

Friday, June 02, 2023

THE FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH JOINS THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT IN URGING RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO PREPARE FOR HURRICANE SEASON



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Tallahassee, Fla.— Hurricane season has begun, and the Florida Department of Health (Department) is joining the Florida Division of Emergency Management in encouraging all residents and visitors to prepare for severe weather emergencies. Determine any risks to your home, property, or business, and update your emergency plans and supplies before Florida is threatened by a storm. It is important to stay prepared [before](#) and [after](#) a storm.

"It's time for every Florida resident and visitor to prepare for hurricane season and put a plan in place," **said State Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Ladapo.** "With this week being the start of hurricane season, it is a great opportunity for Floridians to obtain essential supplies and prepare for possible impacts of hurricane weather."

Make a Plan

It is essential that individuals have a plan before a disaster occurs. Following an emergency or disaster, you may lose access to basic services, such as power and water, and be subject to limited or no access to essentials like food and water. Visit the Florida Department of Emergency Management "Plan and Prepare" [webpage](#) for guidance on making an emergency plan for your family or business.

Sales Tax Holiday for Disaster-Preparedness Supplies

Passed by the Florida Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis, the sales tax holiday began Saturday, May 27, 2023, and extends through Friday, June 9, 2023. A second exemption period will begin Saturday, August 26, 2023, and extend through Friday, September 8, 2023. For more information and a list of qualifying items, please see the Florida Department of Revenue's [Taxpayer Information Publication on the 2023 Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday](#).



Disaster Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday

- \$10 or less**
 - Dog or cat food if sold individually or the equivalent if sold in a box or case
- \$15 or less**
 - Manual can openers
 - Collapsible or travel-sized food or water bowls for pets
 - Cat litter pans
 - Pet waste disposal bags
 - Hamster or rabbit substrate
- \$20 or less**
 - Reusable ice
 - Leashes, collars, and muzzles for pets
 - Pet pads
- \$25 or less**
 - Cat litter weighing 25 or fewer pounds
- \$30 or less**
 - Laundry detergent and supplies: powder, liquid, or pod detergent; fabric softener; dryer sheets; stain removers; bleach
 - Toilet paper, paper towels, paper napkins and tissues, facial tissues
 - Hand soap, bar soap, and body wash, sunscreen and sunblock
 - Dish soap and detergents, including powder, liquid, or pod detergents or rinse agents that can be used in dishwashers
 - Cleaning or disinfecting wipes and sprays, hand sanitizer
 - Trash bags
- \$40 or less**
 - Portable self-powered light sources
 - Pet beds
- \$50 or less**
 - Portable self-powered radios, two-way radios, or weather-band radios
 - Gas or diesel fuel tanks
 - Batteries, including rechargeable batteries, listed sizes only:
 - AA-cell, AAA-cell, C-cell, D-cell, 6-volt, 9-volt
- \$60 or less**
 - Nonelectric food storage coolers
 - Portable power banks
- \$70 or less**
 - Smoke detectors or smoke alarms
 - Fire extinguishers
 - Carbon monoxide detectors
- \$100 or less**
 - Tarpaulins or other flexible waterproof sheeting
 - Ground anchor systems
 - Portable pet kennels or pet carriers
 - Dog or cat food weighing 50 or fewer pounds
 - Over-the-counter pet medications
- \$3,000 or less**
 - Portable generators used to provide light or communications or to preserve food in a power outage

May 27-June 9, 2023
August 26-September 8, 2023
Visit floridarevenue.com/DisasterPrep



[Click to view the exempt sales tax items related to disaster preparedness.](#)

Make a Kit

As we stay on the lookout for upcoming storms, think about what to keep on hand in order to be prepared. The Florida Division of Emergency Management recommends that you [maintain a well-stocked emergency preparedness kit](#) to last you and your family for a minimum of seven days. Each individual or family disaster supply kit differs based on personal needs. Review the list below for the basic items to include in your kit.

- **Water:** Enough for drinking, cooking and sanitation purposes—pack a minimum of 1 gallon daily per person for 7 days.
- **Food:** Non-perishable packaged or canned food and juices, snacks and foods for those with dietary restrictions (e.g., infants and people with diabetes).
- **Cooking Supplies:** Manual can opener, cooking tools and fuel, paper plates, and plastic utensils.
- **Flashlight and Extra Batteries**
- **Pillows, Blankets and/or Sleeping Bags**
- **Clothing:** Complete change of clothes suitable for the current climate and include sturdy shoes to protect feet from debris or other sharp objects post-storm.
- **First Aid Kit, Prescription Medication, and Other Medicines:** Include a first aid kit and plan to bring medications that you need. After a storm, you may have limited supplies of your prescription medications and your local pharmacy may close. Keep an updated list of each medication you take, its dosing instructions, and the name and contact information of the prescribing doctor.
- **Radio:** Battery operated and NOAA weather radio.
- **Toiletries**

- **Cleaning Supplies:** Garbage bags, moisture wipes and other items.
 - **Cash:** Banks and ATMs may not be open or available for extended periods following a disaster.
 - **Important Documents:** Store all critical documents in a waterproof container and save electronically. Documents like insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, etc.
 - **Contact List:** Keep an updated list of all important contacts, including doctors, friends, relatives, out-of-state friends, or relatives.
 - **Special Items:** Assess all family member needs. Plan for infants, elderly and individuals with access and functional needs (e.g., medical items and baby bottles).
 - **Pet Care Items:** Proper identification, immunization records, ample supply of food and water, carrier or cage, medications, muzzle and leash, and a photo of you and your pet together to validate ownership.
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Know Where to Find Shelter

The time may arise when you may need to evacuate your home to go to a safer place. In certain situations, it may be safest for you to evacuate to a more secure location like a shelter. A hurricane evacuation shelter is a refuge of last resort; a place to go if you are not able to evacuate to a hotel or the home of a relative, friend, or co-worker. Hurricane shelters are also available for people who have no other place to go. The Florida Division of Emergency Management maintains a list of [open shelters on their website](#).

If you know or care for an individual with a disability or special need, such as a medical condition that requires assistance but not hospitalization, you should pre-register with the [Florida Special Needs Shelter Registry](#). Registering through the Florida Special Needs Registry allows local emergency management officials to provide important information and quickly assist you during an emergency. For more information, call your county's emergency management office or visit the Florida Special Needs Registry at <https://snr.flhealthresponse.com/>.

If you are eligible for a Special Needs Shelter, your [kit](#) should include the following:

- A list of medications and dosage
 - A 30-day supply of medications
 - Vital medical equipment for those who may be electrically or oxygen dependent
 - Back-up energy sources for essential medical equipment
 - Any special dietary needs or food
 - Personal information including:
 - Photo ID
 - Insurance card
 - List of emergency contacts
 - Your primary care provider's contact information
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Prevent Mosquito-Borne Illness

Immediately following a storm, flooding may occur. Mosquito eggs laid in the soil during previous floods can hatch and result in very large populations. Most of these mosquitoes are considered nuisance mosquitoes, however it's essential to protect yourself and your family from mosquito breeding and [mosquito-borne illness](#).

The risk of disease transmission through bites of infected mosquitoes to humans often increases during the warm, rainy months. To protect against mosquitoes, the Department urges the public to "Drain and Cover."

DRAIN standing water stop mosquitoes from multiplying.

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flowerpots or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pet's water bowls at least once a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER your skin with clothing or repellent to reduce mosquito bites.

- Clothing - If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves.
- Repellent - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, and IR3535 are effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your home.

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites:

- Clean out troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.

- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.
 - Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
 - Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.
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Stay Connected

During severe weather and other emergencies, the State Assistance Information Line (SAIL), a toll-free hotline, is activated to provide accurate and up-to-date information on emergency or disaster situations impacting the State of Florida.

The SAIL hotline is: 1-[800-342-3557](tel:800-342-3557).

You can also get helpful information from the Department's [Emergency Information](#) webpage. Additionally, one of the fastest ways to receive accurate health-related information is to monitor [@HealthyFla](#) on Twitter and on [Facebook](#).

About the Florida Department of Health

The Florida Department of Health, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at [@HealthyFla](#) and on [Facebook](#). For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit www.FloridaHealth.gov.