

Hurricane & Tropical Storm Preparation Planning

_____ Church
_____, Florida

The purpose of this document is to assist congregations in pre and post disaster planning. Storm preparations are vital in completing the steps required to minimize the effects if a major storm hits your area and to designate who will do what, when. There is not a one size fits all plan so tailor the plan to fit your congregations need. If you would like assistance with your disaster planning contact Stephen Garcia, the Synod Disaster Response Director, at stepheng@fbsynod.org.

The Disaster Response Team

1. A disaster response team will have primary responsibility for overseeing and implementing the storm preparation plan. The disaster response team should include the following:
 - a. Disaster Team Incident Coordinator (IC)
 - b. Property Team
 - c. School Team
 - d. Records
 - e. Congregation team
 - f. Community team

Additional volunteers should be recruited as needed.

2. The Disaster Response Team will monitor any approaching storms that threaten your area and be prepared to implement the disaster plan as required.
3. The Disaster Team IC will coordinate a meeting as soon as practicable following a storm that has affected your area to evaluate damage and determine the response required.
4. The Disaster Response Team should meet annually in April to review and update the plan and deal with specific concerns/needs related to the upcoming storm season and to apply lessons learned from the past season. (See Appendix A Hurricane Season Contact List)

General Concerns

1. The safety and well-being of church members is the primary concern. A questionnaire should be provided to congregations in April to be returned no later than May 1 each year to assist in determining current and changing needs. Information and resources should be made available to your congregation with printed packets prior to each storm season by June 1st or directed to the Synod website Disaster page at www.fbsynod.org and click on the Disaster tab, to make necessary storm preparations.
2. Preparations at the church will address the following areas of concern:
 - a. Property – maintain current inventories and video documentation of facilities
 - b. Electronics/Technology – move offsite or to safe location onsite
 - c. Musical Instruments – move offsite or to safe location onsite
 - d. Records/Documents – backup digital records, move physical records
 - e. School property – inventory and secure items
3. Preventative maintenance and addressing potential problem areas in advance will be an ongoing process, overseen by the Property Team.
4. The Parish Administrator will arrange for off-site storage of vital records, backup digital records, documents, and selected technology equipment in advance of any impending need for such action. Additionally, it will be periodically reviewed which items require duplicated and kept off site and coordinate the offsite storage.

The Emergency Plan

The following actions will be taken by the designated persons on the timeline indicated.

Please Note: For detailed plans from team leaders, please see the appendices of this document:

- Appendix A – Contact List
- Appendix B – Supply List
- Appendix C – Property
- Appendix D – Congregation
- Appendix E – Community
- Appendix F – Records
- Appendix G - School

1. Hurricane/Tropical Storm Advisory Issued (72 - 96 Hours)

- Disaster Team is alerted by the Incident Command
- Technology back-up provisions prepared
- Gather required supplies (*Appendix B*)
- Disaster Team meets as required – Threat assessment completed
- Congregation Team begins contacting members requiring transportation and/or shelter
- Property begins to organize and assign members to specific tasks (*Appendix - C*)

2. Hurricane/Tropical Storm Watch Issued (48-72 Hours)

- Disaster Team meets to discuss the situation and review plans
- Property will move supplies from storage that will be used to protect electronics and other equipment (tarps and plastic wrap)
- Contact those most vulnerable who may need to move to shelter to insure all are certain of upcoming arrangements (those living in mobile homes, barrier islands, and those identified by the questionnaire as needing shelter)
- Check generator and chain saw for proper operation
- Fuel church vehicles and all fuel cans
- Begin to move items identified as being stored off site to designated storage
- Make arrangements for proper back up of important materials
- School will clear playground and other School area of all movable equipment toys, art frames, etc. and stored in sheds or classrooms
- Property moves School electronic and electrical equipment to an upper level and covers with tarp
- Critical School records and files are relocated to secure off-site location
- School staff are alerted to stand by for closing and/or evacuation notices
- School staff will be released

3. Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning (24-48 Hours)

- Secure the buildings—remove and store campus items that might become airborne, secure doors/windows as possible
- Move members to shelter that have been identified as requiring such action
- Electronics equipment wrapped in plastic (projectors, photo copiers, sound panel, etc.)
- Power to electronic equipment turned off as necessary
- Store loose exterior items in sanctuary or garage
- Cover sanctuary floor with tarp to store outside items that are moved indoors
- School food and drink is moved off site or destroyed – clear refrigerators
- Announcements regarding regular events/activities are made for church members and the community by mailings and email
- Pastor secures \$1,500 cash for emergency assistance for those in need
- Move predetermined items to storage rental

4. **Storm Approaching (12 - 24 hours)**

- Double check security of buildings, office equipment, electronics, musical instruments, and all records.
- Assist members needing transportation and/or shelter

5. **Post Event**

- Assess property for damage
- Determine availability of church campus and congregation for community needs (food bank, Family Promise, water, etc.)
- Contact:
 1. Insurance Company
 2. Shepherds contact/assess congregation members for any needs
 3. School staff and parents to determine needs
 4. Contact, if necessary, County Emergency Management
 5. School staff and parents for school status and reopening plan
 6. Make announcements regarding schedules/events and continuing programs
- Return stored equipment to exterior areas unwrap equipment and set in place
- Return equipment from off-site storage reconnect and check for proper operation
- Clean and restock all refrigerators and freezers
- Make repairs to buildings and grounds as needed
- If major damage occurred, make plans for continued operation at alternate location

Hurricane Preparedness Questionnaire Please Respond

Your name(s): _____

Your phone number: _____

Your emergency contact phone number: _____

Your emergency contact name: _____

Please check all that apply to you:

- I (we) need transportation to the following:
 - An approved hurricane shelter
 - A pharmacy to pick up prescriptions (Please note You should have at least two weeks' worth of your medications before the storm hits)
 - A bank or ATM to have cash on hand
- I (we) have special medical needs and will need medical shelter:
- I (we) are registered with the _____ County's People with Special Needs (PSN) program.
- I (we) will need to register with the _____ County's People with Special Needs (PSN) program at (xxx) xxx-xxxx.
- I (we) plan to stay in my (our) home during a storm and do not anticipate needing assistance.
- I (we) do not reside in the _____ area during hurricane season.
- I (we) can supply shelter at my (our) home.

Address: _____

Approximate directions:

- I (we) can provide can accommodate ___ number of people at my (our) home.
- I (we) can provide transportation to the following:
 - An approved hurricane shelter
 - A pharmacy to pick up prescriptions
 - Shopping
 - A bank or ATM to have cash on hand
- I (we) will volunteer to help prepare the church campus prior to the disaster
- I (we) will volunteer to help clean up the church campus after the disaster

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Please watch and listen for additional information on hurricane preparedness to the congregation from The Hurricane Task Force.

Hurricane & Tropical Storm Preparation Plan

_____ Lutheran Church
_____, Florida

Appendix F SCHOOL

_____ Name of School

Annual tasks, to occur in month before “hurricane season” and academic year begins

- Chain of command is verified
- Any necessary contact with _____ Public Schools is completed
- Parents are reminded about our emergency plans and are re-informed about our closing procedures
- Names, addresses, home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, and email addresses for all staff, including regular substitutes, are updated and distributed to each staff member, to the Parish Administrator, and to others who are identified or named by the Disaster Team
- Calling trees are updated – one for staff and one for parents
- Building evacuation drills are practiced at least monthly
- At least one battery-operated radio with extra batteries immediately is available at the Director’s desk

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Watch Issued (48 – 72 hours)

- Playground and other School area are cleared of all moveable equipment, toys, art frames, etc. and stored in the sheds or in a classroom
- Staff are alerted to stand-by for closing announcement and evacuation decisions
- Staff members are released to attend to own home preparation
- Property team members move all electronic and electrical equipment to the upper level of the Loft, and securely cover with canvas tarp
- All critical records and files are boxed and placed in a central location

Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning (24 – 48 hours)

- All food and drink products are moved offsite or destroyed
- All five refrigerators are emptied and unplugged
- All critical records and files are removed to a secure location
- Building is secured – all doors locked

Post Event

- In coordination with the Disaster Team and the Property Ministry leaders, entire campus is inspected for safety and security
- Once campus is re-opened, calling trees are activated so staff members and parents are informed of status and of re-opening plan
- Calling tree also identifies any special needs of staff members, and plans are made to assist them
- All rooms are cleaned
- Playground equipment is returned to play areas
- Refrigerators are cleaned and disinfected, and plugged in
- Food and drink supplies are acquired and stored
- Computers, phones, and similar items are re-attached to electrical outlets and tested for performance

Return to Operation

- As many as possible teaching staff members return to the School and re-establish curriculum plans – may require two or more days
- Re-opening is announced to parents and to public
- When children return, teachers talk with each family to ascertain their status and level of stress
- Individual attention is given to those children who need support
- Teachers are to return to normal routine as soon as possible

Hurricane & Tropical Storm
Preparation Plan

_____ Lutheran Church
_____, Florida

Appendix G Records

_____ Lutheran Office Hurricane Preparedness

At the beginning of the new year each year, the _____ will make sure that all inventories are updated and properly stored (one copy in our safety deposit box and one in _____).

Additionally, rent a storage unit from May 1 –November 30th:

Pastor and _____ will sit down and cover what church documents will have to be packed and stored offsite.

_____ will make a list of what financial records will be packed and stored offsite and make sure that the finance committee is okay with this list.

72 – 96 hours out

Make sure everything needed to make adequate backups, sealing of the computers and storage containers are available for all records to be stored offsite during a storm.

- Black box
- Flash drives
- Waterproof tubs with lids
- Large roll of plastic wrap

Be prepared to assist others in campus preparations for the storm.

48-72 hours out

Make two complete backup of all computers, storing one backup in the safety deposit box and the other copy to be stored offsite (storage unit). Begin assembling documents to be stored offsite.

24-48 hours out

Pack all documents that are to be stored offsite, pack and secure all computers and any other office items to be moved to the storage unit. Move copiers to a dry place and wrap them in plastic.

The _____ will make sure that when finally leaving the church campus, all the necessary documents with phone numbers for after the storm activities are in the possession of the _____.