

INSURANCE



Most property owners have homeowners' coverage insuring them from catastrophic loss. Did you know that a typical homeowners' policy does not protect you from loss in flooding or rising water? Our county qualifies and participates in the [National Flood Insurance Program](#). We qualify by making building requirements stringent and in accordance with the [Florida Building Code](#) and local flood damage

prevention ordinances. If you don't have flood insurance, check with your insurance agent for a price quote on your home and your furnishings.

Don't wait until the hurricane warning has been issued.

There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance becomes effective, unless you are purchasing a new home with a mortgage.

Additional information can be obtained from your county Emergency Management office.

BEFORE THE STORM

✓ **Make sure that you have adequate coverage**

Property values have increased markedly over the past few years. Also, you may have made some improvements that increased the value of your home. Make sure that you review your insurance policy carefully and know your coverage limits. Consider increasing your coverage, if it is not adequate.

✓ **Check Your Policy for Flood and Windstorm Coverage**

Remember that a standard homeowners' policy **does not** cover flood damage caused by rising water. If you live in a flood prone, or designated flood area, you should talk to your agent about obtaining flood insurance. Standard Homeowners Insurance policies usually cover windstorm damage caused directly from wind, wind driven water or hail. Check to be sure a windstorm exclusion has not been

written into your policy. If you have any questions about whether your policy covers windstorm damage, contact your insurance agent.

✓ **Contact Your Agent to Discuss Possible Policy Changes**

Your insurance agent can provide information about rates and coverage and can assist you in making any necessary policy changes.



✓ **Know What Your Current Policy Does and Does Not Cover**

Standard homeowner policies usually limit coverage on items such as valuable jewelry, art, antiques, and money. You may need additional coverage for these items.

If your home is 50% or more destroyed, it may cost more than your homeowner's policy will pay to build it back to CURRENT building and life safety codes, unless you have a "rider" added to it, which covers this contingency.

Most homeowners' policies do not cover backup of septic tanks, wells or sewers into your home unless you have added a "rider" to your policy covering this type of loss.

✓ **Update Your List of Personal Belongings**

Make an itemized list of your belongings, their cost, dates of purchase, and serial numbers, if appropriate. Your insurance company will probably require proof of the cost of any item for which a claim is made. Photographs and/or videotapes are also good ideas that you may wish to consider.

✓ **Safeguard Your Records**

Keep a copy of your insurance policies and inventory records in a safe deposit box or with a relative or friend. If your property is damaged, it will be to your advantage to have access to this information. You may choose to take a copy with you if you evacuate.

AFTER THE STORM

➤ Beware of “Fly-by-night” Repair Businesses

Hire reputable and preferably local service people. They should have occupational licenses issued by either the City or the County.

➤ Report Damage to Your Insurance Agent Immediately

Your agent should provide you with claim forms and arrange for an insurance adjuster to visit your property and assess the damage.

➤ Make and Document Emergency Repairs

Your policy probably requires that you make emergency repairs to prevent further damage to your home or contents. Keep all receipts and take photographs of the damage before and after emergency repairs to submit with your claim.



➤ Take Precautions if the Damages Require You to Leave Your Home

Secure your property. Remove valuable items. Lock windows and doors. Contact your insurance agent and leave a phone number where you can be reached. These same precautions should be taken if you are required to evacuate before a storm. If you can not live in your home after the storm, your insurance company will be able to pay you for “Additional Living Expense” if you qualify. Make sure that you keep all of your receipts as you will need them to get reimbursed from the Insurance Company.

➤ Looting

Looting has occurred in many communities after a hurricane. Criminals may take advantage of the opportunity to enter evacuated homes and businesses. Local law enforcement agencies and, if necessary, the National Guard will do everything possible to minimize looting. Place jewels and valuables in a sealed freezer bag in your safe deposit box or take them with you when you evacuate.

The Department of Financial Services (DFS) recommends every home owner should have an insurance check up with their agent before hurricane season starts. Do I need flood insurance, check on Windstorm coverage, do I need more coverage and what does my policy cover and exclude?

If you rent, DFS recommends that you purchase Renters Insurance to cover your contents in the home or apartment.

www.myfloridacfo.com There are free consumer guides, including homeowner's insurance information available on our website under the listing of Consumer Help. You will also find an Insurance Library available to answer your questions. Do not forget to download your Homeowner's Financial Tool Kit; helping you make informed decisions when it comes to disasters

1-877-693-5236 and our storm number is: 1-800-22-storm