



During the North Atlantic Hurricane Season from June 1 to Nov. 30, powerful tropical storms can form in the ocean with only a few days warning before bringing catastrophic winds and storm surge to coastal communities. These storms cause the most widespread destruction of all natural disasters in Florida.

STORM SURGE

The **greatest killer** of people during hurricanes is storm surge. This is the primary reason evacuations are ordered prior to hurricanes. To stay safe, residents must run from the water and hide from the wind. You may not have to go far to escape evacuation zones – think 10 miles, not 100.



JUST TWO FEET OF WATER can float a large vehicle. Hurricanes push a dome of water ashore called storm surge that rushes in and sweeps anything that’s not attached to the ground out to sea – including people. Pinellas County is extremely vulnerable to storm surge due to its coastal and low-lying geography. A cubic yard of water weighs nearly 1,800 pounds – almost a ton – so the rushing storm surge water can easily cause catastrophic damage quickly.

If you live in a zone that’s ordered to evacuate before a hurricane, get out. Do not plan to escape to higher floors or wait until the last minute. Leave for higher ground immediately and survive.

Storm Surge Protector App

Want to see how high that wall of water would get at your home during a major hurricane? Plug in your address and see a 3-D depiction of your home or business. Find the app here: egis.pinellascounty.org/apps/stormsurgeprotector/



Know your zone

Look on page 6 to learn your evacuation zone and where to go in a storm, or use the online application “Know Your Zone” to obtain this information:

<http://egis.pinellascounty.org/apps/knowyourzone/>

DANGEROUS WIND

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

Category	Sustained Winds	Wind Damage
1	74-95 mph	Very dangerous winds: Damage to roofs, shingles, siding, gutters, snapped tree branches, trees with shallow roots toppled.
2	96-110 mph	Extensive damage: Major damage to roof and siding. Shallow rooted trees toppled causing road blocks.
3 (major)	111-129 mph	Devastating damage: Major damage to roof decking and gable ends. Trees snapped or uprooted, blocking roads.
4 (major)	130-156 mph	Catastrophic damage: Severe damage including loss of roof structure and/or some exterior walls.
5 (major)	157 mph or higher	Catastrophic damage: Many framed homes destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles with widespread outages. Most of the area uninhabitable for weeks or months.

DO I STAY OR DO I GO?

MAKING THE DECISION

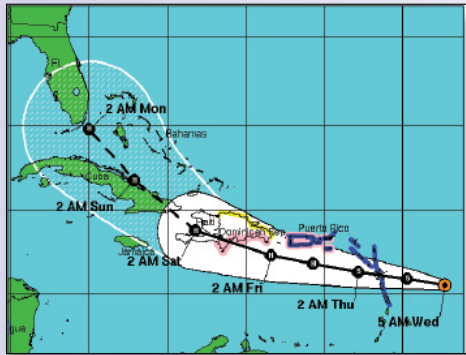
When a hurricane is approaching, will you stay in Pinellas County or drive miles away to an out-of-town location? You can find high ground on the peninsula that won’t be touched by storm surge flooding. Even in a Category 5 storm, sturdy buildings in these areas can provide safe shelter provided they are hardened to withstand high winds. Evacuating to safe shelter locally or in a neighboring county has advantages; you will avoid traffic jams and highways crowded with people from other counties joining the evacuation. Even if you leave the area, the storm could shift and still put you in harm’s way.

The next section will guide you through the steps you should take as a storm is approaching and the choices you’ll have to make during an evacuation.

UNDERSTANDING THE FORECAST

The National Hurricane Center uses a graphic forecast cone to show the probable track of the center of a storm that you see on weather forecasts in local media and on the center’s website: www.nhc.gov

5-DAY CONE ACTIONS

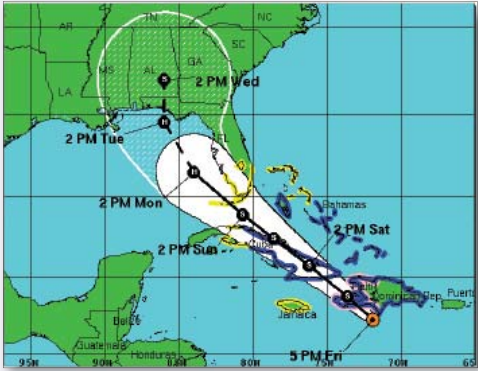


When the Tampa Bay area is in a 5-day cone, it’s time to implement your plan and preparations. A hurricane is on a probable path to reach our area in five days.

- Know your zone. If you live in an evacuation zone, decide where to go and how to get there.

- Review your family disaster plan.
- Get your survival kit and important papers ready.
- Begin work to prepare your home and yard.
- If you have special needs, be sure your caregiver begins to implement your plan and, if needed, you are registered for a special needs shelter.

3-DAY CONE ACTIONS



As a storm moves closer to land, the accuracy of the forecast increases and residents should step up their preparation with the following actions:

- Double check your survival kit and make 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.

HURRICANE WATCH ACTIONS (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.

- Refill medications.
- 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, secure your home so you can leave as soon as an evacuation order is issued.
- If you are registered for transportation to a public shelter, be sure you have everything you need for your “go bag.”

HURRICANE WARNING ACTIONS (36 hours ahead)

- Be prepared for an evacuation order to be issued and know which zone you’re in so you can follow those orders.
- 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.
- If you are registered for transportation to a public shelter, be ready to leave. Rescue workers will begin pick-ups shortly after an evacuation order is issued.

EVACUATION ORDER

- Determine if your residence is affected by the evacuation order - does it include your evacuation zone or do you live in a mobile or manufactured home?
- If you are evacuating locally, get to your shelter location within a few hours of the order.
- If you are traveling out of the local area, leave immediately to avoid traffic jams.
- Be aware of your evacuation time range. Evacuations will be issued with beginning and end times.
- Stay safe during the storm.