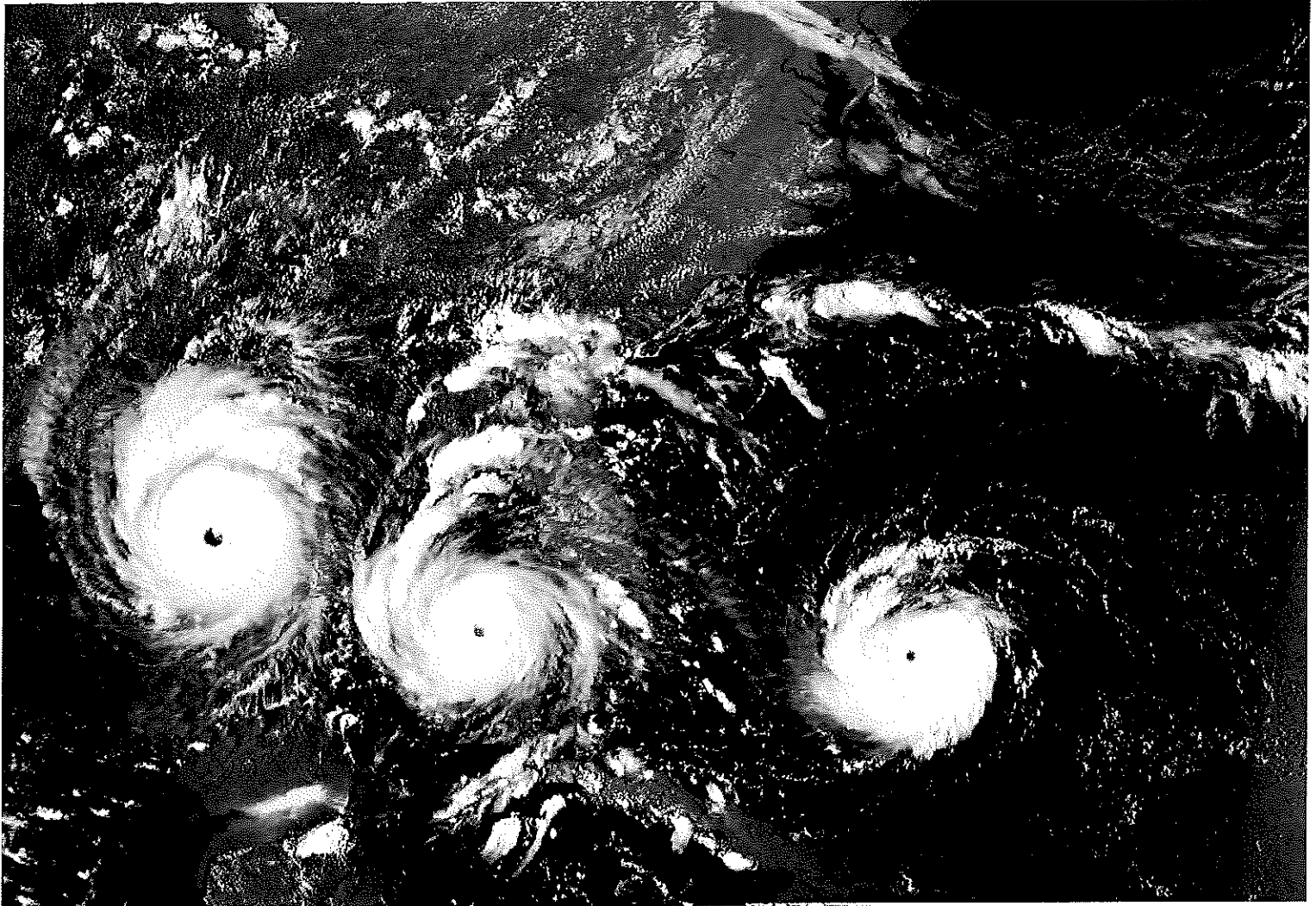


Sweetwater Community, Inc.

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SWEETWATER COMMUNITY, INC. RESIDENTS GUIDE



Picture is of Hurricanes (2004)

TO HURRICANE PREPARATION AND SURVIVAL

HOW TO PREPARE FOR A HURRICANE

TIPS AND HINTS FOR SWEETWATER COMMUNITY, INC.

Well in Advance of a Storm:

- Document the condition and contents of your home. One suggestion is to take a series of photos and/or a videotape, and store a copy of the photos in a safe place away from your home such as a safe deposit box.
- Stock enough nonperishable food to last for at least 3-5 days. Select food that does not require addition of fresh meat or extensive preparation, has a reasonable shelf life, does not require refrigeration, and is something you find appealing to eat. Good options include:
- Tuna canned chicken, canned ham, hash, canned sausages, Spam, canned vegetables, canned pork and beans.
- Soups that contain meat and vegetables
- Peanut butter
- Noodles, packaged rice mixes, macaroni and cheese
- Fruit cups, canned fruit
- Bottled water, Gatorade, soft drinks, juice drinks in pouches or boxes
- Spaghetti sauce (with meat)
- Cold cereal
- Canned milk, powdered dry milk, or boxes or "shelf mild" (unrefrigerated)
- Canned spaghetti, ravioli or similar pasta meals
- Crackers, energy bars, granola bars, peanut butter/cheese sandwich crackers
- Foods you need for a special diet (diabetic, etc)
- Drinking Water

NOTES Regarding Food and Food Preparation:

- Power is often lost for hours to days after a hurricane
- Grocery stores may not be open for days after a hurricane.
- Grocery stores will probably only accept cash during an emergency situation
- Grocery stores may not have fresh meat or dairy products available for several days
- You can cook a lot of different things on a BBQ grill; make sure you know how to start your grill and have plenty of fuel for it. Never use a grill indoors or in an enclosed space such as a garage or shed.
- Be sure you have an old-fashioned (non-electric) can opener on hand
- You will need ice to keep perishable foods in a cooler or refrigerator. If you have time to plan ahead, bag ice from your own refrigerator icemaker and put the bagged ice in your freezer for a jump-start on food preservation.

PREPARE A HURRICANE 72 HOUR SURVIVAL "KIT" You should plan to be self-sufficient for at least 72 hours (3 days) during and after a disaster. You should anticipate no water, electrical power, or utilities for that period of time. To ensure the comfort of your family, whether at home or evacuated to another location, it is suggested that the following item, at a minimum, be assembled and readily available:

Essential things to include are:

- Candles (small votives work well, placed inside a glass bowl or baking dish for safety)
- Matches
- Flashlights with extra batteries
- Extra batteries of all sizes (AAA, AA, C, D)
- Bleach (without additives)
- Battery powered radio with extra batteries (headphones or earphone)
- Bug repellent, bug bite treatment
- Umbrellas and other rain gear
- Change of cloths
- Local and personal telephone books
- Copies of insurance policy numbers (home, auto, health) and other important personal papers
- A list of your prescriptions (include dosages, prescription numbers, and the name and phone number of the ordering physician)
- Prescription medications
- Maps and hotel/travel guides for Florida and nearby states
- Hurricane guides from the local area
- List of local radio stations
- Waterless hand sanitizer, "wet wipes" or Hand Sanitizer
- Notepads and pens
- First Aid kit, anti-diarrhea tablets, Pepto-Bismol, aspirin/tylenol
- Pocket Knife or utility tool, scissors
- Small bars of soaps (the little bars from hotel rooms work well)
- Eyeglasses, reading glasses, hearing aids, mobility aids
- Blanket, pillows, sheets, sleeping bags or lawn chairs
- Drinking Water

Notes Regarding Your Hurricane Kit:

- Shop for supplies prior to hurricane season or soon after notice of a potential hurricane is given. If you wait until the night before an expected hurricane landfall, you are not likely to find batteries, water, ice, or much of a variety in nonperishable foods. Wal-Mart will be mobbed and probably out of most essential supplies. (Tip: Home Depot stocks very large quantities of batteries and water.)
- Put the items listed above in a large basket or box that can easily be picked up and taken with you if necessary
- As items are used, return them to the basket to make them easy to find.

Handy Supplies to Keep on Hand During Hurricane Season:

- Paper plates and bowls, disposable cups, disposable silverware
- Paper products (paper towels, toilet paper, feminine hygiene or special medical supplies)
- Special "extras" to consider adding to your hurricane kit and supplies:
 - Disposable cameras
 - Coleman/camp lantern with extra fuel
 - Manual (non-portable) telephone (these old style phones will work, even if the power is out, if phone service is available' portable phones must have power to operate)
 - Playing cards, board games
 - Gas BBQ grill, extra propane, BBQ lighter/starter
 - Camp stove and fuel
 - Large plastic tarps
 - Cigarette lighter adapter to power cell phone
 - Generator

SEVERAL DAYS BEFORE AN EXPECTED HURRICANE:

- Stock up on cash. During the emergency period immediately after a hurricane, banks will not be open, ATM's might not work (no power!), and most sales at gas stations and grocery stores will be cash only (again, due to no power!)
- Fill your vehicle(s) with gas. Most gas stations need electricity to pump gas. Consequently, it will be difficult to find an open gas station during the emergency period. When gas stations begin to open, there are often very long lines at the pumps, and sales are "cash only" basis.
- Get at least a week's supply of your prescriptions
- Charge electronics such as laptops and cell phones
- Freeze tap water in bottles (empty plastic milk bottles work great!): frozen bottles act like ice blocks to help reserve perishable foods and, when they melt, provide a source of safe drinking water.
- Make a drive-by to your local shelters, so you will know exactly where they are if you need to go there in a hurry.
- Consider making a "back-up" hotel reservation in case of mandatory evacuation.
- Plan for care of pets:
 - Identify a place to board them, friends to leave them with, or a pet-friendly shelter. Some local motels that do not normally accept pets will do so in a hurricane emergency, usually for an extra fee.

- Put a collar with identification tags on your pet, and a phone number where you can be reached. (Including a special tag with your cell phone number is a great ideal)
- If your pet has been micro-chipped, put a copy of the number in your hurricane basket.
- Add photos of your pet to your hurricane basket, in case your pet is lost following the storm.

THE DAY BEFORE AN EXPECTED HURRICANE LANDFALL:

- Turn setting on freezers and refrigerators to maximum cold
- Put away all loose and hanging items outdoors, including patio furniture, signs, hanging pots and planters, BBQ grills, garden decorations, wind chimes, etc. Clean up the same things in your neighbor's yards if they are out of town or "up north". (Loose objects can easily become projectiles in hurricane force winds and damage your home, the homes of others, autos, golf carts, and people)
- Pack an overnight bag
- Charge your golf cart

THE DAY OF THE EXPECTED HURRICANE LANDFALL:

- Back up your computer hard drive; shut down/disconnect the major components of the computer such as the hard drive and monitor; and move the components to safe and dry place. Cover the hard drive and monitor in plastic bags
- Move breakables away from windows
- Put precious items such as family photos into your clothes dryer, or wrap them in plastic and place them in dresser drawers
- Pack essential possessions and keepsakes in the trunk of your car
- Close all window blinds/vertical blinds to help reduce glass breakage. (Most preparation publications now say not to bother taping widows, as it is basically a waste of time)
- Call or email family members and tell them what your plans are in case of evacuation and/or loss of power and phone following the hurricane, tell them where you plan to go to seek shelter during the storm, especially in case of a mandatory evacuation. Give them the number of the Polk County Sheriff Office and the Emergency Operations Center

HOW WILL YOU BE NOTIFIED IF THERE IS A MANDATORY EVACUATION?

- Don't plan on Sweetwater Community, Inc. Board of Directors/ Office contacting you about dangerous weather or the need to evacuate. There probably will not be staff in the office on the day a hurricane is expected to make landfall nearby. You need to keep yourself informed!

- Ideally, a Sheriff's Department patrol car will drive through Sweetwater with sirens blaring if a mandatory evacuation is ordered. But, don't rely on this notification system - it may not come until very late into the emergency, and the sirens/lights may not be obvious.
- Keep the phone number to the POLK COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC) INFORMATION LINE handy and use it to obtain accurate and timely information. The number is:

863-534-0321

The Polk County Citizens Information Line is there to be used-don't hesitate to call them to obtain information about evacuation status, location and status of shelters, contact phone numbers for local utility companies, and potential availability of hotel room in the county.

- If an evacuation is ordered, don't try to be a "hero"! Go to a shelter or other safe place immediately. Most manufactured homes, even brand new ones, are not built to withstand hurricane force winds above category 3. Many carports, patios and porches will not stand up to winds over category 2.
- Help relay evacuation information to your neighbors. If you notice neighbors are still at home and don't seem to be making plans to leave, check to ensure they know about the evacuation order.

WHERE ARE THE HAINES CITY SHELTERS?

Shelters are opened as needed, depending on the type and extent of emergency. Call the POLK COUNTY CITIZENS INFORMATION LINE 1-866-661-0228 to find out which shelters are open when you are ready to leave.

WHAT IS STAYING IN A SHELTER LIKE?

- Shelters are not anything like a comfortable hotel, but they are selected due to their structural soundness. You'll be sitting in chairs or classroom desks (unless you bring your own lawn chairs along), in a big room with lots of other people. (Very likely, though, some may be your Sweetwater Community neighbors- so they won't all be new faces!)

- Shelters will have bathroom facilities available, and most have back-up generator power. While power is available you might also have access to news reports on radio and/or TV.
- It is very important that you take all the things you will need to the shelter as most do not provide meals or bedding. Take a few essentials into the shelter with you (bottled water, snacks, cell phone and contact phone numbers, prescription medications, pillows, blankets, flashlights)
- Head for a shelter early if the weather is getting bad- shelters have occupancy limits and you may be turned away at the last minute if they are full and have already secured their doors. Be sure you know where a second shelter is located, as a backup. (Call the EOC to find out what shelters are presently open, and when others will be opened.)
- You will not be allowed to leave the shelter, once the door has been secured, until public safety officials determine that the storm has passed and it is now safe to go outdoors.
- Polk County does have "special needs" shelters for people with serious medical issues.

A GOOD HURRICANE TRACKING WEBSITE (NATIONAL HURRICANE CENTER):

For a source of accurate information on the potential path of a current hurricane go to this web site, scroll down to the name of the hurricane or storm, and click on maps and charts:

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS:

- If you lose power, listen to the local radio stations. In Polk County,
- TV Channel 8 (WFLA) out of Tampa simulcasts their TV Broadcast on radio during an emergency. If your power is out, but you have access to a battery-powered radio, you can keep updated on what is happening on the TV broadcasts by listening to any of these stations for the simulcast:

FM RADIO STATIONS

94.9
97.5
98.3
101.5

AM RADIO STATIONS

1230
1430

EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR POLK COUNTY:

Emergency: 911
 United Way information referral services 648-1515
 Citizens Information Line 534-0321(local emergencies)
 Polk County American Red Cross: 294-5941

Polk County Emergency Management:	534-5600
Sheriff's Department:	1-800-226-0344
Health Department:	421-3204
Heart of Florida Hospital:	419-2272
Polk County Animal Services	499-2600
Polk County Communications Center	534-0360

WHERE TO OBTAIN INFORMATION ABOUT ANY FLORIDA COUNTY:

If you are outside the state of Florida and need information about how a hurricane is impacting a Florida location, you can call this number to obtain the local Emergency Operations Center phone number for any Florida county: **FLORIDA INFORMATION HOTLINE**
1-800-342-3557

WHERE CAN I FIND SUPPLIES AFTER THE HURRICANE?

Most emergency supplies (including free ice, bottled water, and food) will be distributed at different locations you should listen to the local station to find out this information.

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS REFRESHER

We're in the hurricane season. Yes, hurricane season is an exciting time to be in Florida. If you're new to the area, you're probably wondering what you need to do to prepare for the possibility that "the big one" will hit us. You all should be aware of hurricane preparation, but in case you need a refresher course:

- Make sure to take in anything that can fly away outside.
- Listen to the radio and keep in contact with the local people as to when and where the shelters are if you need to evacuate.
- When they say to evacuate, do it as soon as you can. Don't wait until the last minute.
- Make sure the car is filled with gas.
- Make sure you have everything you need if you do have to go to a shelter (blankets, water, snacks, food, good books, cards, flashlight, medication,)
- Let your loved ones know where you're going to be.
- Make arrangements for pets