



Miami-Dade County Commissioner Sally A. Heyman Hurricane Tips

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Hurricane Tips

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While Miami-Dade has been spared from serious hurricanes and tropical storms in recent years, it's vital that residents are prepared throughout the 2014 hurricane season, which lasts from June 1 through November 30. Hurricane preparedness isn't just about protecting your family and property against the effects of extreme wind and rain. It's also about creating a plan ahead of time and organizing the important documents you might need in case of an emergency.

Commissioner Sally A. Heyman wants to help you get ready.

Quick Tips



Be Informed- Before a disaster, get information about local emergency plans for shelter and evacuation. If you feel you will need emergency evacuation assistance during a storm, call 3-1-1 for an application to be mailed to your residence. Have a list of local emergency contacts handy.

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Make a Plan- Create a family emergency plan and make sure to go over it with every member of your family. Make sure this plan covers evacuation routes, contact information, and important phone numbers. Download a family emergency plan at www.ready.gov.



Prepare a Kit- This kit should have enough items to survive for the first 72 hours after a storm. This includes non-perishable foods, one gallon of water per person per day, battery operated radio, and flashlights. Other items that should be included are medication, diapers and formula if you have a small child, and extra water and food for your pets.



Secure important documents - Secure all of your important documents and valuables in a safe location and store them in waterproof containers, or in a safe deposit box.



Review Insurance Policies - Review all current insurance policies before the storm season, especially flood or property insurance. If you are a renter, it is a good idea to purchase renters insurance. Flood zones are rated on a standard used by most federal and state agencies. There is a 30-day waiting period before flood insurance goes into effect, so don't delay.



Take an inventory of your property - Take an inventory of your personal property, such as clothes, jewelry, furniture, computers and audio/video equipment, and document it with photos and/or a video.



Clean up - Dispose of household and yard trash before a storm threatens. Properly prune trees and shrubs before a hurricane approaches. Residents can dispose of household trash, bulky items and tree cuttings at one of 13 Neighborhood Trash and Recycling Centers located throughout Miami-Dade County. If you have a lawn service, have them haul cuttings away.

For more information on what you can do to prepare for the 2014 Hurricane Season, download the 2014 Miami-Dade County Hurricane Guide at www.miamidade.gov/hurricane. This annual guide is filled with helpful tips on what to do before, during, and after a storm.

Hurricane Tip #1 Swimming Pool Preparedness

Before the Storm

Do not drain your pool before a storm.

Turn off all electrical power to your swimming pool and the swimming pool equipment (pool pump, lighting, chlorinators).
Remove ALL loose items from the pool area.

If you have a swimming pool cover be sure to OPEN the cover. Weight from any debris landing on the cover could destroy the cover itself and also damage or destroy the track system.

After the Storm

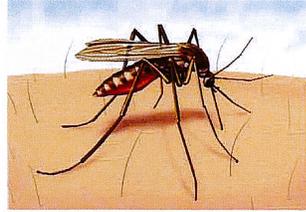
Clean out debris from swimming pool to keep it from staining permanently.

Balance water pH, superchlorinate or shock your pool, and run the filter until the water becomes clear.

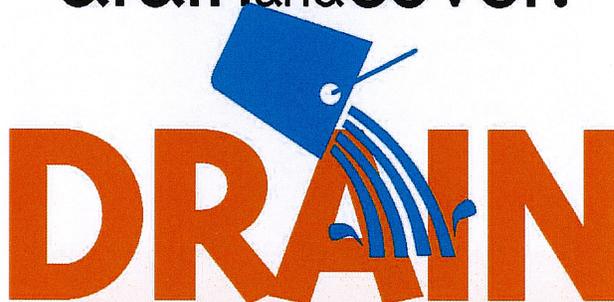
Don't allow anyone to use your pool right before or after superchlorination.

It may be tempting if your pool is a disastrous mess, but, again, don't drain it.

Check the Electrical System: Inspect your pool pump and motor for any damage. Let the motor dry for at least 24 hours. If you couldn't remove your equipment before the storm and it was underwater, get it inspected. When electricity has returned, call a licensed, insured pool repair company to thoroughly inspect your pool and equipment.



Feeling the sting of
mosquitoes?
Then it's time to
drain and cover.



Drain standing water.

Drain water from garbage cans, house gutters, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water 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 pets' water bowls at least once or twice a week.

PROTECT:

boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.

MAINTAIN:

the water balance (pool chemistry) of swimming pools. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

Stop mosquitoes from living and multiplying around your home or business.

Hurricane Tip #2 Boat Preparedness

Hurricane Preparation Plan - Trailered Boats

If possible, remove a trailerable boat from the water and store the boat and trailer in a garage or other sturdy structure.

If all else fails, tie the boat and trailer down. If driving the boat inland or storing it in a sturdy structure is not an option, plan to anchor the trailer into the ground. One way to anchor the trailer is by driving steel rebar into the ground and connecting them to the trailer with heavy duty tie straps. Some experts recommend tying your boat trailer to a sturdy tree, but hurricane-force winds can bring even the mightiest trees down. Anchor your boat trailer to the ground well away from trees, power lines, or other objects that can fall on it.

Be sure to place blocks inside of the trailer wheels between the frame and the axle, and let air out of the tires.

Strap the boat to the trailer and add weight. Use heavy ties to strap the boat down to the trailer. If your boat has an outboard motor, you can set the drain plug and partially fill the boat with fresh water to add extra weight. Do not fill the boat with water if you have an inboard motor. Instead, be certain that the drain plug is removed.

Remove everything! Otherwise the wind will tear it to shreds, or the wind-driven rain will severely damage it. Remove all canvas, plastic, electronics, deck gear, antennas, and any loose objects.

If you have an outboard engine, remove it along with your batteries, and store both in a dry, secure place.

Secure hatches, doors, and other openings. Use duct tape to make all openings as watertight as possible. Wind-driven rain will enter the boat through any crack or crevice. Use plastic and duct-tape to cover fixed instruments.

Hurricane Preparation Plan - Moored Boats

If your boat is not trailerable, the best scenario for your boat to survive a storm is to have it hauled out and secured on shore. If this is not feasible, and you decided to prepare your boat for a storm while it is moored, follow the rest of these instructions to give your boat the best chance of weathering the storm.

Charge batteries and disconnect the electric. Make sure to charge your batteries so bilge pumps will work. Disconnect the electric, water and other dock connections, and shut off fuel lines and close through hull fittings.

Protect your engines. Water will find a way into every opening, so protect your engine by covering engine room vents and plugging the exhaust pipes at the stern. If the vents are small, you can use duct tape. Otherwise, screw a piece of plywood over the vent and tape over the edges.

Remove loose deck items. Remove deck items, bimini tops, plastic, canvas, and plexiglass from the boat entirely. Take

down antennas and remove outriggers. Remove as many items as you can from the boat, and lash down any remaining loose items.

Prepare the interior of your boat. If your boat has a cabin, take precautions there as well by removing all loose items. Clean out the refrigerator, cabinets, and drawers because they will open with the violent motion of the boat. If possible, remove drapes, cushions, mattresses and other cloth items that will become soaked from leaks.

Remove electronics and cover instrument gauges. Remove electronics from the boat and cover both the holes and instrument gauges with plastic and duct tape.

Seal windows, hatches and doorways. Because wind-driven rain will enter the boat through any crack or crevice, Use duct tape to make all openings and seams as watertight as possible. Secure the boat in its moorings. A boat will best weather the storm if it is facing into the wind, so if you can, turn the boat with its bow to the wind within the mooring.

Follow these steps to secure the boat in the mooring:

- * Using mooring lines a 1/4" larger to double the diameter of your current lines, double the mooring lines on your boat, including spring lines.
 - * Distribute the load evenly using several cleats.
 - * Be sure to allow enough line as possible for the tide and storm surge.
 - * Protect your line by using chafing gear at each point that the line meets the boat. Use several feet of garden hose or leather, and consider that as the water rises, your lines will be angled downward.
 - * Put out as many fenders as possible, or lash old tires to the hull to protect the boat.
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Protect yourself
from mosquito
bites and the
diseases they
carry.

Don't forget to
drain and **cover**.

COVER



COVER YOUR SKIN WITH:

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.

COVER DOORS AND WINDOWS WITH SCREENS.

Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screens on windows, doors, porches, and patios.



Hurricane Tip #3 Preparations for the Yard

Tropical Storm and Hurricane Preparations for your yard is essential to prevent serious damage to landscaping during a hurricane or tropical storm. Thinning trees, bushes and shrubs is vital to prevent breakage as a result of high winds; the winds will be able to move through the plant with greater ease once

the plant has been thinned.

Tree branches that overhang the home should be cut back to prevent damage from a tree limb landing on the house. Branches located near electrical or phone lines should also be removed.

All objects should be brought indoors. This includes toys, swing sets, mailboxes, lawn and garden decorations, gardening tools, birdbaths, dog houses, wind chimes, satellite dishes, trampolines, garbage cans and any other items that could potentially turn into a flying projectile during the storm.

Stockade fencing is especially prone to collapse during a hurricane or tropical storm; removing every third panel can reduce wind resistance and improve the fence's chances of surviving the storm.

And finally, before a major hurricane or tropical storm strikes, homeowners should take time to document the condition of their property. Photographs or video of the property (inside the home, outside the home and the surrounding yard) can be invaluable when the time comes to file insurance claims.

Hurricane Tip #4 Pet Friendly Evacuation Centers



Miami-Dade County offers Pet Friendly Evacuation Centers for residents living in evacuation areas, unsafe structures or mobile homes. A family member must stay with the pet. For more information, call 3-1-1 or visit Animal Services Department's page on Pet Safety. You must pre-register for this service with 311.

Hurricane Tip #5 Evacuation Zones



If you live in an evacuation zone, please make every effort to relocate outside of the area to a family member's home, with a friend or a hotel.

I encourage you to contact my office and share your concerns and ideas on how we can improve our community. You can contact my office at (305) 787-5999 or via e-mail at district4@miamidade.gov.