



Public Information Statement
National Weather Service Melbourne FL
800 AM EST Thu Feb 6 2025

...Thursday February 6 is Hurricane and Flooding Awareness Day...

The 2024 Atlantic Hurricane Season witnessed an unusually high number of landfalling storms in the United States, including three in Florida, resulting in one of the costliest and deadliest seasons on record. Hurricane Milton led to an unprecedented tornado outbreak across central and south Florida, with a total of 42 tornadoes in a 12-hour period that resulted in 6 fatalities, all of which occurred in mobile and manufactured homes. Elsewhere, significant wind and flooding damage occurred, particularly along and to the north of the Interstate 4 corridor.

Historically, about 90 percent of all hurricane related deaths occur due to drowning from storm surge or fresh water flooding. Significant freshwater flooding can last for several days, weeks, or even months near the St. Johns River, with the flat terrain and large basin leading to long duration flood events. In 2022, flooding along the Saint Johns River from Hurricane Ian's historic rainfall lasted well into December. Other hazards from storms, even those that pass well offshore, include significant erosion and loss of shoreline property from high surf, coastal flooding, damaging winds, and tornadoes.

Be extremely cautious after a storm has passed as many persons who have survived the initial passage of a tropical storm or hurricane have died during the aftermath and recovery phases! Recent post-storm fatalities that have occurred were the result of attempts to clear debris left behind from a storm, electrocution from downed wires, and carbon monoxide poisoning from the use of portable generators. Electrocution from downed wires, severe injuries during debris removal, impassable roads due to flooding, and motor vehicle accidents often contribute to additional deaths in the wake of a storm. If using a generator, make sure to run it in an open, outdoor location, and never in an enclosed area. If you encounter water covering a roadway, do not assume that you can drive through it! Remember to turn around, don't drown!

Preparation is a community effort that can help to reduce overall risk. It is extremely important to develop a seasonal hurricane plan and have it in place before a storm threatens. Identify potential vulnerabilities ahead of time, including whether you are in a hurricane evacuation or federal flood zone, or whether you live in an area that frequently floods from heavy rains. Extra consideration should be given to vulnerable populations, such as the elderly or those who live in mobile or manufactured housing.



Make sure you prepare or replenish your hurricane kit before the season begins. Don't get caught in the rush of people scrambling to get supplies a few days or hours before a storm approaches east central Florida! Have your kit stocked with supplies such as bottled water, canned foods, important documents, all medications the family takes, and fresh batteries. Include food, water and any necessary medications for your pets as well. When a storm threatens, purchase gas and take out extra cash, since neither may be available for several days after the storm. Plan to buy enough provisions to last a minimum of three to five days for each member of your household, including pets.