



News Release

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Florida Municipal Electric Association Issues “One Dozen Hurricane Season Tips”

(Tallahassee) Because hurricanes can devastate any community taking these deadly storms lightly, the Florida Municipal Electric Association (FMEA) offers “One Dozen Hurricane Season Tips,” outlining important yet often overlooked safety tips Floridians can follow before, during and after a hurricane strikes.

FMEA and the 34 municipal electric utilities it represents used insight gained during past hurricane seasons to develop the helpful tips. In past hurricane emergencies, FMEA and its members mobilized to restore power quickly and safely to customers around the state.

“While we hope for another mild hurricane season, we always need to be prepared for the possibility of several storms,” said Barry Moline, executive director of FMEA. “FMEA and its members are ready to act in the event of an emergency and we urge all Floridians to do the same.”

One Dozen Hurricane Season Tips

1. Following a power outage, unplug all your large appliances and electronics to prevent power surges when electricity is restored, which can often damage equipment and create fire hazards.
2. Remember the “three don’ts” when using generators: DON’T run a generator in the house; DON’T run a generator in the garage; and, DON’T plug the generator directly into your home’s main electrical system. The first two can lead to asphyxiation and the third can send an electrical charge back into the power grid, posing an electrocution hazard to utility workers. DO run the generator outside in a well-ventilated area and DO plug individual appliances directly into the generator.
3. If your home is flooded, turn off your electrical power until a professional inspects it thoroughly.
4. If you smell gas evacuate immediately and contact your gas company’s emergency phone number.

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5. Make sure you have current identification. You might have to pass through identification check points before being allowed access to your home or neighborhood.
6. After the storm, check to see if your home's weatherhead is damaged – it is located above the electric meter where the wires come out of the pipe. **Utility workers cannot reconnect service if this piece of equipment – which is the homeowner's responsibility – is damaged.** If your weatherhead needs repair, please contact a licensed electrician.
7. Utilities often cannot respond to individual customers with special needs during or immediately after a storm. When warned of an incoming storm, have a plan in place for evacuating people with special needs. Know the location of special needs shelters in case you are unable to evacuate. If you or someone in your family has special electrical medical equipment needs, notify your electric utility prior to a storm's arrival.
8. Visit www.FloridaDisaster.org to determine your hurricane evacuation route.
9. Capture water in your water heater by turning off power to the unit and closing the water valves. If you lose water pressure, you will have about 40 gallons of fresh water stored in the tank. Store additional water in your bathtub and fill the washing machine with water. This water supply can be used for cleaning or to operate your toilets.
10. Clear your patio and yard of lawn furniture, toys, potted plants, and other debris that can blow around in high winds, causing damage or injury. Bring these items indoors or place them in a garage.
11. Prior to the storm, identify the places around your home where you can shut off your gas, water and electricity. In an emergency, you might need to turn them off quickly.
12. Create a hurricane survival kit that includes: first aid supplies; water (at least one gallon/person/day); batteries; flashlights; battery powered radio; manual can opener; prescriptions; baby food and diapers; pet food; canned foods; cash; tarps; rope; bleach; trash bags; charcoal or gas grill with plenty of fuel; wooden kitchen matches; and a portable cooler. Don't forget a hardwire, corded phone; cordless phones will not work during a power outage.

About FMEA: The Florida Municipal Electric Association (FMEA) represents the unified interests of 34 public power communities across the state, providing electricity to more than three million Florida residential and business consumers.

