

FREE

2017 Columbia County

NATURAL HAZARDS

GUIDE

Step-By-Step Information
for all Columbia County Residents



Lake City Reporter

CURRENTS Magazine • lakecityreporter.com





Always Be Prepared

About this Magazine

This 2017 Natural Hazards Guide for Columbia County is a publication designed to give quick-read awareness information in hopes of saving lives and prevent property loss in the event of natural disasters.

This magazine, in its fifth year, is a national award winning publication conceived, designed and published by the Lake City Reporter. The Lake City Reporter has published hurricane tracking maps and storm preparedness information for the citizens of Columbia County for many years. To expand this magazine's reach to county residents and assist in making the information as specific and relevant as possible for local residents, the Reporter approached the county for guidance on some of the content.

Using past experiences of disaster-related incidents in Columbia County, emergency officials offered insight into what residents should do to prepare before an

event, and what they could expect to face in the aftermath of a disaster.

The Reporter consulted with several experts at the Columbia County Emergency Management Department and Columbia County Fire Rescue to help enhance the content of this magazine. When approached, the Columbia County Board of Commissioners provided partial financial assistance through public education grant funds to expand this project.

Information contained in this publication is designed to help individuals and families prepare in the event of severe weather, flooding, wild fires and other emergencies. It also offers the basic first aid information and emergency contact links for all emergency needs in Columbia County, Florida.

We urge you to read this magazine thoroughly and to keep it in a safe place as reference material when disaster strikes. Above all, when a natural disaster does occur, protect yourself and your family and friends and do not take unnecessary risks of any type. Stay safe!

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Questions? More Info? Call (386) 758-1125

Email: shayne_morgan@columbiacountyfla.com | Visit: www.columbiacountyem.com
facebook.com/Columbia-County-Florida-Emergency-Management



The Citizens Information Center

Whenever situations arise that may start increasing phone calls into the Columbia County Dispatch center or the board of county commissioners issue a local state of emergency, Emergency Management will activate the Citizens Information Center (CIC). The phone number is 386-719-7530. This line is only active in emergency situations. When it is active it is staffed by County Employees and/or volunteers.



For life threatening or property threatening emergencies always dial 911. If you are interested in learning how to sign up to be a CIC operator you can contact the office at 386-758-1125 or email shayne_morgan@columbiacountyfla.com. You may also contact United Way of Suwannee Valley at 386-752-5604.

Some of the things that our CIC receive calls on are:

- *When will the power/cable come back on ?*
- *Are specific roads closed?*
- *Report non-life threatening damage to your home/property*
- *Are schools open?*



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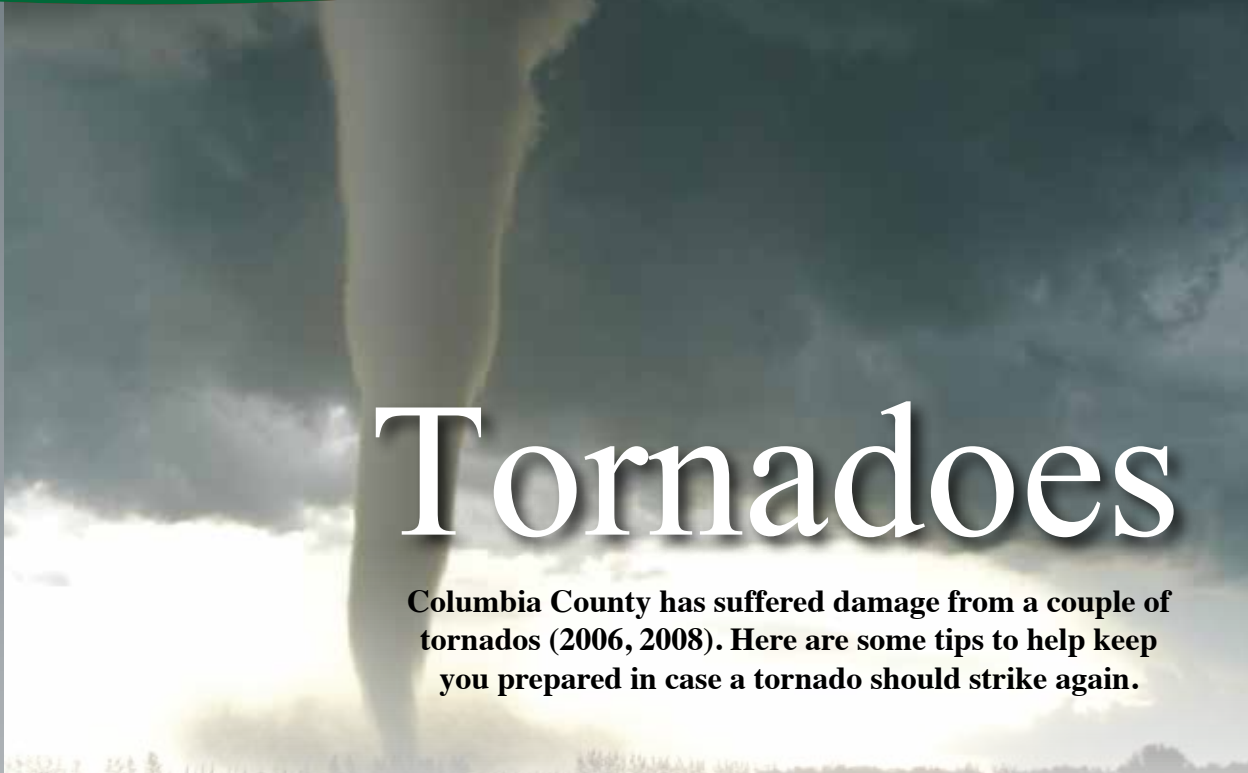


213 SW Commerce Dr., Lake City, FL 32025 www.HILakeCityFL.com **386.754.1411**



TORNADOES

- Terms to Know
- Safety Tips
- Fujita Scale
- Mobile Home Safety



Tornadoes

Columbia County has suffered damage from a couple of tornadoes (2006, 2008). Here are some tips to help keep you prepared in case a tornado should strike again.

TORNADO SAFETY TIPS

These violent storms can strike anywhere at any time with little warning. Stay alert to these danger signs:

- Severe thunderstorms with strong gusty winds.
- A dark funnel cloud that extends from the sky to the ground.
- A roaring sound.



The number one wind safety rule is to get as many walls between you and the outside world as possible so the debris in the wind cannot reach you. It's not the wind that kills and injures people, it is the debris in the wind.

IF THERE IS A TORNADO WARNING, PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY:

At home: Go to your storm shelter or a central room on the lowest level. Stay away from windows.

In a mobile home or trailer: These structures provide little protection. Leave and go to a storm shelter or the lowest level of a sturdy building.

In a Public building: Go to the designated shelter area or to an interior hallway on the lowest floor.

In your car: Stop, get out, and go to the storm shelter or lowest level in a nearby building.

In open country: Lie flat in a ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Do not get under an overpass or bridge.

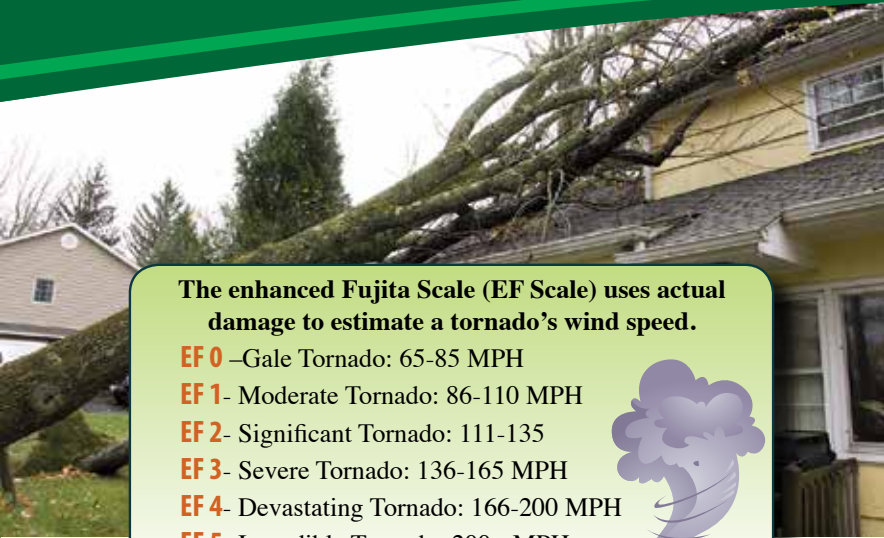
TERMS TO KNOW

Tornado Watch:

Tornadoes are possible. Watch the sky and stay tuned to radio or TV station for warnings.

Tornado Warning:

A tornado has been sighted or detected by weather radar. Take shelter immediately.



The enhanced Fujita Scale (EF Scale) uses actual damage to estimate a tornado's wind speed.

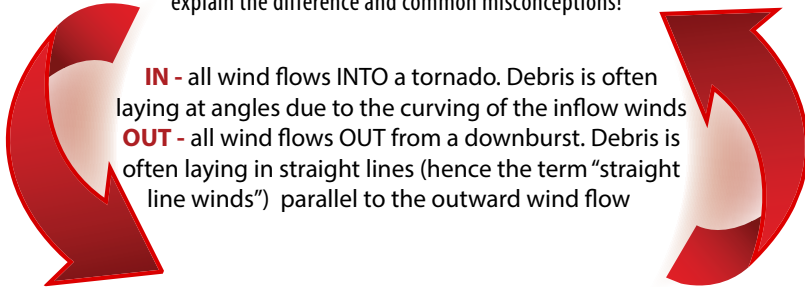
- EF 0** –Gale Tornado: 65-85 MPH
- EF 1** - Moderate Tornado: 86-110 MPH
- EF 2**- Significant Tornado: 111-135
- EF 3**- Severe Tornado: 136-165 MPH
- EF 4**- Devastating Tornado: 166-200 MPH
- EF 5**- Incredible Tornado: 200+ MPH



Straight-Line Winds vs. Tornado:

What's the Difference?

Damaging wind from thunderstorms is much more common than damage from tornadoes. In fact, many confuse damage produced by straight-line winds and often erroneously attribute it to tornadoes. Given recent severe weather with both damaging straight-line winds and a few weak tornadoes across the local area, we decided to share a little "science" to explain the difference and common misconceptions!



Why Are Downbursts Often Mistaken for Tornadoes?

- Both can have very damaging winds causing significant or extensive damage in some cases.
- Tornado winds range from 40 to over 300 MPH. Downburst winds can exceed 165 MPH
- A loud "roaring" sound
- Wind speeds of 75+ MPH will often sound very loud — leading some to believe they heard a tornado when in fact they only heard a straight-line wind
- Trees were "twisted" off — so it must have been a tornado
- This is one of the most common mistakes — the fact that trees were "twisted" off doesn't necessarily mean a tornado has gone through. If you could draw a line straight down a tree, you'd see that the tree isn't exactly alike from one side to the other. Differences in limbs and leaves may cause the tree to have more wind resistance on one side than the other. The tree begins to "twist" (much like a stop sign "twists" in strong winds). If wind speeds are high enough the tree will begin to tear apart in a twisting motion — even though the winds are relatively straight!

If you have any questions, contact Columbia County Emergency Management at 386-758-1125.



HIGH WINDS AND MOBILE HOME SAFETY

A number of Columbia county residents live in mobile homes. Here are some suggestions that you can use to make living in a mobile home safer:

- Pack all breakables in well padded cartons and place them on the floor of your home.
- Remove bulbs from lamps and tape mirrors.
- Shutter windows.
- Turn off the water where it enters the home. Open faucets and leave them open. If done correctly, no water should flow.
- Shut off fuel lines and/or turn off bottles at the tanks. DO NOT disconnect.
- Stow away or anchor outside objects such as garbage cans, lawn furniture, water, hoses, etc.
- Minimize damage by using "over the top" and "frame ties" to anchor your mobile home. "over the top" keep the unit from overturning and "frame ties" prevent it from being blown off the supports.
- Satellite dishes should be removed and secured if time permits. If mechanically moveable, lower to base setting. Turn the dish away from the wind.
- Remove outdoor storage facilities not installed to code or properly secured if time allows.
- Remember, all non-secured items will be airborne projectiles during high winds. Secure toys, gas grills, water hoses, lawn decorations and lawn furniture, yard signs.
- Patio screens can pop out in high winds. If possible, remove the screens or release the tension on the screening to let the wind in without damaging either the screen or the structure.



HURRICANE TROPICAL STORMS

Hurricane Season June 1 - November 30

- Terms to Know
- Safety Tips
- Storm Categories
- Assistance
- Preparedness Steps

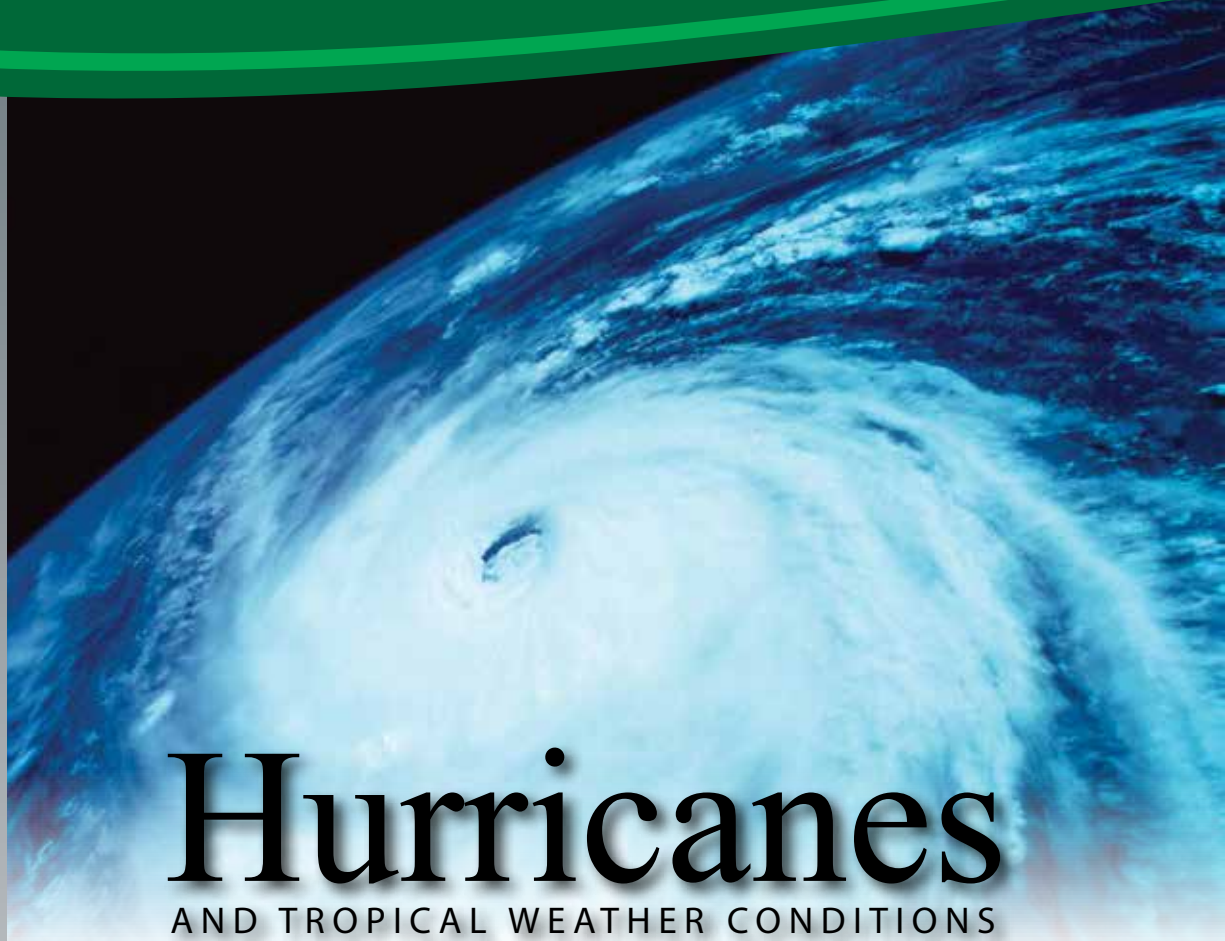
TERMS TO KNOW

Hurricane Watch:

Hurricane conditions are a real possibility for an area.

Hurricane Warning:

A hurricane is expected within 24 hours. Begin precautionary action at once.



Hurricanes AND TROPICAL WEATHER CONDITIONS

Columbia County has been fortunate that we haven't suffered a direct hit from a hurricane in many years. In 2004 hurricanes Frances and Jeanne did damage to our county but fortunately neither of those were direct hits to our county, they were hurricane affects. Even Tropical Storm Debby in 2012 was rain from the outer bands of the storm. Here are some tips to help you be prepared for a hurricane.

HURRICANE SAFETY TIPS

At Hurricane Warning:

- Listen for weather updates and stay informed.
- Keep portable radio and flashlights on hand with fresh batteries.
- Clear your yard of all loose objects.
- Moor your boat securely
- Store drinking water in clean containers.
- Shutter, board or tape windows.
- Plan a flood free evacuation route

IF ORDERED TO EVACUATE OBEY IMMEDIATELY!

Take your HURRICANE EVACUATION KIT. Let friends and neighbors know where you are going.

DO NOT RETURN TO EVACUATED AREAS UNTIL LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE ISSUED AN ALL CLEAR.

Categorizing a hurricanes strength

- Category 1 wind speed 74-95 MPH minimal damage
- Category 2 wind speed 96-110 MPH moderate damage
- Category 3 wind speed 111-130 MPH major damage
- Category 4 wind speed 131-155 MPH severe damage
- Category 5 wind speed 156+ MPH catastrophic damage

For more information, contact Columbia County Emergency Management at 386-758-1125

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST Extreme Heat

People who work outdoors or exercise in extreme heat are more likely to become dehydrated or get heat-related illness.

PEOPLE WHO WORK OUTDOORS:

- Prevent heat illness with acclimatization.
- Drink two to four cups of water every hour while working. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink.
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing large amounts of sugar.
- Wear and reapply sunscreen as indicated on the package.
- Ask if tasks can be scheduled for earlier or later in the day to avoid midday heat.
- Wear a brimmed hat and loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Spend time in air-conditioned buildings during breaks and after work.
- Encourage co-workers to take breaks to cool off and drink water.
- Seek medical care immediately if you or a co-worker has symptoms of heat-related illness.



Stop all activity and get to a cool environment if you feel faint or weak.

PEOPLE WHO EXERCISE IN EXTREME HEAT:

- Limit outdoor activity, especially midday when the sun is hottest.
- Wear and reapply sunscreen as indicated on the package.
- Schedule workouts and practices earlier or later in the day when the temperature is cooler
- Pace activity. Start activities slow and pick up the pace gradually.
- Drink more water than usual and don't wait until you're thirsty to drink more. Muscle cramping may be an early sign of heat-related illness.
- Monitor a teammate's condition and have someone do the same for you.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Seek medical care immediately if you or a teammate has symptoms of heat-related illness.

HEAT EXHAUSTION		OR	HEAT STROKE	
Faint or dizzy			Throbbing headache	
Excessive sweating			No sweating	
Cool, pale, clammy skin			Body temperature above 103° Red, hot, dry skin	
Nausea or vomiting			Nausea or vomiting	
Rapid, weak pulse			Rapid, strong pulse	
Muscle cramps			May lose consciousness	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get to a cooler, air conditioned place • Drink water if fully conscious • Take a cool shower or use cold compresses 			<h1>CALL 9-1-1</h1> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take immediate action to cool the person until help arrives 	



After the Storm ...

What are my next steps?

By SHAYNE MORGAN, FPEM | Emergency Management
Director Columbia County Emergency Management



Welcome to the 2017 edition of the All-Hazards Guide, I would like to send my sincere thanks to the Lake City Reporter for them continuing to allow us to get you the information out to help keep you safe. This is our fifth edition of this magazine, and I always strive to give you a publication that gives you the important information, while still adding a little something new to the mix.

2016 saw Columbia County learn the names Hermine and Matthew as those two storms made impacts on Columbia County. Both storms affected the State of Florida as a whole and here in Columbia County Hermine caused some infrastructure damage and Matthew required our county to activate shelter operations for evacuees from the Atlantic Coast.

Before another event happens, talk to people you know, co-workers, friends,

family, church members, etc. and work out a plan to help each other out, should the opportunity present itself. Also, be familiar with different companies that are in the community. For those jobs that may require more experience, or specialized equipment, or that may be too big for you to handle, call in licensed professionals that can give you a quote and make the best decision for your situation. Always remember you want vendors that are reputable, and who carry insurance that will protect you from accidents and injuries. You may find yourself in a situation where you need the assistance of any of the members of your community to assist with your clean-up, figure out now who can help you, if it's needed.

Once an event happens my partner agencies are the first to respond, and they are the last to leave. Some events may require that we bring in state and/or federal assistance. If that is the case,

then the demobilization of those assets happens in reverse: federal, state and then local. Always remember that you are the first step for recovery. If you are in a situation where you have to recover from a disaster, your first step should be to approach your insurance company and find out what they do and do not cover. As for the clean-up if it is on your property, you are responsible for cleaning the debris up, the county cannot come on your property and clean it up for you. The county MAY make arrangements to help with pickup of storm related debris, when that happens we will put out a press release advising of those arrangements.

It is important for you to know, that in circumstances when FEMA does come in to jurisdictions, they do not actually perform the work of the clean-up. FEMA reviews the documentation, and judges whether you meet the

requirements to qualify for monetary assistance. This assistance will be a dollar amount that is deemed to be able to get your residence back to a safe, secure and stable condition. Another option that MAY present itself to those that suffer damage, are Small Business Administration (SBA) loans. These are low interest loans to help you restore your residence to a livable condition. A lot of times SBA loans may be another option if FEMA assistance is not.

Sheltering is a topic that I'd also like to inform you about. Shelters are open on an as needed basis; we DO NOT OPEN ALL OF THE SHELTERS AT THE SAME TIME. Areas of the county that have been impacted, number of people in need of sheltering, and staffing all play a large role in determining how many shelters are opened. In Hurricane Matthew, our shelters were host shelters, meaning that we hosted residents that were not from Columbia County. Residents and visitors to the Atlantic Coast of Florida were our primary

occupants in the shelters. Columbia County does not have a pet-friendly shelter, trained and documented service animals (dogs, ponies) are allowed in the shelter. We are always looking for shelter volunteers, if you are interested in volunteering please let my office know so that we can put you in touch with the proper agency to get you registered. The Citizen Information Center (CIC) will be able to tell you which shelters are open during an activation. In addition, when the shelters open it will be posted on our county webpage, county emergency management page and the emergency management Facebook page. Local media will be advised through press releases from our public information officer.

Another subject I want to discuss, is the hurricane forecast for the upcoming year. Keep in mind that these are only predictions. These predictions are only for predicting the potential number of storms that may form. If you are a college football or basketball fan, think

of it as the pre-season team rankings that are released. Numbers are good to talk about, but these projections are not a definite. The forecasts cannot account for the strength of storms that make landfall; it cannot account for how many will make landfall; atmospheric conditions play a significant role in how many storms will form during a given season. All the forecast does is attempt to predict the number of storms that will form during the upcoming hurricane season.

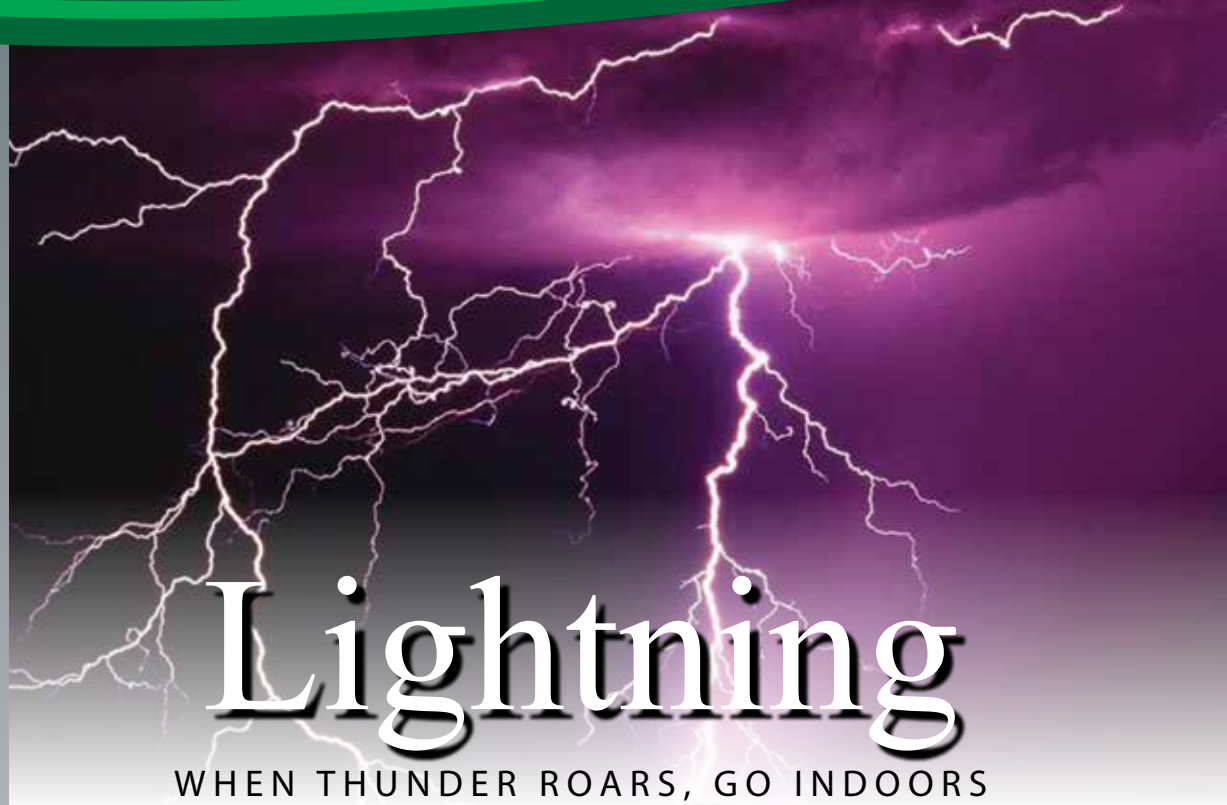
As always, thank you for taking the time to read through and review the information that is contained in this magazine. It is very important to know what to do when an incident happens. Keep this magazine in a convenient place for easy reference. If there are any ideas or subjects that you would like to see addressed or have further questions on please send me an e-mail at Shayne_morgan@columbiacounty.fl.com. Remember all it takes is one storm to make for a bad day!





LIGHTNING THUNDER STORMS

- Safety Tips
- Indoor/Outdoor



Lightning

WHEN THUNDER ROARS, GO INDOORS

LIGHTNING SAFETY TIPS

Anytime a severe thunderstorm strikes lightning will be a dangerous component. Remember the following information to help keep you safe.

PLAN in advance your evacuation and safety measures. When you first see lightning or hear thunder, activate your emergency plan. Now is the time to go to a building or a vehicle. Lightning often precedes rain, so don't wait for the rain to begin before suspending activities.

IF OUTDOORS Avoid water. Avoid the high ground. Avoid open spaces. Avoid all metal objects including electric wires, fences, machinery, motors, power tools, etc. Unsafe places include underneath canopies, small picnic or rain shelters, or near trees. Where possible, find shelter in a substantial building or in a fully enclosed metal vehicle such as a car, truck or a van with the windows completely shut. If lightning is striking nearby when you are outside, you should:

Crouch down. Put feet together. Place hands over ears to minimize hearing damage from thunder.

Avoid proximity (minimum of 15 ft.) to other people.

FOLLOW THE 30/30 RULE

30/30

30 SECONDS Count the seconds between seeing lightning and hearing thunder. If the time is less than 60 seconds, lightning is still a potential threat. Seek shelter immediately.

30 MINUTES After hearing the last thunder, wait 30 minutes before leaving shelter. Many lightning deaths occur after the storm passes. Stay in a safe area until you are sure the threat has passed.

IF INDOORS Avoid water. Stay away from doors and windows. Do not use the telephone. Take off head sets. Turn off, unplug, and stay away from appliances, computers, power tools, & TV sets. Lightning may strike exterior electric and phone lines, inducing shocks to inside equipment.

INJURED PERSONS: They do not carry an electrical charge and can be handled safely. Apply First Aid procedures to a lightning victim if you are qualified to do so. Call 911 or send for help immediately.



**KNOW YOUR
EMERGENCY
TELEPHONE
NUMBERS.**

Citizens Information Center

(386) 719-7530

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ELECTRICAL SAFETY TIPS

ELECTRICAL SAFETY

To report downed power lines contact your local energy provider.

If rising water threatens your home or if you evacuate your home, turn off your power at the circuit breaker panel or fuse box.

Don't drive over-and don't stand near-downed power lines.

Never replace a fuse or touch a circuit breaker with wet hands, or while standing on a wet or damp surface.

If your home or business is flooded, your energy provider cannot reconnect power until the electrical system has been inspected by a licensed electrician. If there is damage the electrician will need to make repairs and obtain certification from local building inspection authority before power can be restored.

GENERATOR SAFETY

Always operate a generator in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines and instructions. Do not operate more appliances and equipment than the output rating of the generator.

To avoid carbon monoxide poisoning, never use a generator indoors or in attached garages. Only operate the generator outdoors in a well ventilated, dry area away from air intakes to the home.

To avoid electrocution, plug individual appliances into the generator using heavy duty, outdoor-rated cords with a wire gauge adequate for the appliance load.

If connecting into the house wiring is necessary on a temporary basis, home should have a transfer switch installed by a licensed electrician. A transfer switch allows your house to receive power directly from a portable generator, rather than through the main circuit.



FOREST FIRES

- Steps to Safeguard Your Property
- Landscape Checklist
- Safe Driving Tips

Columbia County Fire Rescue Insurance Services Office (ISO) Classifications

Columbia County Fire Rescue currently enjoys a Protection Class (PC) 4/4x. With this split class the first number 4 represents properties/homes within 5 road miles of a responding fire station and within 1,000 feet of a credible water supply or source. A credible water supply would be anything such as fire hydrants, water ways or dry hydrants. The second number 4x represents properties within 5 road miles of a station but beyond 1,000 feet of a credible water supply or source.

To locate where your property/home falls in the classification areas you can go to www.columbiacountyfla.com. Once you are there highlight Fire Department and then select Find My Fire Station and type in your address. Once your address is pulled up you can view the closest fire station to your address or property. There is also an option for a fire hydrant map if one is listed near your home or property.

If you have any additional questions about the online map or your classification please contact Columbia County Fire Rescue at (386) 754-7057.



Fire

This year marks the 10-year anniversary of the Bugaboo Wildfire, the last major wildfire to hit Columbia County was the Bugaboo Wildfire. The fire started in Georgia in 2007 and came through Baker County and into Columbia County. Here are some recommendations of ways to protect your home.

- Regularly clean roof and gutters
- Use ½ -inch mesh screen beneath porches, decks, floor areas and the home itself. Also screen openings to floors, roof and attic.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type) and show them where it's kept.
- Keep a ladder that will reach the roof. Consider installing protective shutters or heavy fire-resistant drapes.

• Keep handy household items that can be used as fire tools: a rake, axe, handsaw, or chainsaw, bucket and shovel.

Before wildfire threatens

Design and landscape your home with wildfire safety in mind. Select materials and plants that can help contain fire rather than fuel it. Use fire resistant or non-combustible materials on the roof and exterior structure of the dwelling. Or treat wood or combustible material used in roofs, siding, decking or trim with UL approved fire retardant chemicals. Plant fire resistant shrubs and trees. For example, hardwood trees are less flammable than pine.

Create a 30 to 50 foot safety zone around your home

Within this area you can take steps to reduce potential exposure to flames and radiant heat. Homes built in pine forests should have a minimum safety zone of 100 feet.

- Rake leaves, dead limbs and twigs. Clear all flammable vegetation. Remove leaves and rubbish from under structures.

- Thin a 15 foot space between tree crowns, and remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground.

- Remove dead branches that extend over the roof.

- Ask the power company to clear branches from power lines.

- Mow grass regularly.

- Clear a 10 foot area around propane tanks and the barbeque.

- Stack firewood at least 100 feet away and uphill from your home. Clear combustible material within 20 feet.

Plan your water needs

- Identify and maintain an adequate outside water source such as a small pond, cistern, and well, swimming pool or hydrant.

- Have a garden hose that is long enough to reach any area of the home and other structures on the property.

When wildfire threatens

If you are warned that a wildfire is threatening you area, listen to your battery-operated radio for reports and evacuation information. Follow the

instruction of local officials.

- Back your car into the garage or park it in an open space facing the direction of escape. Leave the key in the ignition. Close garage doors and windows, but leave them unlocked. Disconnect automatic garage door openers.

- Confine pets to one room. Make plans to care for your pets in case you must evacuate.

If advised to evacuate, do so immediately

- Wear protective clothing-sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long sleeved shirt, gloves and a handkerchief to protect your face.

- Take your disaster supplies kit.

- Lock your home.

- Tell someone when you left and where you are going

If you're sure you have time take steps to protect your home:

Inside:

- Close windows, vents doors, venetian blinds or non combustible window coverings and heavy drapes.

- Shut off gas at the meter. Turn off pilot lights.

- Open fireplace damper. Close fire place screens.

- Move flammable furniture into the center of the home away from windows and sliding glass doors.

- Turn on a light in each room to increase visibility of your home in heavy smoke.

Outside:

- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.

- Turn off propane tanks.

- Place combustible patio furniture inside.

- Connect the garden hose to outside taps.

- Set up the portable gasoline-powered pump.

- Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and near above ground fuel tanks. Wet the roof.

- Wet or remove shrubs within 15 feet of the home.

- Gather fire tools.

More Information

- www.columbiacountyem.com

- www.fireadapted.org

- www.firewise.org

- www.wildfireRSG.org

Driving safely on Florida Highways in severe weather



- Slow down!

- Do not use your hazard lights while it's raining. It's against the law in Florida to drive with your hazard lights on.

- Use windshield wipers in heavy fog.

- Turn on your low-beam headlights.

- If the fog or smoke becomes so thick you cannot see well enough to keep driving, pull all the way off the pavement and stop. Turn on your emergency flashers.

- The space between your vehicle and the road way should be sufficient so that you can safely exit the vehicle without obstructing traffic.

- Report hazard to the nearest Florida Highway Patrol office so that steps can be taken to warn other drivers about the hazard.



After the fire: Returning to normal

A fire can happen to anyone at any time of year. Here are some things to remember if a fire should damage or destroy your home or the home of a friend or family member. The value of your home and personal belongings. Talk with your insurance company to learn the value of your home and property. Replacing valuable documents and records. You will want to replace many of the following documents destroyed or lost in the fire:

Personal Documents

- Drivers License
- Bankbooks (checking, savings, etc.)
- Insurance policies
- Military discharge papers
- Passports
- Birth, death, and marriage certificates
- Divorce papers
- Social Security or Medicare cards
- Credit cards
- Titles to deeds
- Stocks and bonds
- Wills
- Medical records
- Warranties
- Income tax records
- Citizenship papers
- Prepaid burial contract
- Animal registration papers
- Mortgage papers

Ask For Honest Help

Some companies that claim to provide board up and cleaning services are not honest. Ask your insurance company for names of companies you can trust to do a good job at a fair price.

These companies provide services that include some or all of the following:

- Securing your home against more damage
- Estimating damage
- Repairing damage
- Estimating the cost to repair or renew items of personal property
- Storing household items
- Hiring cleaning or repair subcontractor
- Storing repaired items until needed



Next Steps following a fire

Contact your local disaster relief service, such as the Red Cross. They can help you find a place to stay for a limited amount of time, they can help find food, medicines and other important items for day-to-day life.

If you have insurance, contact your insurance company. Ask what you should do to keep your home safe until it is repaired. Find out how they want you to make a list of the things that were lost or damaged in the fire.

Ask who you should talk to about cleaning up the mess.

Check with the fire department to make sure your home is safe to enter. Be very careful when you go inside. Floors and walls may not be as safe as they look.

The fire department will tell you if your utilities (water, electricity,

and gas are safe to use. If not, they will shut these off before they leave. DO NOT try to turn them back on by yourself. This could be very dangerous.

Try to find valuable documents and records. A list of these valuable documents is in this guide.

If you leave your home, call the Police Department (if in the city limits) or Sheriff's Office (If outside the city limits) to let them know the site will be vacant.

Begin saving receipts for any money you spend related to fire loss. The receipts may be needed later by the insurance company and to prove any losses claimed on your income tax.

Check with an accountant or the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) about special benefits for people recovering from fire loss.



PUBLIC SAFETY

HAZARDOUS SPILL

Because Columbia County has two interstates (I-10/I-75), two railways, U.S. 90, U.S. 41 and 441, State Roads 100, 47, and numerous other transportation methods here in the county, the possibility of a hazardous materials spill does exist here. What should you do if you are notified of such a spill? If you have witnessed the spill (regardless if it is a motor vehicle accident or at a fixed facility), make sure that you are safe from the hazardous material. Once you are safe, dial 9-1-1 and report it to authorities so that the appropriate response personnel can head toward the scene. If it is at all possible for you, make sure that you do not drive through the hazardous materials. Hazardous materials can come in liquid, gas or solid form. Some examples of Hazardous Materials and what are used for are: Ammonia (fertilizer); Chlorine (disinfectant); Formaldehyde (preservative); Sulfuric Acid (used in batteries) and Nitric Acid (used for etching steel) are just some of the potential chemicals that can be classified as hazardous materials.

Always listen to instructions given by authorities:

- If you are told to protect your breathing, cover your nose and mouth with a large wet bath towel or cloth

If you are told to remain indoors (Shelter-In-Place):

- Remain indoors until given the all clear from authorities.
- Close all doors and windows. Use masking tape or duct tape or a damp towel to seal the opening, if possible.
- Turn off all type of ventilation, unless otherwise instructed.
- Do not use fireplaces and close the dampers.
- Cover or refrigerate any uncovered food.
- Continue to stay tuned to hear when authorities give you the all clear.

If you are told to evacuate:

- Have a pre-determined plan for your pet. Columbia County does not have any pet-friendly shelters.
- Lock all doors and windows.
- Turn off all appliances (except for the refrigerator) and faucets.
- Leave pets inside of your home with plenty of food and water.
- Keep your car vents and windows closed. Do not use the heater or air conditioner. DRIVE CAREFULLY.
- Make sure to have an All-Hazard Go Kit. This will contain the same items as a Hurricane Go Kit.
- Nursing homes, hospitals, schools and businesses have their own plan to follow should they need to evacuate their facility for any reason.
- Always check in advance to see what the school's, the business', or other entities plan is. Now is the time to find out about the evacuation plan, not after the event happens.

If you have livestock:

- Place the animals in an enclosed shelter, if possible.
- Leave plenty of food and water for several days.
- Use stored feed if possible.
- Tune to a local radio or television station for further instructions.

Always stay tuned to local broadcast and print media for the latest information.

TERRORIST ATTACKS

With the recent tragic events that have occurred more frequently around the country and world this year, terrorism events have made their way back to the foreground in our society. Here are some tips to help make sure you and your family are prepared.

Raise your awareness

- Be aware of your surroundings. Note emergency exits and staircases.
- Leave the area if you feel something is wrong.
- Do not accept suspicious packages.
- Do not leave your baggage unattended while traveling.
- Report suspicious behavior.

In case of Explosion

- Watch for falling debris
- Crawl beneath the smoke and exit the area as quickly as possible.
- If you are trapped in debris, minimize your movements and cover your mouth with a cloth. Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can hear you. Do not use a lighter or match.

In case of a Biochemical Attack

- Evacuate if ordered by authorities.
- Stay tuned to radio or TV for updates.
- If not evacuating, take shelter in an interior room that can be easily sealed off with pre-cut plastic sheeting and duct tape that you have stored in this room.
- Turn off the air conditioner or heating system.
- Remain sheltered until advised its safe to leave.
- If caught outside, try to get upwind of the attack site and seek shelter as soon as possible.

If You Are Exposed to Chemicals

- Quickly remove all clothing and items in contact with the body. Cut shirts off to avoid contact with the face.
- Flush eyes with water.
- Wash hands and face with soap and water. Use a soapy cloth to blot exposed skin. Rinse with clean water.
- Change into clean clothes.
- Seek medical help as soon as possible

If Exposed to Biological Attack

- Pay close attention to instructions from authorities.
- Remove and bag clothes that may have come in contact with an infectious substance. Seek medical assistance.
- Seek immediate medical treatment if you notice symptoms of the disease caused by the infectious substance used in the attack.

In case of Nuclear Attack

- Be prepared: learn in advance about your community's evacuation and shelter plans and have plenty of emergency supplies on hand.
- Inside a building, use a basement or underground area as shelter, or a central room on the lowest floor.
- Take shelter even when you are miles away from that site of the explosion. If you are close enough to see the flash, fallout will arrive within 20 minutes.
- If you see a bright light like the sun drop to your knees DO NOT look at the explosion. The heat will be over in a second
- Remain in the shelter until authorities say it is safe to leave. This could be from two days to four weeks.



FLOOD

- Terms to Know
- Flood Insurance
- Disaster Checklist
- Flood Insurance Facts & Myths
- National Flood Insurance
- FEMA



Flooding

Floods are one of the most common weather hazards in the United States. Flooding has been one of the most frequent hazards we have experienced in Columbia County. In 1998, 2004, and 2012, we all saw Columbia County residents get affected by flooding. Flooding issues are not limited to those that live along our rivers. Flooding can occur anywhere throughout our county. Here are some flood safety tips for you to remember.

Some floods develop slowly, while flash floods can strike in a matter of minutes.

TERMS TO KNOW

Flood Watch: Flooding is possible-stay tuned to radio or TV for information and be prepared to relocate to higher ground.

Flash Flood Warning: A flash flood is occurring-get to higher ground if necessary. Protect your family in case of flooding. Learn flood evacuation routes and where to find high ground. Learn alternate routes to and from your home incase your primary route is impassible. Evacuate if instructed by authorities and return home only when they say it is safe. Do not drive into flooded areas. You never know how deep the water you drive through may be.

TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!

Flash Floods: Flash flooding occurs when the ground becomes saturated with water that has fallen to quickly to be absorbed. These floods occur quickly and can destroy structures, down trees and wash out roads. You may not always have warning of these sudden and deadly floods.

Lake City Floods: Flooding can be magnified in urban area as paved area lose their ability to absorb rainfall. Urbanization increases water runoff as much as two to six times over what would occur on natural terrain. These floods make driving very dangerous.

River Floods: River floods occur in Florida frequently, and can cause extensive damage. Many river basins stream into Northern Florida from Georgia. As water runoff collects in rivers and streams, the excess water can be too much to handle and may overflow the banks.



Flood Insurance: *Are you covered?*

Even if you are not living in the flood zone, you may need flood insurance:

Flooding often occurs outside of the flood zones. If you live on low lying property you should consider flood insurance. If your neighborhood has ever flooded, you should consider flood insurance.

What is covered by flood insurance and what is not:

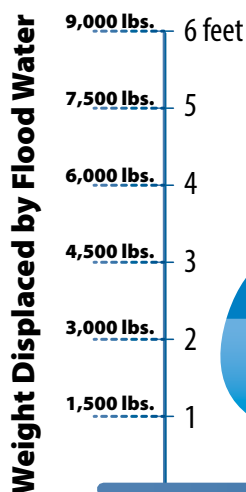
Physical damage to your building or personal property “directly” caused by flood is covered by your flood insurance policy. For example damages caused by a sewer backup is a direct result of flooding. If the backup is caused by some other problem, the damages area not covered.

The following lists provide general guidance on items covered and not covered by flood insurance. Refer to your policy for the complete list.

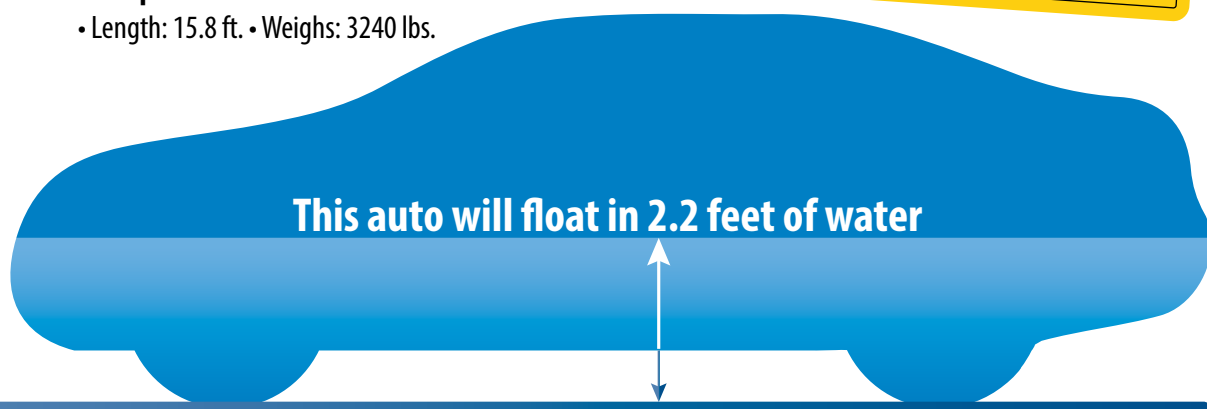
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How Much Running Water Does It Take To Make A Vehicle Float?

Water weighs 62.4 pounds per cubic foot. When a vehicle stalls in water, the water’s momentum is transferred to the car. For each foot the water rises, 500 pounds of lateral force is applied to the car. For each foot the water rises up the side of the car, the car displaces 1,500 pounds of water. In effect, the car weighs 1,500 pounds less for each foot the water rises. Most vehicles will float in just 2 feet of water.



Example Automobile
• Length: 15.8 ft. • Weighs: 3240 lbs.



This auto will float in 2.2 feet of water



FLOODING

General guidance on flood insurance coverage

What is insured under building property coverage?

- The insured building and its foundation.
- The electrical and plumbing system.
- Central air-conditioning equipment, furnaces, and water heaters.
- Refrigerators, cooking stoves, and built in appliances such as dishwashers.
- Permanently installed paneling, wallboard, bookcases, and cabinets.
- Window blinds.
- A detached garage (up to 10% of building property coverage); detached buildings (other than detached garages) require a separate building property policy.
- Debris removal.

What is insured under personal property coverage?

- Personal belongings such as clothing, furniture, and electronic equipment.
- Curtains
- Portable and window air conditioners.
- Portable microwave ovens and portable dishwashers.
- Carpets not included in building coverage.
- Clothes washers and dryers.
- Food freezers and the food in them.
- Certain valuable items such as an original artwork and furs (up to \$2,500.00).

What is not insured under either building property or personal property coverage?

- Damage caused by moisture, mildew, or mold that could have been avoided by the property owner.
- Currency, precious metals, and valuable papers such as stock certificates.
- Property and belongings such as trees, plants, wells, septic systems, walks, decks, patios, fences, seawalls, hot tubs, and swimming pools.
- Living expenses such as temporary housing.
- Financial losses caused by business interruption or loss of insured property.
- Most self-propelled vehicles such as cars, including their parts.

How flood damages are valued.

The value flood damage covered under the dwelling form is based on either replacement cost value or actual cash value.

- Replacement cost value (RCV)
- RCV is the cost, without depreciation, to replace that part of a building that is damaged.

To be eligible, three conditions must be met:

- 1) The building must be a single-family dwelling; and
- 2) The building must be your principal residence at the time of loss, meaning you live there at least 80% of the year; and
- 3) Your building coverage is at least 80% of the full replacement cost of the building, or is the maximum available for the property under the NFIP.

Actual cash value (ACV)

ACV is replacement cost value at the time of loss, less the value of its physical depreciation.

Some building items such as appliances and carpeting are always adjusted on an ACV basis. For example, wall to wall carpeting could lose from 10 to 14% of its value each year, depending on the quality of the carpeting. This depreciation would be factored in the adjustment.

Personal property is always valued at ACV.

This is general information about flood insurance coverage. However, please be aware that your standard flood insurance policy and your application, and any endorsements, including the declarations page, make up your official contract of insurance. Any differences between this information and your policy will be resolved in favor of your policy. If you have questions, call your insurance agent or company representative.

General guidance on flood insurance coverage limitations in area below the lowest elevated floor and in basements.

Flood insurance coverage is limited in areas below the lowest elevated floor (including crawlspaces) depending on the flood zone and date of construction.

This is general information provided by Columbia County Emergency Management. Please contact your insurance agent to find out about the specifics of your flood policy.

What is insured under building property coverage?

- Foundation walls, anchorage systems, and staircases attached to the building.
- Central air conditioners.
- Cisterns and the water in them.
- Drywall for walls and ceilings (in basements only).
- Non-flammable insulation (in basements only).
- Electrical outlets, switches, and circuit breaker boxes.
- Fuel tanks and the fuel in them, solar energy equipment, and well water tanks and pumps.
- Furnaces, water heaters, heat pumps, and sump pumps.

What is insured under personal property coverage?

- Washers and dryers
- Food freezers and the food in them (but not in refrigerators).
- Portable and window air conditioners.

What is NOT insured under either building or personal property coverage?

- Paneling, bookcases, and window treatments, such as curtains and blinds.
- Carpeting, area carpets, and other floor coverings such as tile.
- Drywall for walls and ceilings (below the lowest elevated floor).
- Walls and ceilings not made of drywall.
- In certain cases staircases and elevators.
- Most personal property such as clothing, electronic equipment, kitchen supplies, and furniture

Disaster survivor application checklist

To apply for assistance following a disaster

Apply online:

• Go to disasterassistance.gov on your computer or smart phone. You can apply quickly for many types of assistance on one website. Update and check the status of your application online.

Apply by phone for FEMA assistance only:

- Call 1-800-621-FEMA (1-800-621-3362)
- People with speech and hearing disabilities can call 1-800-462-7585 (TTY) For those who use 711 or video relay service (VRS) call 1-800-621-3362



Information checklist:

Before starting your FEMA application, you, your spouse or a minor in your home must:

- Have a social security number and
- Be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen, or qualified alien

If you do not have a Social Security number, please apply for a Social Security number, then visit disasterassistance.gov or call FEMA at 1-800-621-3362 to complete your disaster application.

Please have a pen and paper and the following information ready:

Social security number: If you do not have a social security number, your household may still be eligible to receive assistance if there is a minor in the household who is a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified alien with a social security number.

Insurance information: describe the type of insurance coverage you have, such as homeowners, flood, automobile, mobile home insurance etc.

Damage information: describe your damages caused by the disaster, including the type of disaster (flood, hurricane, earthquake) and type of dwelling (mobile home, house) or vehicle (car, boat)

Financial information: provide your family's total annual income, before taxes at the time of the disaster.

Contact information: give FEMA the address and phone number where the damages happened and the address and phone number where you can be reached after the disaster.

Direct deposit information (optional): if you are approved for assistance and want your funds deposited directly in your bank account, provide your banking information.

This includes:

- Bank name
- Type of account (checking, savings, etc)
- Routing number
- Account number



Myths and Facts: Flood Insurance

Myth: Federal disaster assistance will pay for flood damage.

Fact: Before a community is eligible for disaster assistance, it must be declared a federal disaster area. **Federal disaster assistance declarations are issued in less than 50% of flooding events.** The premium for a NFIP policy, averaging a little over \$500.00 a year can be less expensive than the monthly payments on a federal disaster loan.

Furthermore if you are uninsured and receive federal disaster assistance after a flood, you must purchase flood insurance to remain eligible for future disaster relief.

Myth: The NFIP does not cover flooding resulting from hurricanes or the overflow of rivers or tidal waters.

Fact: The NFIP defines covered flooding as a general and temporary condition which during the surface of normally dry land is partially or completely inundated. Two properties in the area or two or more acres must be affected. Flooding can be caused by:

- Overflow of inland or tidal waters, or
- Unusual and rapid accumulation or runoff of surface waters from any source, such as heavy rain fall or
- Mudflow, i.e. a river of liquid and flowing mud on the surfaces of normally dry land areas, or
- Collapse or subsidence of land along the shore of a lake or other body of water, resulting from erosion or the effect of waves, or water currents exceeding normal, cyclical levels.

Myth: You can't buy flood insurance immediately before or during a flood.

Fact: You can purchase National Flood Insurance at any time. There is usually a 30 day waiting period after premium payment before the policy is effective, with the following exceptions:

If the initial purchase of flood insurance is in connection with the making, increasing, extending, or renewing of a

loan, there is no waiting period. Coverage becomes effective at the time of the loan, provided application and payment of premium is made at or prior to loan closing.

If the initial purchase of flood insurance is made during the 13 month period following the effective date of a revised flood map for a community there is a one day waiting period. This applies only where the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) is revised to show the building to be in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) when it had not been in an SFHA.

The policy does not cover a “loss in progress” defined by the NFIP as a loss occurring as of 12:01 a.m. on the first day of the policy term. In addition, you cannot increase the amount of insurance coverage you have during a loss in progress.

Myth: Flood insurance is only available for homeowners.

Fact: Most people who live in NFIP participating communities, including renters and condo unit owners, are eligible to purchase federally backed flood insurance. A maximum of \$250,000.00 of building coverage is available for single family residential buildings; \$250,000.00, per unit for residential condominiums. The limit for contents coverage on all residential buildings is \$100,000.00 which are also available to renters.

Commercial structures can be insured to a limit of \$500,000.00 for the building and \$500,000.00 for the contents. The maximum insurance limit may not exceed the insurable value of the property.

Myth: You can't buy flood insurance if your property has been flooded.

Fact: You are still eligible to purchase flood insurance after your home is flooded, apartment, business has been flooded, provided that your community is participating in the NFIP.



Top-10 facts every consumer needs to know about the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)

1. Everyone lives in a flood zone.

You do not need to live near water to be flooded.

Floods are caused by storms, hurricanes, and water backup due to inadequate or overloaded drainage systems, as well as broken water mains.

2. Flood damage is not covered by homeowner's policies.

You can protect your home, business, and belongings with flood insurance from the NFIP.

You can insure your home with flood insurance up to 250,000.00 for the building and 100,000.00 for its contents.

3. You can buy flood insurance no matter your flood risk.

It does not matter whether your flood risk is high or low. Anyone in a community that participates in the NFIP can buy building and/or contents coverage, with very few exceptions.

4. The low cost preferred risk policy is ideal for homes and businesses in moderate to low risk areas.

Homeowners can insure buildings and contents for a little as \$129.00 per year. Business owners can insure buildings and contents for a little as \$567.00 per year.

5. Flood insurance is affordable.

About 90 private insurance companies nationally offer affordable flood insurance backed by the federal government. Contact your local agent.

6. Flood insurance is easy to get

You can buy flood insurance through licensed property insurance agents. You can purchase flood insurance with a credit card.

7. Contents coverage is available to homeowners, business owners, and tenants.

Up to \$100,000.00 contents coverage is available for homeowners and renters. Whether you rent or own your home or business, make sure to ask

your insurance agent about contents coverage.

8. Up to a total of \$1 million in flood insurance coverage is available for non-residential buildings and contents.

Up to \$500,000.00 of coverage is available for non-residential buildings.

Up to \$500,000.00 of coverage is available for the contents of non-residential buildings.

9. There is usually a 30 day waiting period before coverage goes into effect.

Plan ahead so you are not caught without insurance when a flood threatens your home or business.

10. Federal disaster assistance is not the answer.

Federal disaster is only available if the president declares a disaster.

Flood insurance pays even if a disaster is not declared.



FEMA

What you need to know

1) After a federally declared storm event, FEMA, the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the County will set up a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). You must register for assistance by phone at 1-800-621-3362, on-line at www.FEMA.gov or at the DRC. Community service agencies, such as the American Red Cross, Catholic Charities and the United Way, will also be located at a DRC.

2) FEMA will NOT fully fund your loss. FEMA will offer just enough assistance to make your home safe and sanitary. Often this is in the form of a Small Business Administration (SBA) low interest loan or Individual Housing Program (IHP) funding. FEMA will not return your home to pre-disaster conditions nor will FEMA purchase your home after a disaster.

3. If you do not agree with FEMA's decisions, you always have the right to appeal.

4) FEMA will not pay utility bills, or replace lost food.

5) The purchase of a generator may be reimbursed on a case by case basis and the generator must have been purchased to overcome a disaster related hardship, injury or adverse condition.

Program Eligibility

To receive money or help for housing needs that are the result of a disaster, all of the following must be true.

- You have filed for insurance benefits and the damage to your property is not covered by your insurance.

- You or someone who lives with you is a citizen of the United States, a non-citizen national, or a qualified alien.

- Your home is in an area that has been declared by the president. The home in the disaster area is where you usually live the majority of the year.

- You are not able to live in your home now, you cannot get to your home due to the disaster, or your home requires repairs due because of damage from the disaster.

- You have filed for insurance benefits and the damage to your personal property is not covered by your insurance.

- You have necessary expenses or serious needs because of the disaster.

- You have accepted assistance from all other sources for which you are eligible, such as insurance proceeds or SBA loans.

You may NOT be eligible for money or help from IHP if :

- You have other, adequate rent-free housing that you can use (for example, rental property that is not occupied).

- Your home that was damaged is your secondary or vacation residence.

- Your expenses resulted only from leaving your home as a precaution and you were able to return to your home immediately after the incident.

- Your losses are business losses (including farm business other than the farmhouse and self employment) or items not covered by this program.

- The damaged home where you live is located in a designated flood hazard area and your community is not participating in the national flood insurance program.

Types of eligible losses

IHP only covers repairs or replacement of items that are damaged as a direct result of the disaster that area not covered by insurance.

Housing needs: Money to repair your home is limited to making your home safe and sanitary so you can live there. IHP will not pay to return your home to its condition before the disaster. You may use your money provided for housing needs to repair:

- Structural parts for your home (foundation, outside walls and roof).

- Windows, doors, floors, walls, ceilings, and cabinetry.

- Septic or sewage system.

- Well or other water system.

- Heating, ventilating and air conditioning system.

- Utilities (electrical, plumbing, and gas systems).
- Entrance and exit ways from your home, including privately owned access roads.
- Blocking, leveling, and anchoring of a mobile home and reconnecting or resetting its sewer, water, electrical and fuel lines and tank.

Other than housing needs: Money to repair damaged personal property or to pay for disaster related necessary expenses and serious hardship, injury or adverse condition.

- Clothing; household items (room furnishings, appliances); tools (specialized or protective clothing and equipment) required for your job; necessary educational materials (computers, school books, and supplies).
- Disaster-specified clean-up items (wet/dry vacuum, air purifier, and dehumidifier).
- A vehicle damaged by the disaster.

- Moving and storage expenses related to the disaster (moving and storing property to avoid additional disaster damage while disaster-related repairs are being made to the home).
- Other necessary expenses or serious needs as determined by FEMA.

Important information about disaster help

Money received from IHP for housing and other than housing needs must be used for eligible expenses only, as identified by FEMA:

- If you do not use the money as explained by FEMA, you may not be eligible for any additional help and may have to give the money back.
- IS usually limited to up to 18 months from the date the president declares the disaster.
- Does not have to be repaid.
- Is tax free

How do I know if I am in a flood zone?

When purchasing a piece of property, a home, insurance or possibly even applying for permits to build, it may be necessary to determine if where you are at is in a flood zone. We are going to go over some of the tools that are at your disposal to help you figure out if you are in a flood zone or not. More extensive information can be found at the websites that are listed below.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has a flood hazard mapping program, Risk Mapping, Assessment and Planning. As a part of this FEMA Identifies flood hazards, assesses flood risks and partners with states and communities to provide accurate flood hazard and risk data to guide them to the appropriate mitigation actions. This mapping is an important part of the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and risk assessments. Some of the data that is included in FIRMs are the following: statistical information such as data for river flow, storm tides, hydrologic/hydraulic analyses and rainfall and topographic surveys.

FIRMs for Columbia County may be viewed at the Columbia County Building and Zoning Department. The phone number for the Building and Zoning Department is (386) 758-1008. In addition, there is an online link that you can use to view the flood zone map from your own computer. The link can be accessed from the Columbia County website at www.columbiacountyfla.com. Once you are on the county's home page go to the most requested section of links and you can go to Search Flood Maps for Columbia County. Also, if you type in www.srwmfloodreport.com, you will be directed to the page as well. Once you are there you can search and see where your particular property is located.

If for some reason after reviewing the location on the map, a resident believes that they have been inadvertently mapped in a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), a request to FEMA can be submitted by putting in a Letter of Map Change (LOMC). The FEMA website goes into more detail about how to complete this process. Go to www.fema.gov and look for the section on Protecting Homes, under the Plan, Prepare and Mitigate tab on the FEMA website.



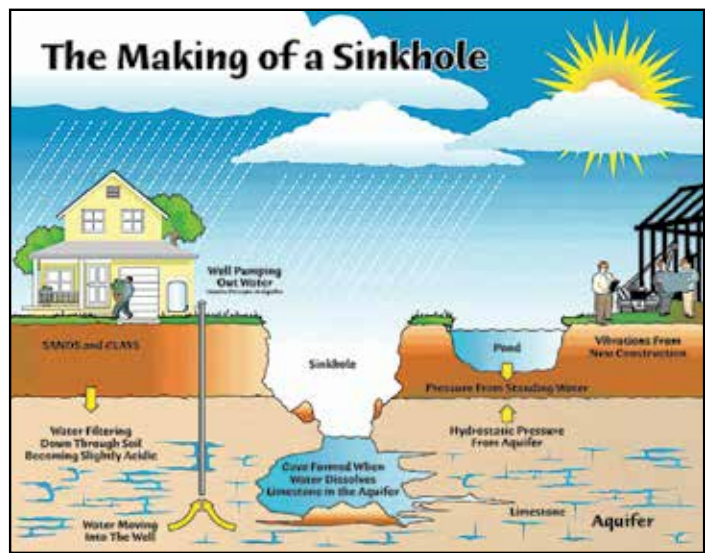
Sinkholes

Sinkholes are common where the rock below the land surface is limestone, carbonate rock, salt beds, or rocks that can naturally be dissolved by groundwater circulating through them. As the rock dissolves, spaces and caverns develop underground. Sinkholes are dramatic because the land usually stays intact for a while until the underground spaces just get too big. If there is not enough support for the land above the spaces then a sudden collapse of the land surface can occur. These collapses can be small, or, as this picture shows, or they can be huge and can occur where a house or road is on top.

The most damage from sinkholes tends to occur in Florida, Texas, Alabama, Missouri, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania.

What is a "Sinkhole"?

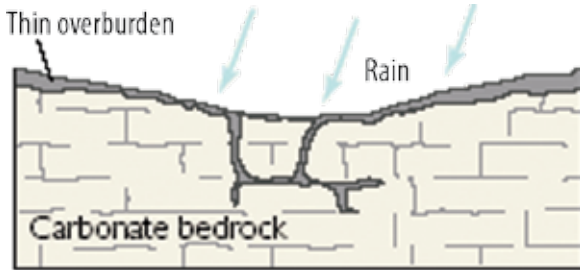
A sinkhole is an area of ground that has no natural external surface drainage--when it rains, all of the water stays inside the sinkhole and typically drains into the subsurface. Sinkholes can vary from a few feet to hundreds of acres and from less than 1 to more than 100 feet deep. Some are shaped like shallow bowls or saucers whereas others have vertical walls; some hold water and form natural ponds. Typically, sinkholes form so slowly that little change is noticeable, but they can form suddenly when a collapse occurs. Such a collapse can have a dramatic effect if it occurs in an urban setting.



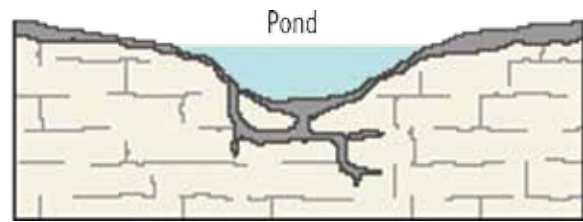
Types of Sinkholes

Since Florida is prone to sinkholes, it is important to realize and understand the different types of sinkholes and the geological and hydrologic processes that form them. The processes of dissolution, where surface rock that is soluble to weak acids, are dissolved, and suffusion, where cavities form below the land surface, are responsible for virtually all sinkholes in Florida.

Dissolution sinkholes

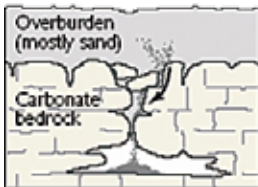


Rainfall and surface water percolate through joints in the limestone. Dissolved carbonate rock is carried away from the surface and a small depression gradually forms.



On exposed carbonate surfaces, a depression may focus surface drainage, accelerating the dissolution process. Debris carried into the developing sinkhole may plug the outflow, ponding water and creating wetlands.

Cover-subsidence sinkholes



Granular sediments spall into secondary openings in the underlying carbonate rocks.



A column of overlying sediments settle into the vacated spaces (a process termed "piping").



Dissolution and infilling continue, forming a noticeable depression in the land surface.



The slow downward erosion eventually forms small surface depressions 1 inch to several feet in depth and diameter.

Cover-collapse sinkholes



Sediments spall into a cavity.



As spalling continues, the cohesive covering sediments form a structural arch.



The cavity migrates upward by progressive roof collapse.



The cavity eventually breaches the ground surface, creating sudden and dramatic sinkholes.

Source: USGS



RISK SHELTERS

- Fort White High
18119 SW State Road 47
Fort White
- Pinemount Elementary
324 SW Gabriel Place
Lake City
- Westside Elementary
1956 SW County Road 252B
Lake City
(Also Special/Medical Needs Shelter)

**Citizens
Emergency
Info Line:
(386) 719-7530**



Columbia County will open shelters on an “as needed” basis during an emergency event. The first shelter that would be open would be one that is nearest to where the event occurred. Emergency shelters should always be a last resort for you and your family. You will be much more comfortable staying with family and friends that have not been affected by the event. Cots, blankets, food, and water are some of the basic necessities that will be provided in one of our county operated shelters. Columbia County DOES NOT have a pet friendly shelter! Also weapons and alcohol are not permitted in county operated shelters. Shelter openings will be announced through news releases and our citizen’s information phone line (386) 719-7530 will have an updated open shelter list.

HOST SHELTERS

Columbia City Elementary	7438 SW State Road 47	Lake City
Columbia High School	469 SE Fighting Tiger Drive	Lake City
Eastside Elementary	256 SE Beech Street	Lake City
Five Points Elementary	303 NW Johnson Street	Lake City
Fort White Middle School	2253 SW Cook Street	Fort White
Lake City Middle School	843 SW Arlington Boulevard.	Lake City
Melrose Park Elementary	820 SE Putnam Street	Lake City
Niblack Elementary	837 NE Broadway Avenue	Lake City
Richardson Middle School (6th Grade Center)	646 SE Pennsylvania Street	Lake City
Summers Elementary	1388 SW McFarlane Avenue	Lake City
Deep Creek Community Center	11934 N US Highway 441	Lake City
Fort White Community Center	17579 SW State Road 47	Fort White
Lulu Community Center	205 SE Community Drive.	Lake City
Mason City Community Center	11110 South US Highway 441	Lake City
Richardson Community Center	255 NE Coach Anders Lane	Lake City
Springville Community Center	3710 NW Suwannee Valley Rd.	Lake City
Winfield Community Center	1324 NW Winfield Street	Lake City
Westside Community Center	431 SW Birley Avenue	Lake City

Special Needs

Mass care shelters are sometimes referred to as general population shelters. These types of shelters can be broken down to host and risk shelters. Risk shelters have been inspected by trained Red Cross personnel and are approved to provide relative safety if a severe storm or hurricane is coming right to our county.

There are different types of shelters that could be open. Mass care (general population) shelters and special needs shelters. Space in the special needs shelter is extremely limited. Only persons that meet the criteria will be admitted

to the special needs shelter. To find out if you meet the requirements visit our website www.columbiacountyem.com or call our office at 386-758-1125 to have a packet mailed to you. Please remember that you need to register before a storm is heading our way since once a confirmed storm is happening you will not be able to register. If you qualify for a special needs shelter you will need to bring a caregiver. Emergency management does not have the trained personnel to dedicate a medical professional to each client. Our local designated special needs shelter is Westside Elementary School.



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW IF YOU NEED SHELTER DURING AN EMERGENCY AND HAVE SPECIAL MEDICAL NEEDS...

Frequently Asked Questions:

What happens in case our area is threatened by a hurricane or storm and evacuations are issued?

Approximately 24-48 hours before a hurricane impacts our area, Emergency Operations Operators make phone calls to make evacuation arrangements to all Special Needs Registrants who have expressed transportation needs to a shelter on their registration forms. At the time you are called, if you accept transportation assistance, the operator will confirm your physical home address and pick up time and location are arranged. You must pack and be ready to leave when transportation arrives to take you to the shelter.

What if I need special transportation because I am unable to move or walk and need a wheelchair or stretcher?

You should inform the operator so that an appropriate vehicle arrives to pick you up. Evacuation staff needs your written authorization to enter your residence to move you. If your condition calls for this type of evacuation assistance, make sure to contact the Emergency Management office at 386-758-1125, and complete a Special Needs Registration Form prior to an event.

The Special Needs registry is updated annually.

What if a caregiver (or spouse) is accompanying me to the shelter?

You should let the operator know if someone will accompany you and need transportation. This person will be picked up at the same time and location as you and must bring his/her own supplies to the shelter.

What if I refuse or decline evacuation transportation assistance at the time an operator calls?

If you decide to stay home and refuse assistance for any reason, you may not be contacted or offered transportation assistance at a later time.

What if I will be transporting myself to the shelter?

Before going to the shelter, make sure you check local media advisories for shelter information such as shelter opening times and locations. Do not forget to pack your shelter supplies.

What if I did not express a transportation assistance need on my registration form and need transportation to a shelter?

After all persons who have expressed a transportation need on their forms have been contacted, operators will make an effort to call persons who have not expressed this need.

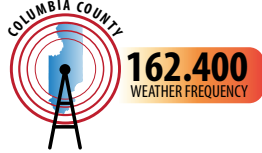
What happens after a hurricane or storm conditions pass?

Once weather and other conditions are considered to be safe by local officials, shelter occupants can return to their homes. Transportation is provided to those without transportation access.

Shelter Packing List

1. Medications and Medical Supplies – Daily Prescriptions (Two-week supply. Your pharmacy records may not be available for days.) Oxygen bottle and or concentrator, Glasses, Hearing Aids, Walker, Wheelchair, Etc.
2. Important Papers – Personal Identifications, Family Phone Numbers, Copies of Prescriptions, Doctor's Name and Phone Number.
3. Personal Items – Toothbrush, Paste, Soap, Towel, Etc.
4. Comfort Items- Blankets, Sleeping Bag & Pillow, Lightweight Folding Chair.
5. Extra Clothing- Comfortable clothing.
6. Special Dietary Foods – (If you have a special diet).
7. Entertainment Items – Books, Magazines, Cards and Games.
8. Flashlight, Batteries, Radio with Batteries.

* Have these items packed and ready BEFORE transportation arrives for you. An evacuation process is swift and starts well in advance of a disaster!



What To Listen For

Ways to Stay Informed

Current Storm Information

National Weather Service: www.weather.gov
National Hurricane Center: www.nhc.noaa.gov
Central Pacific Hurricane Center: www.prh.noaa.gov/cphc

Historical Storm Information

National Climatic Data Center: www.ncdc.noaa.gov
NOAA Coastal Services Center: www.csc.noaa.gov

Emergency/Preparedness Information

American Red Cross: www.redcross.org
FEMA: www.fema.gov

Mobile NHC and NWS Information
Mobile NHC website in basic HTML: www.nhc.noaa.gov/mobile
Mobile NWS website for smartphones: mobile.weather.gov
Mobile NWS website in basic HTML: cell.weather.gov

Other Information

Audio Podcasts: www.nhc.noaa.gov/audio/index.shtml
Geographic Information System Data: www.nhc.noaa.gov/gis/
NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards: www.weather.gov/nwr
Hurricane Tracking Charts: www.weather.gov/os/hurricane/

Facebook

NHC Facebook Page:
www.facebook.com/US.NOAA.NationalHurricaneCenter.gov
CPHC/ NWS Honolulu Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/US.NationalWeatherService.Honolulu.gov

Twitter

Atlantic: [@NHC_Atlantic](https://twitter.com/NHC_Atlantic)
Eastern North Pacific: [@NHC_Pacific](https://twitter.com/NHC_Pacific)
Central Pacific: [@NWSHonolulu](https://twitter.com/NWSHonolulu)
Storm Surge: [@NHC_Surge](https://twitter.com/NHC_Surge)

▲ **HURRICANE WATCH:** An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are possible within the specified area in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds. During a Watch, prepare your home and review your plan for evacuation in case warnings are issued. Listen closely to instructions from local officials.

▲ **TROPICAL STORM WATCH:** An announcement that tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73mph) are possible within the specified area within 48 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. During a Watch, prepare your home and review your plan for evacuations in case warnings are issued. Listen closely to instructions from local officials.

▲ **HURRICANE WARNING:** An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are expected somewhere within the specified area in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds. The warning can remain in effect when dangerously high water or a combination of dangerously high water and waves continue, even though winds may be less than hurricane force.

▲ **TROPICAL STORM WARNING:** An announcement that tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone.

▲ **EXTREME WIND WARNING:** Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eyewall, are expected to begin within an hour. Take immediate shelter in the interior portion of a well-built structure.

Additional Watches and Warnings are issued to provide detailed information on specific threats such as floods and tornadoes. Local National Weather Service offices issue Flash Flood/Flood Watches and Warnings as well as Tornado Warnings.





Emergency Management and the Red Cross recommend the following three step process to preparedness:

BUILD A DISASTER KIT

Have supplies for a minimum of 72 hours for your family and your pets. Disaster kits can be used for any disaster or personal event. It is also recommended that you keep a kit in your car, so that you already have one if you are forced to leave your home in a hurry.

MAKE A PLAN

Disaster may strike at any time and you could very easily be separated from your family and loved ones. Establish a point for your family to meet up, a so called "rally point." Make sure all of your family knows where it is. Make sure everyone knows alternate routes out of your neighborhood, in case debris covers the road, or it is flooded. You never want to drive through standing water if you can avoid it, because you don't know how deep the water might be. Turn around, don't drown!

STAY INFORMED

Tune to local radio stations, websites, if you have power and are able to access the internet (this has become an outlet for keeping the printed newspaper readers in touch with the latest information, local television stations are also another outlet to utilize. Again, report local impacts to county emergency response personnel as soon as they happen. Also, be sure to follow any protective actions that may be issued by authorities.

The hardest events that hit our county are the non-declared events. These events do not get a Presidential Declaration, or even a State Executive Order of Disaster. In those cases the local agencies are the ones that are tasked with supporting the recovery process.

Columbia County Emergency Management and the North Central Florida Chapter of the American Red

Cross ask you to please be prepared year round. Hurricanes and severe weather don't pay attention to the calendar and can happen at any time during the year. If you need further information please visit either of our websites at www.redcross.org or you can visit our county emergency management page www.columbiacountyem.com.

SEVERE WEATHER

Severe weather doesn't have a specific season, it can occur winter, spring, summer or fall! All it takes is the correct mix of atmospheric conditions and a severe weather event could be on us! Here are some ideas to keep you safe when severe weather threatens.

SAFETY TIPS

Thunder and Lightning

- Go inside a house, building or car.
- Stay away from windows.
- Don't take a shower or bath.
- Don't use a phone that has a cord except in an emergency.

Hurricanes

- Shutter, board up or tape windows.
- If instructed by authorities, turn off water and electricity at main terminals.
- Plan a flood free route if evacuation is necessary.

Tornados

- Get into a house or a building.
- Go to the basement or an inside hallway or closet.
- Stay away from windows.

EMERGENCY KIT

- Keep these items handy in case of emergency.
- Drinking water and canned/boxed food
- First aid supplies
- Radio and extra batteries
- Flash lights
- Blankets

And remember assistance IS NOT always around the corner.



Lake City Utilities

Natural Gas Public Awareness Program

The Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 requires pipeline operators to develop and implement a public awareness program. At Lake City Utilities (LCU), our goal is to continue to provide safe, reliable natural gas service to our customers and ensure the safety of those who live and/or work near our natural gas pipelines.

The objective of this Public Awareness Program is:

- To educate the public on how to recognize the odor of natural gas and how to respond if they detect possible gas odors. Early recognition of gas odor and proper response can save lives and property.
- To warn the public about potential safety problems with certain flexible appliance connectors.
- To raise awareness about the presence of buried natural gas pipelines in our community.
- To help the public and excavators understand the steps that they can take to prevent damage and respond properly if they cause damage to our pipelines.
- To educate the public about how to prepare for hurricane season with regard to natural gas appliances.

What is Natural Gas?

Natural gas is a mixture of hydrocarbon gases, primarily methane (CH₄), naturally occurring in rock formations deep below the earth's surface. The natural gas is withdrawn and transported to homes and businesses through an underground system of pipes.

Natural Gas Safety Precautions

Natural gas is colorless, odorless, lighter than air, and nontoxic. Breathing natural gas is not harmful as long as there is an adequate supply of fresh air to breathe along with it. Natural gas by itself will not burn, but with the proper mixture of gas and air combined with an ignition source, combustion can occur.

Why Does Natural Gas Smell So Bad?

Natural gas is safe, clean, and efficient, but it has no odor. To identify natural gas we add a harmless odorant called mercaptan, which gives natural gas its distinctive "ROTTEN EGG" smell.

What Should I Do If I Smell Natural Gas?

The natural gas industry has an outstanding safety record, but if you smell natural gas, in the event of a gas leak inside a building:

- Do not turn on or off any lights or appliances.
- Do not use your home phone or cell phone in your house. - Do not light matches.
- Immediately extinguish any cigarettes or open flames such as candles.

- DO leave the building and call LCU from a nearby phone at 752-2031 and follow the recorded instruction, then wait for our representative to arrive.

Leaks from natural gas pipelines are extremely rare; however, it is important that you know how to recognize the signs of a leak if one were to occur in your area. A strong odor of "ROTTEN EGGS," hissing sounds, or dirt blowing up from a hole are signs of a leak. If you suspect a leak:

- Do not try to fix the leak.
- Do not light matches, smoke, use a cell phone, or attempt to enter or start any vehicle.
- DO move away from and upwind of the suspected pipeline leak before calling LCU at 758-5405. Follow the recorded instructions, and then wait for our representative to arrive to investigate the situation.

In any case, if you feel that life or property is in danger, CALL 911. LCU has an excellent working relationship with our police and fire departments.

Flammable Vapors and Appliances Are a Dangerous Mix

Natural Gas Appliances Use Pilot Flames to Start the Appliance. Do Not Store Substances with a Flammable Vapor Near a Natural Gas Appliance

Both gasoline and kerosene produce vapors that can catch fire causing severe burns or property damage. Vapors cannot be seen. They are heavier than air and can move along the floor a good distance from the original source by way of air currents coming from other rooms. An active pilot light on an appliance can light these vapors causing a fire.

DO NOT use or store flammable products such as gasoline, solvents, or adhesives in the same room or area where a water heater or any other gas appliance is installed. Keep flammable products stored in approved containers with lids tightly closed, and keep them away from children and appliances.

Keep paper, curtains, paints, solvents, etc. away from gas appliances. They can be a fire hazard.

Natural Gas Appliance Flexible Connectors

A flex connector is the corrugated metal tubing used to bring gas from supply pipes to your appliance. Uncoated, brass connectors are dangerous and can cause a serious gas leak. Replace them immediately with a stainless connector or plastic coated brass connector.

A certified professional or LCU should inspect and change your flex connectors. For an appointment call LCU at 752-2031 and ask for Customer Service.



Why Be Concerned About Carbon Monoxide

Carbon Monoxide (CO) is an odorless, tasteless, invisible gas that can be formed when fuels like charcoal, coal, gasoline, kerosene, natural gas, propane, or wood are burned with a insufficient supply of air.

A natural gas appliance could produce carbon monoxide if:

- Boxes, laundry, or other materials are blocking the base, restricting air flow.
- The vent hood, pipes, or flues are blocked or corroded.
- The unit is installed or adjusted improperly.
- It's used incorrectly (i.e., heating a room with a gas stove or using a gas or charcoal grill indoors).
- The heat exchanger is cracked.

Call LCU for natural gas appliance inspections. Natural gas furnaces and heating products such as fireplace logs and space heaters should be inspected every year. Other appliances, such as heaters, clothes dryers, ranges, and cook tops should be checked for proper operation. All natural gas appliances come with a manual. Always read the manual for proper installation, cautions, and warnings.

What Is Carbon Monoxide Poisoning?

The early effects of Carbon Monoxide poisoning mimic the flu, so watch out for these warning signs:

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Dizziness and disorientation
- Muscle weakness or fatigue

If the flu-like symptoms are NOT accompanied by fever, or if everyone in the family is ill, or if the symptoms disappear when you leave the house, you may have a CO problem. If CO symptoms are present, leave the building immediately and call LCU at 752 2031, extension 405, and we will send a trained technician to test for CO. Prevention is the only way to deal with carbon monoxide and the best prevention is regular inspection by a trained service technician.

CALL BEFORE YOU DIG:

It's not just another catchy slogan, it's the LAW!

Today, more and more utility companies that supply your home with electrical power, natural and propane gas, water, sewer, telephone, and cable television service are delivering those services underground. It's also possible that these buried service lines are close to the surface, making digging a dangerous and expensive proposition.

Fortunately, you can find out where utility owned lines are buried on your property with one FREE call to Sunshine State One Call at 811. When you make that one call, Sunshine State One Call will notify our member companies of your project and will, in turn, tell you where the buried lines they own are located.

Florida law requires that you wait two full business days before beginning your project. This law also applies to contactors, excavators, or anyone who is digging on private or public property. The majority of utility accidents are caused by hitting underground utility lines. For additional information call Sunshine State One Call at 811 or visit their web site at www.sunshine811.com. Dig Safely!

Preparing for Hurricane Season

LCU is very fortunate that we have had no incidences on our natural gas system. This is not to say we need to let our guard down, because gas systems in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and the Florida Panhandle had massive damage.

Before the Storm

When A Hurricane Threatens

- Leave the gas on. Because most gas facilities are located underground, rarely does a hurricane threaten natural gas service.
- Move or secure items not firmly installed.
- Check your yard for loose items. This includes grills, patio furniture, swings, pool equipment, and supplies. If it is not firmly secured, secure it or move it to a secure area.
- Any grill needs to be securely tied down. This includes the grill lid. If the grill is propane (LP), re-move the propane tank and securely tie it down outside. Propane tanks should never be stored inside and grills should never be operated indoors.

If Asked To Evacuate

Leave the gas on. Turning off the gas could result in unnecessary delays in restoring your gas service. By leaving your gas on, you will be able to cook, and as long as there is a reliable supply of water, you will have hot water.

After A Hurricane

Clean-up efforts after previous hurricanes show that more gas lines are broken during clean-up than during the actual storm. Before removing fallen trees it is very important to call Sunshine State One Call at 811 for your FREE utility line locate.

Ranges: Gas ranges with pilot lights require no additional care. Cook as usual. When the power is out, surface top burners with electric ignition can be easily lit. Refer to your owner's manual.

Clothes Dryers: If the power is out, you will not be able to operate your dryer, because dryers need electricity to operate.

If You Smell Gas: Follow the instructions in the "Natural Gas Safety Precautions" section on the other side.



Lake City Utilities

205 N. Marion Ave. Lake City, FL 32055
www.lcfla.com

**If you have any additional questions,
please call 386-752-2031, extensions 405.**



Numbers To Know

To Report A Power Company Outage		Your Account Number	
Clay Electric		1-888-434-9844	
Duke Energy		1-800-228-8485	
FP & L Customer Service		1-800-468-8243	
Suwannee Valley Electric Cooperative		1-800-752-0025	
Columbia County Public Works		(386) 758-1019	
Telephone Companies			
AT & T Repairs:	Residence	1-877-737-2478	
	Business	1-866-620-6900	
Comcast		1-800-266-2278	
Windstream		1-855-411-2600	
Local Radio Stations			
WQLC 102.1, Lake City, Power Country	(386) 755-4102		
WCJX 106.5 FM, Lake City, The X	(386) 755-9259		
WJTK 96.5 FM, Lake City, The Jet	(386) 758-9696		
WNFB 94.3 FM, Lake City, Mix 94.3	(386) 752-1341		
WQHL 98.1 FM, Live Oak, The Big 98	(386) 362-1250		
WDSR 95.5 FM, Lake City, The Falcon	(386)752-1340		
Local Media Web Address			
Lake City Reporter	(386) 752-1293	www.lakecityreporter.com	



IMPORTANT WEB ADDRESSES

Columbia County Board of City Commissioners
www.columbiacountyfla.com

Columbia County Emergency Management
www.columbiacountyem.com
facebook.com/Columbia-County-Florida-Emergency-Management

City of Lake City
www.lcfla.com

Columbia County Sheriff's Office
www.columbiasheriff.org

Florida Division of Emergency Management
www.floridadisaster.org

National Weather Service Jacksonville
www.srh.noaa.gov/jax

National Hurricane Center
www.nhc.noaa.gov

American Red Cross No. Central Florida Chapter
www.redcross.org/fl/gainesville

Catholic Charities Lake City Regional Office
www.catholiccharitieslakecity.org

United Way of Suwannee Valley
www.unitedwaysuwanneevalley.org

Florida Highway Patrol Traffic Information
www.flhsmv.gov

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
www.fema.gov

F P & L
www.fpl.com

Clay Electric Cooperative
www.clayelectric.com

Duke Energy
www.duke-energy.com

Suwannee Valley Electric Cooperative:
www.svec-coop.com

Florida Department of Transportation
www.dot.state.fl.us

Florida Forest Service
www.floridaforestservice.com/

Fire Adapted
www.fireadapted.org

