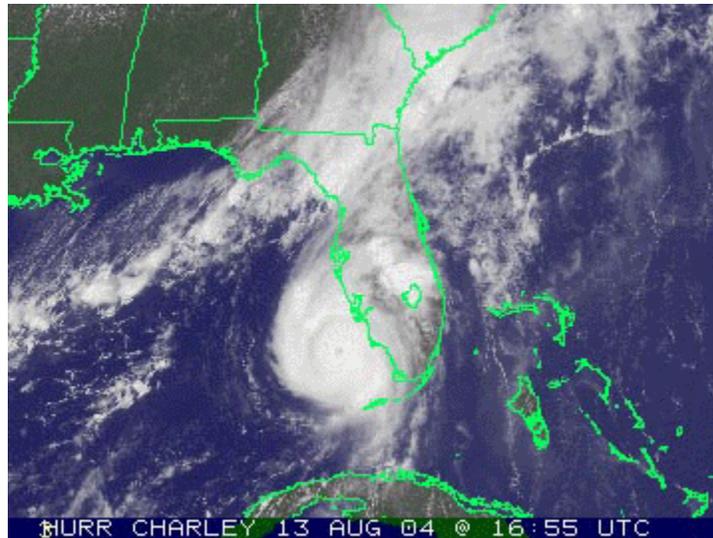




# CITY OF PUNTA GORDA

## Hurricane Preparedness Brochure



## ARE YOU READY?

Hurricane Preparedness begins at home! Are you ready? Please take some time to review the information contained in this document. It may save your home and possessions, the life of your pet, and/or your life.

You may want to print and save information on these pages now, as you may not have power if a storm is approaching.

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## DEFINITIONS

**Hurricane Season.** Hurricane season runs from June 1<sup>st</sup> through November 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Hurricane.** Tropical storm with sustained winds of 74 mph or greater. A typical hurricane starts as a **Tropical Wave**. If the tropical wave becomes better organized it becomes a **Tropical Depression**. If conditions are favorable, it then can become a **Tropical Storm**, at which point it gets a name. Once the sustained winds reach 74mph or greater it becomes a Hurricane.

**Hurricane Categories.** The Saffir-Simpson Scale assigns hurricanes to five categories based on wind speed and damage potential:

Category	Wind Speed	Damage
One	74-95 mph	Minimal
Two	96-110 mph	Moderate
Three	111-129 mph	Extensive
Four	130-156 mph	Extreme
Five	157 mph or greater	Catastrophic

**Tropical Storm Watch.** A tropical storm is smaller than a hurricane. Storm winds are less than 74 mph, but can still cause widespread damage and flooding. Tropical storm watches are made where tropical storm conditions pose possible threats within 48 hours in a specific coastal area.

**Tropical Storm Warning.** A tropical storm warning means that tropical storm conditions with possible sustained winds of 39-73 mph are expected within 36 hours in specific coastal areas.

**Hurricane Watch.** A hurricane watch is a notice of potential hurricane conditions. It means that a hurricane is close enough for everyone to be prepared to take precautionary measures. Watches are usually issued 24-36 hours prior to landfall.

**Hurricane Warning.** A hurricane warning means that sustained wins of 74 miles per hour or higher are expected in the area within 24 hours to a specific coastal area. Precautionary measures must be taken immediately.

## HURRICANE HAZARDS



**Tornadoes.** Tornadoes are considered nature's most violent storm. A tornado is a violent, whirling, funnel-shaped cloud that touches the ground. Tornadoes may form in the rain bands of a hurricane and cause significant damage. While tornadoes in Southwest Florida are not as intense as those in the Midwest belt, they can inflict tremendous damage with little or no warning. You should be familiar with the following information regarding tornadoes:

**Tornado watch:** Conditions are favorable for the formation of tornadoes. Remain alert for changing weather conditions.

**Tornado warning:** A tornado has been sighted or is indicated by weather radar to be in your area. You should plan to take shelter immediately.

**Funnel Cloud:** A violent, whirling, funnel-shaped cloud that does not touch the ground. Some people may mistakenly call these tornadoes.

**Waterspout:** A tornado over water.

If a tornado warning is issued, you should plan to do the following:

At **Home:** Go to a room without windows such as a bathroom or a closet. Stay away from windows. Protect your head and arms.

In a **Mobile Home:** Get out and find shelter elsewhere. Do not stay in a mobile home.

At **School:** Go into a center hallway and stay away from windows. Areas with wide, free-span roofs such as auditoriums, gymnasiums and other areas should be avoided.

In a **Motor Vehicle:** Stop your vehicle, get out and seek shelter elsewhere. Do not get under or next to your vehicle. If a tornado shelter is not nearby, a ditch or low-lying areas is your next best solution. Do not try to outrun a tornado in your car.

If **Outdoors:** Try to get into a secure building. If not, lie in a ditch or other low-lying areas or crouch near a strong building, if you cannot get into a shelter.



**Storm Surge.** Storm Surge is defined as an abnormal rise in the sea level accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm. As a storm makes landfall, tide levels of up to 25 feet may occur along the Southwest Florida coast. With the improvements in forecasting, the 'information age' and timely evacuations, the number of deaths from hurricane storm surge has been drastically reduced over the past 30 years. However, it is important to understand the risks from hurricane storm surge and heed the warnings and evacuation orders

given by local emergency management officials.

## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

During a hurricane, the following telephone numbers may be of service to Punta Gorda residents:

<b>Local Emergency Numbers</b>	
Police, Fire, or Medical Emergencies	9-1-1
Non-Emergency Police, Fire or Medical	639-4111
Punta Gorda Emergency Operations Center (This number is activated when the EOC becomes operational)	575-5580
Punta Gorda Hurricane Hotline (Provides residents with hurricane-related information such as watches/warnings)	575-3388
Charlotte County Emergency Operations Center	833-4000
Charlotte County Sheriff's Office	639-2101
American Red Cross	629-4345

<b>Federal Agencies</b>	
FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)	1-800-462-9029
TTY for hearing/speech impaired	1-800-462-7585
Disaster Information Helpline	1-800-525-0321
TTY for hearing/speech-impaired	1-800-660-8005
FEMA Fraud Protection	1-800-323-8603
National Flood Insurance Program (Policy/Information)	1-800-720-1090
<b>State Agencies</b>	
Attorney General (Consumer Fraud)	1-850-414-3600
Department of Insurance	1-800-22-STORM

<b>Public Agencies</b>	
Florida Power and Light (to report outages)	1-800-4-OUTAGE
Sprint (Repair Services) Residential	1-800-788-3600
Sprint (Repair Services) Business	1-800-786-6272
Comcast Cable (Repair Services)	625-6000
Or Toll-Free	1-888-831-2481

## RADIO AND TELEVISION ADVISORIES

Weather advisories and evacuation information can be obtained by listening to the following television and radio stations.

### Television Channel/Cable

SNN 6/6  
WBBH (NBC) 20/2  
WFTX (FOX) 36/4  
WINK (CBS) 11/5  
WXLT (ABC) 40/10  
WZVN (ABC) 26/7  
Weather Channel /31

### AM/FM Radio

WGPU-FM (90.1)  
WIKX-FM (92.9)  
WINK-FM (96.9)  
WBCG-FM (98.9)  
WCVU-FM (104.9)  
WKII-AM (1070)  
WINK-AM (1240)  
WENG-AM (1530)  
WCCF-AM (1580)

### VHF Radio

NOAA 3  
COAST GD 9  
16  
22A

### CB Radio

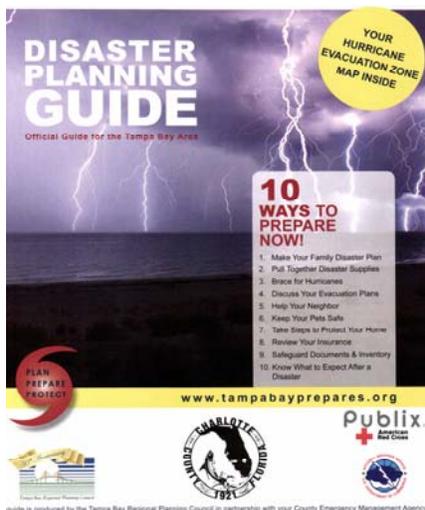
Channel 9

## LINKS TO OTHER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

There is a wealth of information available on the internet for emergency management. The following links are provided for your reference:

Federal Emergency Management Agency  
State of Florida Emergency Management  
Charlotte County Office of Emergency Mgmt.  
National Hurricane Center  
The Weather Channel  
American Red Cross

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)  
[www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)  
[www.charlottecountyfl.com/emerg.htm](http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/emerg.htm)  
[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)  
[www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com)  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)



Additional publications available are the Charlotte County Emergency Management Office's "Disaster Planning Guide" and the "Emergency Management Services Brochure". These publications are generally distributed in mid-May of each year. These can also be viewed online at the following website: <http://www.charlottecountyfl.com/emergency/>. These will provide you with additional information on developing your own hurricane plan.

## HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS KIT

The Boy Scout motto is "Be Prepared". This slogan could not be any more appropriate than for your response to the issuance of a TROPICAL STORM or HURRICANE WATCH. In order to aid you in your preparations, one of the first steps is to have the necessary supplies on hand. The following is a recommended list of supplies:

### Disaster Planning Kit

**Water** – at least one (1) gallon daily per person for 3-7 days

**Food** – at least enough for 3-7 days

- Non-perishable packaged or canned food/juices
- Foods for infants and/or elderly
- Snack foods
- Non-electric can opener
- Cooking tools/fuel
- Paper plates / plastic utensils

**Blankets / Pillows, etc.**

**Clothing** - seasonal / rain gear/ sturdy shoes

**First Aid Kit / Medicines / Prescription Drugs**

**Special Items** - for babies and the elderly

**Toiletries** - hygiene items

**Moisture wipes**

**Flashlight / Batteries**

**Radio** - Battery operated and NOAA weather radio

## Additional Disaster Planning Considerations

**Cash** - Banks and ATMs may not be open or available for extended periods.

### **Toys, Books and Games**

**Important documents** - in a waterproof container

- Insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, etc.
- document all valuables with videotape if possible

**Tools** - keep a set with you during the storm

### **Vehicle fuel tanks filled**

### **Pet care items**

- Proper identification / immunization records
- ample supply of food and water
- a carrier or cage
- medications
- muzzle and leash

### **First Aid Kit Supplies** should include:

- Sterile adhesive bandages in assorted sizes
- Assorted sizes of safety pins
- Cleansing agent/soap
- Latex gloves (2 pairs)
- Sunscreen and Insect Repellant
- 2-inch and 4-inch sterile gauze pads (4-6 each size)
- Triangular bandages (3)
- Non-prescription drugs
- 2-inch and 3-inch sterile roller bandages (3 rolls each)
- Scissors and Tweezers
- Needle
- First aid tape
- Moistened towelettes
- Q-tips, cotton balls
- Antiseptic
- Thermometer
- Tongue blades (2)
- Tube of petroleum jelly or other lubricant

All first aid supplies should be kept in a waterproof portable container.

## Food and Water Safety Tips

*The information contained in this section is courtesy of the Federal Emergency Management Agency in cooperation with the American Red Cross and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.*

If a hurricane or other disaster strikes the community, you may not have access to food, water and electricity for days, or even weeks. By taking some time now to store emergency food and water supplies, you can provide for your entire family.

Having an ample supply of clean water is a top priority in an emergency. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments can double that amount. Children, nursing mothers and ill people will need even more. You will also need water for food preparation and hygiene. Store at least a total of one gallon per person, per day. You should store at least a two-week supply of water for each member of your family.

If supplies run low, never ration water. Drink the amount you need today, and try to find more for tomorrow. You can minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool.

### How to Store Water

Store your water in thoroughly washed plastic, glass, fiberglass or enamel-lined metal containers. Never use a container that has held toxic substances. Plastic containers, such as soft drink bottles, are best. You can also purchase food-grade plastic buckets or drums. Seal water containers tightly, label them and store in a cool, dark place. Rotate water every six months.

### Emergency Outdoor Water Sources

If you need to find water outside your home, you can use these sources. Be sure to purify the water according to the instructions listed on this site before drinking it.

- Rainwater
- Streams, rivers and other moving bodies of water
- Ponds and lakes
- Natural springs

Avoid water with floating material, an odor or dark color. Use saltwater only if you distill it first. You should not drink flood water.

## Hidden Water Sources in your Home

If disaster catches you without a stored supply of clean water, you can use the water in your hot-water tank, pipes and ice cubes. As a last resort, you can use the water in your reservoir tank of your toilet (not the bowl).

Do you know the location of your incoming water valve? You'll need to shut it off to stop contaminated water from entering your home if you hear reports of broken water or sewage lines.

To use the water in your pipes, let air into the plumbing by turning on the faucet in your house at the highest level. A small amount of water will trickle out. Then obtain water from the lowest faucet in the house.

To use the water in your hot-water tank, be sure the electricity or gas is off, and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Start the water flowing by turning off the water intake valve and turning on a hot-water faucet. Do not turn on the gas or electricity when the tank is empty.

## How to Purify Water

In addition to having a bad odor and taste, contaminated water can contain microorganisms that cause diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and hepatitis. You should treat all water of uncertain purity before using it for drinking, food preparation or hygiene. There are many ways to treat water. None is perfect. Often the best solution is a combination of methods.

Two easy treatment methods are outlined below. These measures will kill most microbes but will not remove other contaminants such as heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals. Before treating, let any suspended particles settle to the bottom, or strain them through layers of paper towel or clean cloth.

- **Boiling:** Boiling is the safest method of treating water. Bring water to a rolling boil for 3-5 minutes, keeping in mind that some water will evaporate. Let the water cool before drinking. Boiled water will taste better if you put oxygen back into it by pouring the water back and forth between two clean containers. This will also improve the taste of stored water.

- **Disinfection:** You can use household liquid bleach to kill microorganisms. Use only regular household liquid bleach that contains 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite. Do not use scented bleaches, color safe bleaches or bleaches with added cleaners.

Add 16 drops of bleach per gallon of water, stir and let stand for 30 minutes. If the water does not have a slight bleach odor, repeat the dosage and let stand another 15 minutes.

The only agent used to treat water should be household liquid bleach. Other chemicals, such as iodine or water treatment products sold in camping or surplus stores that do not contain 5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite as the only active ingredient, are not recommended and should not be used.

While the two methods described above will kill most microbes in water, distillation will remove microbes that resist these methods, and heavy metals, salts and most other chemicals.

- **Distillation:** Distillation involves boiling water and then collecting the vapor that condenses back to water. The condensed vapor will not include salt and other impurities. To distill, fill a pot halfway with water. Tie a cup to the handle on the pot's lid so that the cup will hang right-side-up when the lid is upside-down (make sure the cup is not dangling into the water) and boil the water for 20 minutes. The water that drips from the lid into the cup is distilled.

## Food Supplies

### Short-Term Food Supplies

Even though it is unlikely that an emergency would cut off your food supply for two weeks, you should prepare a supply that will last that long. The easiest way to develop a two-week stockpile is to increase the amount of basic foods you normally keep on your shelves.

### Storage Tips

- Keep food in a dry, cool spot - a dark area if possible.
- Keep food covered at all times.
- Open food boxes or cans carefully so that you can close them tightly after each use.
- Wrap cookies and crackers in plastic bags, and keep them in tight containers.
- Empty opened packages of sugar, dried fruits and nuts into screw-top jars or airtight cans to protect them from pests.
- Inspect all food for signs of spoilage before use.
- Use foods before they go bad, and replace them with fresh supplies, dated with ink or marker. Place new items at the back of the storage area and older ones in front.

### Nutrition Tips

During and right after a disaster, it will be vital that you maintain your strength. So remember:

- Eat at least one well-balanced meal each day.
- Drink enough liquid to enable your body to function properly (two quarts a day).
- Take in enough calories to enable you to do any necessary work.
- Include vitamin, mineral and protein supplements in your stockpile to assure adequate nutrition.

## When Food Supplies are Low

If activity is reduced, healthy people can survive on half their usual food intake for an extended period and without any food for many days. Food, unlike water, may be rationed safely, except for children and pregnant women.

If your water supply is limited, try to avoid foods that are high in fat and protein, and don't stock salty foods, since they will make you thirsty. Try to eat salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals and canned foods with high liquid content.

You don't need to go out and buy unfamiliar foods to prepare an emergency food supply. You can use the canned foods, dry mixes and other staples on your cupboard shelves. In fact, familiar foods are important. They can lift morale and give a feeling of security in time of stress. Also, canned foods won't require cooking, water or special preparation.

## Special Food Considerations

As you stock food, take into account your family's unique needs and tastes. Try to include foods that they will enjoy and that are also high in calories and nutrition. Foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking are best. Individuals with special diets and allergies will need particular attention, as will babies, toddlers and elderly people. Nursing mothers may need liquid formula, in case they are unable to nurse. Canned dietetic foods, juices and soups may be helpful for ill or elderly people.

Make sure you have a manual can opener and disposable utensils. And don't forget nonperishable foods for your pets.

## Shelf Life of Foods for Storage

Here are some general guidelines for rotating common emergency foods:

### **Use within six months:**

- Powdered milk (boxed)
- Dried fruit (in metal container)
- Dry, crisp crackers (in metal container)
- Potatoes

### **Use within one year:**

- Canned condensed meat and vegetable soups
- Canned fruits, fruit juices and vegetables
- Ready-to-eat cereals and uncooked instant cereals (in metal containers)
- Peanut butter
- Jelly
- Hard candy and canned nuts
- Vitamin C

**May be stored indefinitely** (in proper containers and conditions):

- Wheat
- Vegetable oils
- Dried corn
- Baking powder
- Soybeans
- Instant coffee, tea and cocoa
- Salt
- Noncarbonated soft drinks
- White rice
- Bouillon products
- Dry pasta
- Powdered milk (in nitrogen-packed cans)

### ***How to Cook if the Power Goes Out***

For emergency cooking you can use a fireplace, or a charcoal grill or camp stove can be used outdoors. You can also heat food with candle warmers, chafing dishes and fondue pots. Canned food can be eaten right out of the can. If you heat it in the can, be sure to open the can and remove the label first.

### ***If the Electricity Goes Off***

FIRST, use perishable food and foods from the refrigerator.

THEN, use the foods from the freezer. To minimize the number of times you open the freezer door, post a list of freezer contents on it. In a well-filled, well-insulated freezer, foods will usually still have ice crystals in their centers (meaning foods are safe to eat) for at least three days.

FINALLY, begin to use non-perishable foods and staples.

## HURRICANE SHOPPING LIST

The Hurricane Shopping List is presented as a courtesy to Punta Gorda residents. It was prepared by Charlotte County Emergency Operations in cooperation with the Charlotte Herald-Tribune.

### Week #1

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 gallon of water per person (and each pet)
- 1 jar of peanut butter
- 1 can meat
- hand-operated can opener
- instant coffee, tea, powered soft drinks
- matches (wooden ones are best)

#### **Hardware Store**

- flashlights
- hammers
- assorted nails
- wood screws

### Week #2

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 gallon of water per person
- 1 box heavy-duty garbage bags
- 1 can fruit
- Personal products
- video tape
- pet food, diapers, and/or baby food, if needed

#### **Hardware Store**

- smoke detector with battery
- heavy work gloves
- extra flashlight batteries
- duct tape



Hurricane season begins  
June 1st.  
Be prepared!

#### **Sponsors:**



## Hurricane Kit Shopping List



Adding a few items to your regular shopping list each week is the easiest way to complete your hurricane kit.

### Week #3

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 gallon of water per person
- 1 can vegetables
- 1 jar of jelly or jam
- 2 rolls toilet paper
- 1 large tube of toothpaste
- 1 box sanitary wipes or liquid hand sanitizer
- special foods for special diets, if needed

#### **First Aid Supplies**

- aspirin and/or acetaminophen
- rolls of gauze or bandages
- first aid tape
- adhesive bandages (in assorted sizes)

### Week #4

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 gallon of water
- 1 can ready to eat soup (not concentrate)
- 1 can fruit
- 1 can vegetables
- 1 bottle of shampoo

#### **First Aid Supplies**

- scissors
- tweezers
- antiseptic
- thermometer
- spare eyeglasses or contact lens supplies
- items for denture care, if needed

### Week #5

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 can ready-to-eat soup
- liquid dish soap
- unscented liquid bleach
- 1 can meat
- mosquito repellent

#### **Hardware Store**

- waterproof portable plastic container (with lid) for important papers
- portable am/fm radio (with batteries or hand crank)
- blankets or sleeping bag for each family member
- portable camp stove or grill
- stove fuel or charcoal, lighter fluid

#### **To Do List**

- Make family plan—who does what and where will your family ride out the storm
- Locate your water meter and electrical shutoff
- Check with your child's day care school to find out about their disaster plans
- Trim trees and store loose objects
- Install or test your smoke detector
- Use a video camera to tape the components of your home and store video tape with friend or family member who lives out of town
- Photocopy important papers and store safely
- Make a reservation to board your pet if you plan to go to a shelter
- Obtain cash or travelers checks
- Prepare a "go-pack" in case you need to evacuate
- Have a roll of quarters & dimes for emergency phone calls
- Establish an out-of-state contact to call in case of emergency

## HURRICANE SHOPPING LIST

### Week #6

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 large can of juice
- large plastic zip type food bag
- 1 box quick energy snacks
- 2 rolls paper towels
- aluminum foil
- oven mitts

#### **First Aid Supplies**

- anti-diarrhea medicine
- rubbing alcohol
- 2 pair latex gloves
- hydrogen peroxide
- petroleum jelly
- first aid book

### Week #7

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 can meat
- 1 can fruit
- 1 can vegetables
- 1 package paper plates
- 1 package eating utensils
- 1 package paper cups
- adult vitamins

#### **Hardware Store**

- Whistle
- ABC fire extinguisher
- Pliers
- Vise grips

### Week #8

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 can meat
- 1 can vegetables
- 1 box heavy-duty garbage bags
- Kleenex
- 2 rolls toilet paper
- 1 box quick energy snacks

#### **Hardware Store**

- leash or carrier for your pet, if needed
- tarpaulin, canvas for temporary roof repair
- crowbar
- Hatchet

### Week #9

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 box crackers
- assorted plastic containers with lids
- assorted safety pins
- dry cereal
- disposable eating utensils, plates, cups

#### **Hardware Store**

- double-sided tape or velcro type fasteners to secure movable objects
- masking tape

#### **First Aid Supplies**

- extra hearing aid batteries, if needed
- extra prescription medications

### Week #10

#### **Grocery Store**

- 1 box heavy-duty garbage bags
- 1 box quick energy snacks (such as granola bars or raisins)
- ice chest

#### **Hardware Store**

- camping or utility knife
- extra radio batteries
- local and state road maps
- plywood & fasteners to cover windows

### Week #11

#### **Grocery Store**

- 2 rolls paper towels
- 1 can meat
- 1 can fruit

#### **Hardware Store**

- 1 box disposable dust masks
- screwdriver
- plastic safety goggles
- handsaw and/or chain saw, fuel

### Week #12

#### **Grocery Store**

- large plastic food bags
- plastic wrap
- aluminum foil
- sandwich bread (freeze until needed)

#### **Hardware Store**

- Battery powered camping lantern
- generator and extra fuel
- broom, mop and bucket

#### **Keep in a waterproof, portable container:**

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

#### **Special Needs Residents**

If you or a family member has special needs, and will need assistance during an evacuation, you must register in advance with the Emergency Management Office by calling 505-4620.

#### **Do you know your flood elevation?**

Your elevation could determine whether or not you need to evacuate. To find out your elevation, call 941-743-1964.

## PUBLIC SHELTER INFORMATION

The following is a list of shelters in Charlotte County for the purpose of hurricane evacuation. It is important to note that not all listed shelters would be available at the time of a hurricane. Shelters opened by the Charlotte County Emergency Management Office during a hurricane evacuation will be announced on local radio and television outlets. Residents should listen to their local media for the most current and up-to-date information.

Shelter Name	Address
<b><u>Punta Gorda Shelters</u></b>	
Sallie Jones Elementary School	1221 Cooper Street, Punta Gorda
South County Regional Park	Carmalita & Cooper St./670 Cooper St. PG
Ventura Lakes Clubhouse Building	27110 No. Jones Loop Road, Punta Gorda
<b><u>Port Charlotte Shelters</u></b>	
Charlotte Harbor School	22450 Hancock Avenue, Port Charlotte
Cultural Center of Charlotte County	2280 Aaron Street, Port Charlotte
Friendship United Methodist Church	12275 Paramount Drive, Tropical Gulf Acres
Kingsway Elementary School	23300 Quasar Boulevard, Port Charlotte
L.A. Ainger Middle School	245 Cougar Way, Englewood
Lemon Bay High School	2201 Placida Road, Englewood
Liberty Elementary School	370 Atwater Street, Port Charlotte
Meadow Park Elementary School	3131 Lakeview Blvd., N.W., Port Charlotte
Murdock Middle School	17325 Mariner Way, Port Charlotte
Myakka River Elementary School	12650 Wilmington Boulevard, Englewood
Pilgrim United Church of Christ *	24515 Rampart Boulevard, Port Charlotte
Port Charlotte High School	18200 Cochran Boulevard, Port Charlotte
Port Charlotte Middle School	23000 Midway Boulevard, Port Charlotte
Vineland Elementary School	467 Boundary Boulevard, Englewood

## WHAT TO TAKE TO A PUBLIC SHELTER

Here are some things you should know about going to a hurricane evacuation shelter.



Hurricane evacuation shelters are provided for public use in the event a hurricane evacuation becomes necessary and if you have no other place to go. Shelters are always crowded, usually uncomfortable when the power goes off because there is no ventilation, long lines to use restrooms and to get food, and very noisy making it difficult to rest or sleep. Keep in mind you may have to stay in the shelter for several days.

It is recommended that other arrangements be made with a friend or relative that lives in a well constructed home, out of the evacuation area, and properly protected to withstand hurricane force winds. You will probably be more comfortable, certainly in a less crowded environment and among friends. If you go to a public shelter, you should be prepared to take the following items:

A change of clothing, rain gear and sturdy shoes.

Toiletries and personal items.

Blankets or sleeping bags.

Identification and any important papers.

Games or toys for children; books for adults.

Special items for infants or elderly family members.

Any special dietary needs and non-perishable foods for snacks.

Battery operated radio, flashlights and plenty of spare batteries.

Prescription medications or any over-the-counter medications you normally take.

Upon arrival at the shelter, please give your name and address to the shelter manager and/or volunteers, so you can be located if necessary. If you leave the shelter for any reason, check out with the manager and/or volunteer.

Remember, alcohol, weapons and pets are not permitted in public shelters. Documented service animals are allowed. Make arrangements to ensure your pet's safety and care.

## WHAT TO DO

### Before a Hurricane

The single most important thing for every resident to do is prepare a family hurricane plan, review it each year, and make any changes as necessary. The plan should include:

- If you plan to evacuate
  - ◆ Where you will go
  - ◆ What route will you take to get there
  - ◆ When you will leave
  - ◆ What supplies to take

If you plan to evacuate, you need to leave early. Make sure you have enough fuel and there may be long lines of traffic. Evacuation routes will be busy and fill up quickly and you don't want to be caught on the highway when the storm hits. A vehicle is not a safe haven during a storm.



- If you plan to stay
  - ◆ Ensure you have necessary supplies for at least 72 hours.
  - ◆ Ensure you have materials on hand to protect your home.
- If you plan to go to an evacuation shelter
  - ◆ Ensure your shelter kit is prepared and ready to go.

Whatever plan you decide on, you should ensure that you:

- Make arrangements for your pet.
- Contact an out-of-town friend or relative and let them know of your plans.

Once the storm is imminent, listen to your local radio and/or television stations for further information and actions to be taken. You should ensure that you do the following:

- Fuel your vehicle. Gas pumps will not work without electricity and if you plan to evacuate, you will need it.
- Secure and/or bring in outdoor furniture, toys, garden equipment, etc.
- Cover windows with plywood or with storm shutters and secure all doors.
- Turn refrigerators and freezers to the highest settings.
- Turn off any small appliances that are not needed.
- Fill sinks and bathtubs with water.
- Get an extra supply of cash, as banks and/or ATMs may not be operational after the storm.
- Prepare your boat as appropriate
- Turn off LP tanks.

## During a Hurricane



If you remain at home during a hurricane, you need to take the following precautions:

- Stay away from windows and doors, even if they are covered.
- Get into a small interior room, closet or hallway. In a two-story home, choose a 1<sup>st</sup> floor room.
- Close all interior doors and brace exterior doors, if possible.
- Lie on the floor under a table, or another sturdy

object. Some protection may be afforded by covering with a mattress during the height of the storm.

- If the eye of the storm passes over, **REMAIN INDOORS**. It will be calm for only a short period of time. As soon as the eye passes over, winds will increase rapidly to hurricane force from the opposite direction.
- Listen to your portable radio for current information and to ensure the storm has completely passed out of the area.

## After a Hurricane

- Keep listening to your local radio or TV stations for the most current information.
- Drive only if it is absolutely necessary, as debris may be covering roadways making them impassible. City crews will be working to clear roadways but it may take hours or even days to clear them all. Do NOT drive around to sightsee. If you encounter a barricade, turn around and go another way, this is for your protection.
- Areas may be flooded, do not attempt to drive in flooded areas. Avoid weakened bridges and washed out roadways.
- Stay on firm ground. Moving water only six inches deep can sweep you off your feet.
- Beware of downed power lines. Lines may be charged and dangerous. Standing water may be electrically charged from downed power lines.
- Expect the unexpected. Beware of snakes, insects or animals. This bear appeared in Punta Gorda Isles following Hurricane Charley. He was tranquilized and returned to his habitat.



- When you return to your home:
  - ◆ Enter your home with extreme caution. Beware of fallen objects or damaged roof and wall sections.
  - ◆ Remove shutters or plywood and open windows and doors to ventilate or dry your home if necessary.
  - ◆ Check gas, water and electrical lines and appliances for damage. Do not attempt to repair damaged gas or electrical lines. Call a professional.
  - ◆ Do not drink or prepare food with tap water until you are certain it is not contaminated.
  - ◆ Avoid using candles or other open flames indoors. Use a flashlight or other battery powered lighting.
- Use the telephone to report emergencies only. This includes cellular phones.
- Be especially cautious when using a chainsaw to cut fallen trees.
- Never connect portable generators to the main breaker in your home. Use them only to run necessary appliances and plug the appliance into the generator.
- Florida Power and Light may have information that may help you determine when power will be back in your area.

### Recovery

Depending on the severity of the damage done by a tropical storm or hurricane, it could be a matter of days or even weeks until residents are allowed to return to their homes. If you are not a member of the Punta Gorda Emergency Management Team, or a Public Safety Officer, you will not be allowed to return until the 'all-clear' order is issued. It is very important that residents take a picture identification card with them showing their current address. Curfews may be enacted as was the case during Hurricane Charley.

## SAFETY INFORMATION



### Mobile Home Preparation

Mobile homes are particularly vulnerable to hurricane force winds. Mobile home owners should take the proper precautions to ensure their mobile home is properly secured. Mobile home owners should be aware of the

following information:

- Florida law requires that mobile homes be secured using anchors and tie-downs. Tie-downs should be checked at least once a year by a licensed installer.
- If your mobile home is not in compliance with Florida law, you will not be allowed to purchase windstorm insurance.
- It is strongly recommended that mobile home owners evacuate when the order is given. Before leaving your home you should:
  - Shutter windows. Tape will add strength, but will not protect it completely.
  - Pack breakables in well-padded water-tight containers and place on the floor of the mobile home.
  - Turn off water where it comes into the home. Open faucets and leave them open.
  - Shut down fuel lines and turn off gas bottles at the tank.

## Pet Safety

Weather emergencies just don't affect people, they affect pets and animals as well. All pet owners need to take the time now to plan how you will protect your pets during a weather emergency. It is important to remember that shelters will not accept pets.



You should have a pet disaster kit available which should include:

- Pet food and treats
- Drinkable water in plastic bottles
- Can opener for canned food
- Pet medications
- Medical records

- A current photo of your pet(s) in case they get lost
- Leashes, harnesses and/or pet carriers so you can move your pet safely and/or secure them as they may be scared or act different than usual)
- The name of your veterinarian
- Pet beds and toys, if room exists

Store items that may be damaged if wet in waterproof containers. Other items should be stored in easily transportable containers that won't easily break. Avoid the use of bags made of paper or plastic.

All pets should have an identification tag and collar. If possible, attach to the pet's collar a phone number of a family member or friend not in the immediate area, so that anyone who may find your pet will be able to call them to reach you.

Make sure your pets are current on their vaccinations.

If you plan to evacuate, and can't take your pet with you, please make arrangements with a veterinarian clinic or kennel well in advance, as available spaces may fill up quickly. **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PETS BEHIND!** If your pets survive the storm, they could be injured or attempt to escape through broken windows or doors and become lost.

Many hotels/motels will accept pets in emergency situations. Please visit the pet friendly hotels/motels/resort lodging list for further information at [www.1clickpethotels.com/](http://www.1clickpethotels.com/).

### Additional Pet Safety Tips:

The approaching storm may frighten a pet. If at all possible, keep the pet with your family in your home, reassure them and remain calm.

**Never, never, never leave your pet chained outside.**

Never tranquilize your pets. They may need their survival instincts to escape potential danger.

After a storm, walk pets on a leash until they become reoriented to their surroundings. Be careful of downed power lines and other debris that may put your pet at risk.

Don't allow pets to consume food or water which may have become contaminated.

Monitor your pet's behavior after a storm, as they may become aggressive or defensive.

### Safety Tips for Other Pets:

Tropical Fish: If the power goes off, the aeration pump in the fish tank will stop. The pump may be operated by battery if the tank has an adapter.

Small Mammals: Carriers should be utilized to transport hamsters, gerbils, ferrets, and other small mammals.

Birds: Travel cages or carriers should be used to transport birds. Keep the cage in a quiet area. Do not let the bird out of the cage.

Reptiles: If you need to transport snakes, a pillowcase is a very good carrier, however, immediately transfer to a more secure cage when you reach your location.

Lizards: If transporting a lizard, transport in a secure cage or carrier.

### Finding and Returning Lost Pets.

The Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County is the only pet lost-and-found service in the area. Anyone who has lost or found a pet should contact the shelter at 941-625-6720 and relay the pet information. Phone lines may be down after the storm. The Animal Welfare League is located at 3519 Drance Street in Charlotte Harbor.

## Generator Safety



Portable generators are a great benefit to home owners after hurricane when the power goes off. They can be used to provide power to refrigerators, freezers, lights and other appliances. However, home owners should be aware of the following guidelines for safely connecting and operating a portable generator.

Never use a generator indoors or in an attached garage. Generators should be operated in a well-ventilated, dry area, away from air intakes into the home.

Do not connect your generator directly to your home's wiring. It can be deadly to you and others as it can 'backfeed' onto the power lines connected to your home.

Do not overload the generator. It should be used to power essential equipment and used when necessary. Prioritize your needs.

Make sure your generator is properly grounded in order to prevent electrical shock. Consult the manufacturer's manual for correct grounding procedures.

Carefully read all instructions in your portable generator's owner manual.

Keep children away from portable generators at all times.

Avoid getting burned, as many generator parts are hot enough to burn you during operation.

Never attempt to refuel a generator while it is running.

Turn off all equipment powered by the generator before shutting it down.

For further information, please visit Florida Power and Light at [http://www.fpl.com/storm/contents/generator\\_safety.shtml](http://www.fpl.com/storm/contents/generator_safety.shtml) for further information.

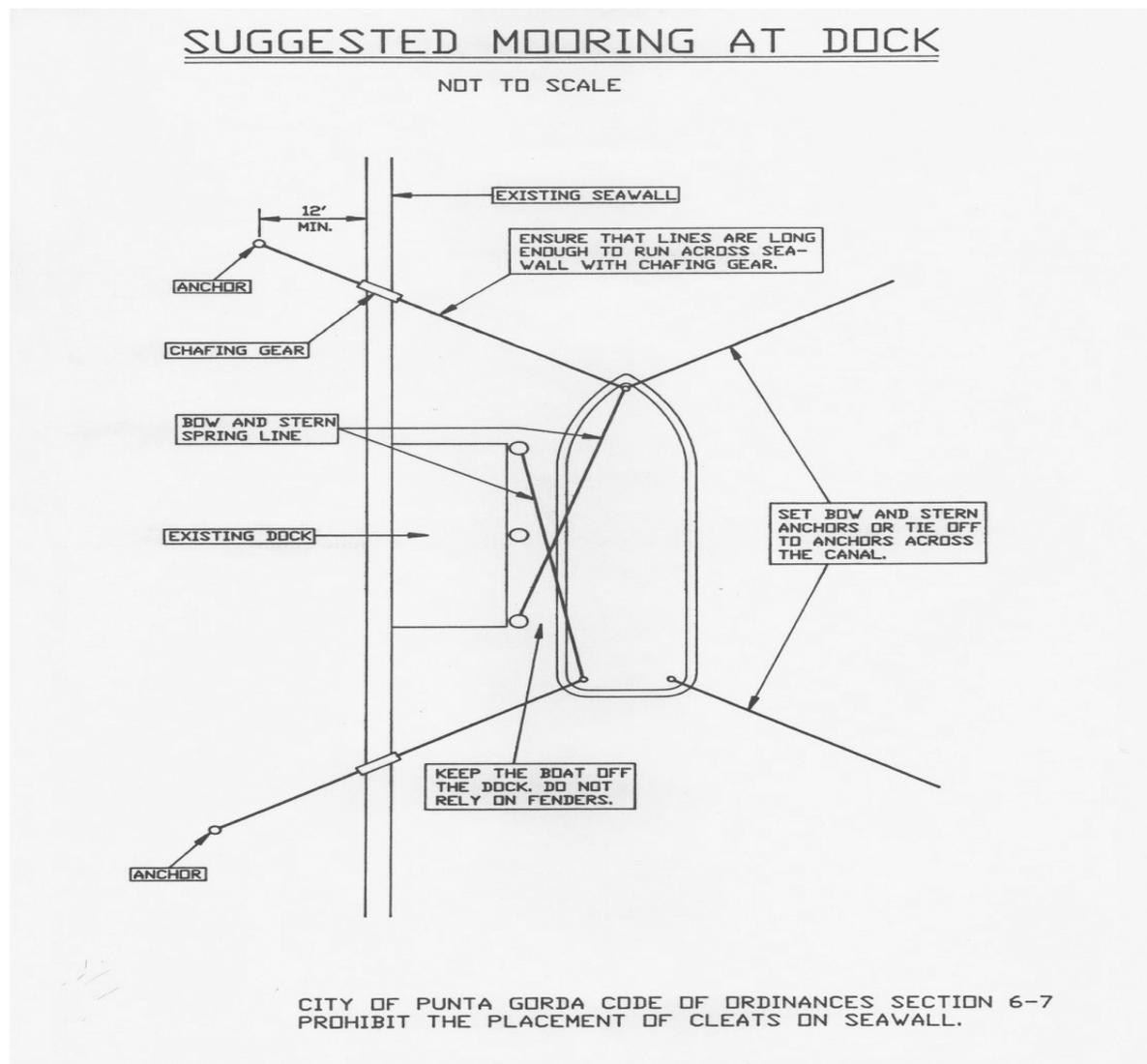
## Boat Mooring Safety

Boaters who don't store their boats on lifts need to make sure that they have a solid ground anchoring system. Anchors should be placed into the ground a minimum of six feet from the seawall. However, the further back from the seawall, the better. Be sure to include chafing gear to protect lines from rubbing against the seawall cap.

Boaters should check such things as ground anchors, dolphin pilings, bumper pilings, lines, lift cables and all of the other things purchased to protect the investment made in their boats.

As a reminder, the use of cleats on seawalls is prohibited by the City of Punta Gorda Code of Ordinances Section 6-7(b)(2)c.

The diagram below represents the suggested mooring at your dock.





**After Storm Clean-up.** Following Hurricane Charley, the City of Punta Gorda had the overwhelming problem of debris clean-up. The following guidelines are presented to residents to assist when clearing debris from your property.

**Household Garbage** includes anything that you normally put in your trash. Spoiled or contaminated food is a good example.

**Yard Waste** is defined as tree branches, twigs, cut up tree parts. Shrubs, palm fronds, and leaves also fall into this category.

**Construction Debris** includes any building construction materials. Glass, insulation, concrete blocks are good examples.

### Safe Rooms and Community Shelters

Please visit [http://www.fema.gov/hazard/tornado/to\\_saferoom.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/hazard/tornado/to_saferoom.shtm) for information regarding safe rooms and community shelters.