](http://www.duke-energy.com)

**Frontier**  
(800) 921-8101  
[www.frontier.com](http://www.frontier.com)

**Spectrum**  
(855) 222-0102  
[www.spectrum.com/services/florida/pinellas-county](http://www.spectrum.com/services/florida/pinellas-county)

**TECO Peoples Gas**  
(877) 832-6747 (*gas leaks*)  
[www.peoplesgas.com](http://www.peoplesgas.com)

**TECO** (*report outages*)  
(877) 588-1010  
[www.tampaelectric.com](http://www.tampaelectric.com)

**WOW!**  
(866) 745-3685  
[www.wowway.com](http://www.wowway.com)

## Other agencies

**2-1-1 Referral Line—Tampa Bay Cares**  
[www.211tampabay.org](http://www.211tampabay.org)

**American Red Cross**  
(727) 898-3111  
[www.redcross.org/fl/tampa-bay](http://www.redcross.org/fl/tampa-bay)

**Federal Alliance For Safe Homes (FLASH)**  
(877) 221-7233  
[www.flash.org](http://www.flash.org)

**Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS)**  
(813) 286-3400  
[www.disastersafety.org](http://www.disastersafety.org)

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