



alachua county library district

HURRICANE PREPARATION & RESPONSE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

The most important defense against a hurricane is advance planning and preparation. This manual is designed to provide information and instruction on how to plan and prepare all library facilities for hurricane season. Much of the information will also help you prepare your family and personal property from the storm's effects.

Florida is one of the most vulnerable states in the nation to the devastating damage caused by hurricanes. Hurricanes are tropical storms characterized by heavy rains, tidal flooding and strong winds of more than 74 mph. Storm surges caused by hurricanes can raise tides as much as 10 to 25 feet above normal levels, and this rushes across flat coastal areas with devastating results. In our area we also have to deal with rising water levels in our rivers and streams, sometimes weeks after a hurricane or tropical storm has passed through our area.

Hurricanes are classified according to their intensity, with a Category 1 hurricane being the least serious with winds of 74-95 mph and a Category 5 hurricane having winds greater than 155 mph. Here are the defined hurricane categories.

HURRICANE CATEGORIES

CATEGORY 1

Winds of 74 to 95 mph (120 to 153 km/hr). Possible storm surge 4 to 5 ft (1.2 to 1.5 m) above normal. Damage primarily to shrubbery, tree foliage and unanchored mobile homes. No real damage to other structures. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Low-lying coastal roads inundated, minor pier damage, some small craft in exposed anchorage torn from moorings.

CATEGORY 2

Winds of 96 to 110 mph (154 to 177 km/hr). Storm surge of 6 to 8 ft (1.8 to 2.4 m) above normal. Considerable damage to shrubbery and tree foliage. Some trees blown down. Major damage to exposed mobile homes. Extensive damage to poorly constructed signs. Some damage to roofing materials of buildings. Coastal roads and low-lying escape routes inland cut by rising water two to four hours before arrival of hurricane center. Considerable damage to piers. Marinas flooded. Small craft in unprotected anchorages torn from moorings. Evacuation of some shoreline residences and low-lying islands required.

CATEGORY 3

Winds of 111 to 130 mph (179 to 209 km/hr). Possible storm surge 9 to 12 ft (2.7 to 3.6 m) above normal. Limbs torn from trees and large trees blown down. Practically all poorly constructed signs blown down. Damage to roofing materials of buildings, some window and door damage. Mobile homes destroyed. Serious flooding at coast and

many smaller structures near coast destroyed. Larger structures near coast damaged by battering waves and floating debris. Low-lying escape routes inland cut by rising water three to five hours before hurricane center arrives. Flat terrain 5 ft (1.5 m) or less above sea level flooded inland 8 miles (13 km) or more. Evacuation of low-lying residences within several blocks of shoreline possibly required.

CATEGORY 4

Winds of 131 to 155 mph (211 to 249 km/hr). Storm surge 13 to 18 ft (4 to 5.5 m) above normal. Flat terrain 10 ft (3 m) or less above sea level flooded inland as far as 6 miles (9.6 km). Shrubs and trees blown down, all signs down. Extensive damage to inadequately installed roofing materials, windows and doors. Complete failure of roofs on many small residences. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Major damage to lower floors of structures near shore and rivers due to flooding and battering of waves and floating devices. Low-lying escape routes inland cut by rising water three to five hours before hurricane center arrives. Major erosion of beaches. Massive evacuation of all residences within 500 yards of shore possibly required, and of single-story residences on low ground within 2 miles (3.2 km) of shore.

CATEGORY 5

Winds greater than 155 mph (249 km/hr). Storm surge greater than 18 ft (5.5 m) above normal. Shrubs and trees blown down, considerable damage to roofs of buildings; all signs down. Very severe and extensive damage to windows and doors. Complete failure of roofs of many residences and inadequately designed industrial buildings. Extensive shattering of glass in windows and doors. Some complete building failures. Small buildings overturned or blown away. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Major damage to lower floors of all structures less than 15 ft (4.6 m) above sea level within 500 yards of shore. Low-lying escape routes inland cut by rising water three to five hours before hurricane center arrives. Massive evacuation of residential areas on ground within 5 to 10 miles (8 to 16 km) of shore possibly required.

PRE-HURRICANE SEASON PREPARATION (April and May)

1. Update Staff Address, Emergency Contact and Telephone Lists

During March branch or departmental safety meetings, the Department or Branch Manager, or designee, should either create or update a list of employees' current telephone numbers; addresses; and an emergency contact name, address and telephone number where the employee will go if he or she evacuates their home. Administration supplies all Managers with updated staff rosters monthly. If needed, establish a "telephone tree" for the location. The first person on the list will be the Manager. The "telephone tree" should also contain contingencies in case the callers are not available. Also, a method could be created to contact staff to verify their safety after the storm.

2. Review Emergency Procedures and Update a Facility Map

During April branch or departmental safety meetings, staff should review the Emergency Procedures Manual. Staff should review the diagrams that give the location of all fire alarm monitors, pull stations, and the fire panel. Facilities staff will review with Branch Managers the location of electrical power shut down and turn on; all electrical panels in the building will be pointed out. Facilities staff will also point out to the Manager the location of the water main, and sprinkler system main if applicable. Note: do not turn off the sprinkler system without authorization of the Facilities/Safety Services Administrator, the Facility Maintenance Manager, or the Sr. Building Mechanic.

3. Facilities Department Electrical, Plumbing and HVAC Review

The **Facilities Department** will be responsible for the electrical shut down, if required, of all Library buildings. The Facilities/Safety Services Administrator, the Facility Maintenance Manager or Sr. Building Mechanic must approve **any** shut down or **service restoration** of **any** building systems. All Facilities staff should make themselves familiar with the locations and functions of all electrical panels, HVAC controls, water meters, and sprinkler controls in each Library building. Below is the procedure for shut down of Electrical, Plumbing and HVAC systems:

A. Electrical & HVAC Shut Down

1. Turn off all air conditioning systems from the thermostats.
2. Go to each panel and turn off each circuit breaker, one by one.
3. Turn off the panel's main breaker.
4. Repeat steps 2 and 3 for every electrical panel.
5. Turn off main breaker for the building.

B. Electrical & HVAC Turn On

1. Check buildings for damage prior to energizing electrical panel.
2. Check to see if water main is on. Check for any water leaks on or near electrical service prior to energizing the electrical panel.
3. Report all findings to Facilities/Safety Services Administrator, the Facilities Maintenance Manager or Sr. Building Mechanic prior to energizing the panel.

4. If the Facilities/Safety Services Administrator, the Facility Maintenance Manager or Sr. Building Mechanic permits Building Mechanics to turn on electrical service, reverse the steps identified in the electrical shut down procedure.

C. Plumbing Shut Down

1. Turn off all plumbing fixtures, sinks, toilets etc.
2. Check all outside water faucets make sure they are off.
3. Locate main building valve and sprinkler valves near the water meter(s).
4. Turn off water valve, test one outside faucet to make sure water is off.
5. Turn off the landscape sprinkler valve at meter.

4. Securing Designated Equipment

The Department or Branch Manager should identify equipment to be relocated or secured in order to protect it. This includes computers, televisions, videotape players/recorders, CD players, etc. Serial and model numbers for all equipment should be recorded and kept in a waterproof package. A list of each building's equipment will be provided by Administration. An interior room should be designated as the storage area for the equipment. The equipment should be wrapped in a plastic bag if possible.

5. Securing Designated Library Materials

The Department or Branch Manager meets with staff to review the library's collection to determine which items are to be included in this plan. It is not possible or practical to attempt to protect every item in the library in the event a hurricane warning has been issued. However every means should be taken to ensure identifiable materials are protected. Identified items should be marked on the map.

Rare, expensive, non-print, and irreplaceable items should be considered for protection. Not all irreplaceable items need to be protected. For example, common out-of-print fiction materials may not be worth the salvage effort. Staff should keep in mind the length of time necessary to protect and relocate items and balance that with the overall value of the item or collection when deciding which materials are to be included in this plan.

Materials may be protected by bagging and/or relocating items. In some cases, it may be prudent to move items away from windows (place the items on tables in an interior location) or take items off the bottom shelves.

Covering all the book stacks with plastic is not viable because the size and quantities of plastic would be difficult to work with, obtain and store. In addition, there are safety concerns when climbing over stacks with plastic rolls. The benefit of covering the collection with plastic also may be negated by the humidity build up and mildew that will occur if the items are left under the plastic for more than a few days without air conditioning.

6. Review Pre- and Post- Hurricane Activities

During the Hurricane Watch, Hurricane Warning and Post-Hurricane periods, staff will have various assignments. The Department or Branch Manager is responsible for identifying assignments and the appropriate staff for each assignment. The library assignments include emergency closing procedures, how to evacuate patrons, securing petty cash and other funds, checking the exterior of the building for items which may become projectiles, bringing in the flag, shutting off utilities, dismissing employees, advising employees of how to know when to return, etc. Department and Branch Managers need to consider personal responsibilities including dependents and pets, preparation of the employee's home before the storm, and whether the employee will evacuate his or her home prior to making staff assignments.

7. Check Supplies and Equipment Needed to Implement Hurricane Plan

A variety of different items may be needed in order to implement the Hurricane Plan for the Library. These include various size plastic bags, sealable bags, markers, flashlights, radio, batteries, local maps with evacuation routes, first aid kit, signs to indicate "Closed Due to Hurricane Warning," or other necessary items. Some of the items may not be needed for implementation of the Hurricane Plan. However, it is important to review the need for other emergency-related items and mark the supply location on the map.

HURRICANE ACTION PLAN

HURRICANE WATCH: 36 TO 72 HOURS NOTICE

Library Administration will notify the Management Team when the Alachua County Emergency Management Department has issued a “Hurricane Watch”. Since notification may come at any time of the day or night or on weekends, it is critical that Managers have a copy the Library’s Hurricane Plan with him/her at all times. Procedures of how to implement the plan, if notice is given, when the library is closed should be part of the plan. Essentially, this notice is a call to review with staff all assignments, procedures and duties that are in the Hurricane Plan. If the plan calls for actual preparations to begin, then those elements should be implemented. If any staff member is unable to fulfill the obligations set forth for them in the plan, alternates must be identified at this time. This may be due to vacations, illnesses, or any other unforeseen condition. If a Manager is unavailable to conduct this review, the plan should indicate the chain of command and level of authority to implement changes. All changes of assignments must be reported to Administration.

HURRICANE WARNING: 24 HOUR NOTICE OF IMMINENT LANDFALL

The Alachua County Emergency Management Director will announce the “Hurricane Warning” in consultation with other governmental agencies. When the directive is issued, Library Administration will notify the Management Team. If a Manager has heard that a “Hurricane Warning” has been issued before receiving notification from Library Administration, the Manager must call Library Administration to confirm that the “Hurricane Warning” has actually been issued. Very often during emergency situations, misinformation and rumors are rampant. It is the responsibility of the Manager to implement the Library’s Hurricane Plan when the “Hurricane Warning” has been confirmed. By this time, all staff will have reviewed and confirmed their assignments with their Manager and contingency plans made as needed. Once all facets of the Hurricane Plan for this phase have been implemented and prior to locking and leaving the facility, the Manager must inform the Facilities/Safety Services Administrator, Facilities Maintenance Manager or Sr. Building Mechanic that the plan has been implemented. Facilities staff will then notify the Library Director and/or Administrative Services Division Director.

Staff/departments (i.e., Outreach and Automated Services) will ensure their assigned vehicles are filled with gas. The Facilities Department will fill pool vehicles with gas and also fill spare gas cans for chain saws and other gas powered equipment.

CLOSING FACILITIES

The Library Director will determine when Alachua County Library District Facilities close and when nonessential personnel should be dismissed.

Procedures for closing the Library after the order has been given – Library is open:

1. **Evacuate the Library** in accordance with the previously outlined procedures, post the Emergency Closing sign, which indicates the reason for closing, the date and the time. Review the duty roster and previously outlined procedures for any additional or forgotten assignments and duties.
2. **If there are unattended children in the building when the order to evacuate and close the building is given**, the Librarian in charge (or designee) will attempt to contact the child's parent, guardian or other responsible adult to pick up the child. This should be done in circumstances when there are children who are obviously confused by the emergency closing or when children approach a staff member for assistance. In most instances, children will have the means to go home on their own. If staff has not been able to contact the parent, guardian or responsible adult by the time staff has evacuated the public from the facility, the Alachua County Sheriff's Office or City of Gainesville Police should be contacted to determine whether a Deputy sheriff or City Police Officer will pick up the child or where staff is to take the child. If the child has not been picked up by the time staff is ready to be dismissed, two staff members (if the situation permits) should deliver the child to the location designated by the Sheriff's Office or City Police Department. In the case where a Deputy Sheriff or City Police Officer has either picked up a child or a child has been delivered by a staff member to a designated location, staff must post the UNATTENDED CHILDRENS FORM (Appendix A) on the front door of the Library.
3. **Secure the building equipment** according to the procedure.
4. **Secure the designated library materials** according to the procedure.
5. **Bring indoors:** recycling bins, receptacles and other loose items that have potential to become projectiles.
6. **Take down the flag** and bring it indoors.
7. **Notify the cleaning service (Facilities Staff), the security service and groups** that may have booked the meeting room of the emergency closing.
8. **The supervisor in-charge** takes the petty cash and other documents with him or her according to the procedures.
9. **Notify Administration** that the Library has been prepared for closing and staff are about to be dismissed.

10. **Facilities Staff will turn off the electricity** (and other utilities if directed to do so by the Facilities/Safety Services Manager, Facility Maintenance Manager, or Sr. Building Mechanic) following the procedures.
11. **The supervisor in-charge reviews Checklist** and then, if all procedures have been followed, staff is dismissed. Staff are authorized to be dismissed only at this time. Staff who leave before this time may be charged with Unauthorized Leave without Pay.

**Procedures for closing the Library after the order has been given –
Library is Closed**

If the Library is closed when the order to shut Library facilities is given, reassigned staff will report to the Library to secure the facility. The procedures described above will be followed including the posting of the Emergency Closing sign.

Staff who evacuate their homes, or will be in a location other than originally reported to their supervisor when dismissed, should notify Library representatives at the Emergency Operations Center with their new location and contact telephone number. This will ensure that Library staff can be accounted for after the storm.

STAFF DISMISSAL, RETURN TO DUTY AND SECURING WORK AREAS

In the event the Alachua County Library District officially closes its facilities due to a pending Hurricane, the Library Director shall authorize the release of some employees from work and place them on paid administrative leave.

Key employees (i.e., branch manager, person-in-charge [PIC], etc.) may need to stay on the premises longer to secure closing.

Prior to leaving the work site, staff must:

1. Verify pre- and post- hurricane assignments, if any.
2. Secure their workplace.
3. Receive authorization to leave from their supervisor.

Return to Duty

If the Library Director assesses the situation and determines a state of emergency no longer exists, then employees will be contacted and, upon mutual agreement, they will return to work. If they are unable to return to work, they will be granted Paid Time Off (PTO), if they have PTO available, for the remainder of the day. In the event that employees are called back to work, at least a 4-hour delay will be added to the building's scheduled opening time.

The return to duty order will be based on the Facilities Department inspections and other safety-related conditions they may find in the surrounding areas. Managers and Supervisors should begin to contact staff as soon as possible after the hurricane passes with information on reopening the libraries. The Alachua County Emergency Management Department will be informed and announce when library operations will resume for staff only, and for the public. This information will be provided to WCJB TV 20 and any radio stations that are on the airway. If staff have not been contacted by their supervisor and are unsure of the return to work status, they can contact the Alachua County Emergency Management Department by calling 3-1-1, calling Rumor Control at 352-264-6557, or visiting the Emergency Management Department's website: <http://www.co.alachua.fl.us/government/depts/fr/em/> for information.

Securing the Workplace

It is the responsibility of each employee to secure his or her individual workplace to limit potential damage. When the Library Director has dismissed employees, Managers or designated personnel must ensure staff have completed the following prior to leaving the work site:

1. Follow all procedures in the Library's Hurricane Plan.
2. Remove all items from windowsills or areas adjacent to windows.
3. Disconnect and move all portable electrical items facing windows to interior and secure locations. All relocated equipment should be appropriately tagged for identification.

4. Ensure that any data on desktops have been backed up to server and secured.
5. Facilities will unplug electrical equipment as required.
6. Relocate critical papers or files from areas where wind or water damage might occur.
7. Facilities will ensure that electrical circuits are set for emergency conditions.

Materials and Supplies

During the pre-hurricane planning stage, Managers are to identify any Library materials that need to be protected during the storm. Facilities will ensure the supplies are on hand no later than June 1.

Staff Required to Work During Emergency:

Those employees required to work while others from the same facility have been released on paid administrative leave, granted as the result of a Library District declared emergency facilities closure, will receive compensation in accordance with Chapter XV: Compensation and Chapter XVI: Hours of Work and Overtime.

In addition, those employee required to work while others from the same facility are on paid administrative leave will receive hour for hour "Library District Declared Emergency Closure Leave" for all regularly scheduled hours worked while other employees are on paid administrative leave during a declared emergency closure.

Library District Declared Emergency Closure Leave must be used within six months of being earned.

POST-HURRICANE PHASE

If you have been evacuated from the Alachua County area, do not return until advised to do so by the Alachua County Emergency Management Department. This “all clear” advisory will be broadcast over the radio and television.

All staff, except those with specific and reassigned post-hurricane duties or responsibilities, must stay away from their work place until personally notified by their supervisor or an authorized Library representative. If a return to work notice has been announced by the media and you have not yet heard from your supervisor or other authorized Library representative, contact the Alachua County Emergency Operations Center (pages 9 and 10).

It is absolutely forbidden for any staff member to enter a Library facility after the hurricane unless authorized to do so by the Facilities/Safety Services Administrator, the Facility Maintenance Manager, the Sr. Building Mechanic, the Library Director, or Department or Branch Manager. All structures are considered to be unsafe until inspected by Facilities staff.

HURRICANE INFORMATION WEB SITES

1. Alachua County Office of Emergency Management
Division of Alachua County Fire/Rescue: www.alachua-em.org
2. National Weather Service: <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>
National Hurricane Center
Tropical Prediction Page
3. National Weather Service: <http://www.srh.noaa.gov/cgi-bin/ahps.cgi?jax>
Flood information
Advanced Hydrologic Prediction Service
4. WCJB TV 20: <http://www.wcjb.com/news.asp>
5. Hurricane Preparedness and Response for Florida public Libraries
<http://www.ii.fsu.edu/hurricanes/>

DEFINITIONS OF WEATHER TERMINOLOGY

ADVISORY

Advisory messages are issued by the U.S. Environmental Science Services Administration, Weather Bureau, concerning TROPICAL STORMS and HURRICANES. They are issued by the Hurricane Warning Centers.

An advisory gives details as to where the tropical storm or hurricane is located, its intensity and direction and speed of movement. Precautionary measures are given for ships in or near the storm. See also Hurricane Warning.

BULLETIN

A WEATHER BULLETIN is a public release from a U.S. Weather Bureau Hurricane Warning Center during periods between advisories, giving latest details on the tropical storm or hurricane.

HURRICANE

A violent storm originating over tropical waters, with winds near its center reaching 74 MPH (64 knots) and above. In the Northern Hemisphere, winds in hurricanes blow in a counterclockwise direction around the center and the size of the storm may range from 50 to 1000 miles in diameter.

HURRICANE CENTER OR "EYE"

The relatively calm area, near the center of the storm. In this area, winds are often light and the sky may be seen, as it is often only partly covered by clouds.

HURRICANE FORCE WINDS

Winds of 74 MPH (64 Knots) and higher.

HURRICANE WATCH

An announcement issued by the U.S. Weather Bureau to the public and all other interests, via. Press, Radio and TV, whenever a tropical storm or hurricane becomes a threat to coastal areas.

THE HURRICANE WATCH IS NOT A WARNING. It indicates that the hurricane is near enough that everyone in the area covered by the watch should listen for subsequent advisories and be ready to take precautionary action in case hurricane warnings are issued. A HURRICANE WATCH implies the possibility of dangerous conditions within 24 to 48 hours.

LOCAL STATEMENTS

A public information release prepared by the U.S. Weather Bureau in or near the threatened area giving details on conditions that will be felt locally; areas that should be evacuated, and other precautions in the local area to protect life and property.

SQUALL

A strong wind usually associated with a thunderstorm or shower, which maintains its peak speed over a period of two (2) or more minutes and then decreases quickly.

STORM TIDE

The abnormally high water that is associated with tropical storms or hurricanes as they approach or move across the coastal line. Advisories often contain information as to how many feet the "storm tide" will exceed the normal height.

HURRICANE WARNING

A warning which indicates that hurricane winds of 74 MPH (64 knots) and higher or a combination of dangerously high water and very rough seas (in this case with, winds as low as 60 MPH) are expected in a specified coastal area. When a hurricane warning is announced, hurricane conditions are considered imminent and may begin immediately or at least within the next 12 to 24 hours.

It is of utmost importance that ALL precautionary measures and actions be instituted immediately for the protection of life and property when a hurricane warning is announced.

TROPICAL DEPRESSION

A TROPICAL DEPRESSION is an area of low atmospheric pressure originating over tropical waters, with winds blowing counter-clockwise around the center at speeds less than 39 MPH (34 knots).

GALE WARNING

A warning of winds within the range of 30-54 MPH (34-47 knots). Gale warnings may precede or accompany a hurricane watch, and may be used as the warning for coastal sections adjacent to an area under a hurricane warning.

