



December: Hurricane Season is Over, Now What?

Hurricane Season officially ended November 30. Some of you may be wondering “What now?”. Well, hurricanes are not the only hazard we face in PSL, and in our “winter” months of December through May, there are several different hazards we face such as severe weather/lightning (peaks in January/February), tornadoes (peaks in March), and due to the lack of rain during our “dry” season, anytime can be a threat for wildfires in Florida. And, when the rain returns, it is usually heavy and causes some flooding issues. So don’t worry, we will give you tips and information on how to stay prepared for all of these hazards throughout our winter season.

Are you prepared for a wildfire?

Do you know how to better prepare your home against the threat of wildfires? According to the US Fire Administration, you should create a 30- to 100-foot safety zone, by doing the following things around your home:

- 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.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a stovepipe or chimney outlet.
- Ask the power company to clear branches from powerlines.
- Remove vines from the walls of the home.
- Mow grass regularly.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue. Place a screen over the grill -- use nonflammable material with mesh no coarser than one-quarter inch.
- Regularly dispose of newspapers and rubbish at an approved site. Follow local burning regulations.
- Store gasoline, oily rags, and other flammable materials in approved safety cans. Place cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.
- Stack firewood at least 100 feet away and uphill from your home. Clear combustible material within 20 feet. Use only wood- burning devices evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL).
- Review your homeowner’s insurance policy and also prepare/update a list of your home’s contents.



Flood Safety is everyone's business

Flooding is the top hazard in Florida, we have more flooding events than any other hazard (even hurricanes). This is due to our flat topography (making it hard to drain rainfall), heavy aerial rainfalls (particularly during the rainy season), and sandy soils not conducive to absorption of all of the rain we get.

Even though we have FEMA Flood Zone Maps highlighting places at higher risk for flooding, any emergency manager will tell you that all of Florida is a flood zone.



As a matter of fact, the majority of flooding in Florida takes place outside of a marked flood zone. This is due to many factors, but particularly in this part of Florida, aerial flooding due to intense rainfall is very common, whereas riverine flooding (rivers getting high and flowing out of their banks) is nominal compared to the rest of the country.

Things you can do to protect yourself from flooding or better prepare yourself for the potential of flooding can be found in the City's Flood Facts brochure and throughout our flood webpage at www.cityofpsl.com/flood. There you will find helpful tips to prepare you and your family for flooding, and ways to protect your home against it. The best way to protect the life you've built is by purchasing flood insurance for your home. Visit <http://www.floodsmart.gov/> or contact your local insurance agent to purchase flood insurance.