



# City of Lakeland Water Utilities

## 2024 Emergency Preparation Resource Guide



Learn about resources tailored to help protect your loved ones and home against natural disasters. This guide includes comprehensive safety checklists, Polk County's evacuation and shelter maps, along with the Polk County's special needs registration form and much more.

For additional preparation resources please visit the links below:

[Public Safety](#) | [Hurricane Food List Polk County](#) | [Preparedness \(polk-county.net\)](#)

[Get Help](#) | [Emergency Preparedness](#) | [Red Cross](#)

[Plan & Prepare](#) | [Florida Disaster](#)

[Plan for Disasters](#) | [Ready.gov](#)

[Home](#) | [Florida Disaster](#)

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# KNOW YOUR ALERTS AND WARNINGS



FEMA

Receiving timely information about weather conditions or other emergency events can make all the difference in knowing when to take action to be safe. Local police and fire departments, emergency managers, the National Weather Service (NWS), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and private industry are working together to make sure you can receive alerts and warnings quickly through several different technologies no matter where you are—at home, at school, at work, or in the community.

For those with access and functional needs, many messages are TTY/TDD compatible and many devices have accessible accommodations. Review this fact sheet to make sure you will receive critical information as soon as possible so you can take action to be safe. Be sure to share this information with your family, friends, and colleagues. And remember to keep extra batteries for your mobile phone or radio in a safe place or consider purchasing other back-up power supplies such as a car, solar-powered, or hand crank charger.

## IPAWS INTEGRATED PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM

**Organized by FEMA, the Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) is the Nation's alert and warning infrastructure. It provides an effective way to alert and warn the public about emergencies using the Emergency Alert System (EAS), Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA), NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, and other public alerting systems from a single interface. IPAWS is used to send notifications for three alert categories—Presidential, AMBER, and Imminent Threat.**

For more information on IPAWS, EAS, and WEA, visit [www.ready.gov/alerts](http://www.ready.gov/alerts).

Using IPAWS, officials can send messages simultaneously through multiple pathways, including:

- EAS: used by alerting authorities to send detailed warnings to broadcast, cable, satellite, and wireline communication pathways;
- WEA: Free, 90-character emergency text messages sent by local alerting authorities to equipped mobile devices within range of cell towers broadcasting in the affected area. You do not have to sign up for WEA alerts. To find out if your mobile device is capable of receiving WEA alerts, contact your cellular service provider or visit [www.ctia.org/WEA](http://www.ctia.org/WEA); and
- IPAWS compliant digital road signs, sirens, and other systems.

# NOAA WEATHER RADIO ALL HAZARDS

The NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, or NWR, is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting forecasts, warnings, and emergency information 24 hours a day. It is a comprehensive weather and emergency information service available to the public. All-hazards messages include weather events, technological incidents like chemical spills, AMBER alerts, and national emergencies. NWR also broadcasts EAS notices.



A special weather radio receiver is required to receive NWR broadcasts. You can buy these receivers at many retail outlets such as electronics stores, department stores, big box stores, or online. Be sure to look for the Public Alert or NWR logo to ensure the radio meets technical requirements. Models identified as SAME, or Specific Area Message Encoding, receivers allow users to select alerts for specific geographic areas. For information on NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards, visit [www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr).

## LOCAL JURISDICTION EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

### OPT-IN/SIGN-UP TEXT AND EMAIL SYSTEMS

Many jurisdictions have opt-in public alert and warning systems. An opt-in system means you must sign up to receive the alert. Once you have signed up, officials in your area can send you text or email messages about local emergencies. Most opt-in systems allow subscribers to choose the devices that receive alerts as well as the types of alerts. Because you may not be near a television or radio when something happens, a local text or email alert can be an extremely useful source for critical information. Small costs may be associated with receipt of text messages from your mobile device service provider.

To find out what alerts are available in your area, you can do an Internet search with your town, city, or county name and the word "alerts"; you can go to the website for your local emergency management or public safety office; or you can contact these offices by telephone.

### ENHANCED TELEPHONE NOTIFICATION (ETN) SYSTEMS

In the event of an emergency, local officials in many local communities can send warning messages and instructions to individuals in an at-risk area through an ETN system, such as a Reverse 911® system. Most systems include landline phone numbers, but some also allow for messages to Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) and mobile phones through an opt-in process—check with your local emergency management for information on this system and available features.

## OUTDOOR SIRENS AND/OR VOICE ALERT SYSTEMS

Outdoor sirens and/or voice alert systems are used to alert people outdoors of an immediate danger so they can take cover. The system is not designed to be heard inside building walls. Note that some communities may still have the siren infrastructure in place but it may no longer be operable, so it is important to check with your local emergency management office to understand if this service is currently provided.

## LOCAL SCHOOL OR ORGANIZATION NOTIFICATION SYSTEMS

Many workplaces, schools, and community- and faith-based organizations have notification systems to warn individuals of emergencies and provide tailored notifications. These may range from listservs to opt-in text and email systems similar to those used by local jurisdictions.

### MOBILE APPS WITH LOCAL ALERT FUNCTIONS



#### FEMA APP

Stay updated with severe weather alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations across the U.S.; learn how to stay safe before, during, and after over 20 types of hazards; save a custom list of the items in your family's emergency kit; and locate and receive driving directions to open shelters and disaster recovery centers. You can also submit disaster-related photos to a public map using the Disaster Reporter feature. The FEMA App is also available in Spanish. Download the app to your mobile device or smartphone free on iTunes or Google Play. Learn more at [www.fema.gov/mobile-app](http://www.fema.gov/mobile-app).



#### AMERICAN RED CROSS APP

The Red Cross Emergency app combines more than 35 different types of severe weather and emergency alerts. You can choose the alerts that are important to your location or the location of loved ones. The "Family Safe" feature allows you to notify loved ones that an alert has been issued in their area and check to see if they are safe. The app also offers information on what to do before, during, and after severe weather hits and how to find open Red Cross Shelters. All content is also available in Spanish. You can download the app to your mobile device or smartphone free on iTunes (Apple-iOS 6.0 or later) and Google Play (Android). Learn more at [www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/mobile-apps).



#### THE WEATHER CHANNEL APP

Tracks weather and provides local forecasts and push alerts of severe weather to your mobile device. Download the app to your mobile device or smartphone free on iTunes (Apple-iOS 6.0 or later), Google Play (Android), App World (BlackBerry), and Windows Phone at [www.weather.com/apps](http://www.weather.com/apps).

# SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

## FOR INDIVIDUALS

- Confirm your mobile device can receive Wireless Emergency Alerts.
- Sign up for text and/or email alerts from your local jurisdiction.
- Consider purchasing a NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards.
- If you do not have a landline, check to see if your jurisdiction has options for VoIP and mobile phones to be connected to ETN systems such as Reverse 911®.
- Sign up for listservs and alerts for the workplace, schools, houses of worship, or other community organizations you'll want to hear from in an emergency.
- Download relevant hazard alerts and warnings apps.
- Create a list of all the alert systems available to you, and make sure everyone in the household receives the alerts as part of your household communication system.

## FOR ORGANIZATIONS

- Test internal communication systems to ensure all individuals in the organization can be contacted.
- Designate individuals to be responsible for distributing alerts from official sources.
- Consider purchasing a NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards.
- Develop a list of all the alert systems available for your community and your organization as a guide for people in the organization.
- Encourage individuals to sign up for alerts and warnings, and assist them with finding any needed information.

*The reader recognizes that the Federal Government provides links and informational data on various disaster preparedness resources and events and does not endorse any non-Federal events, entities, organizations, services, or products.*

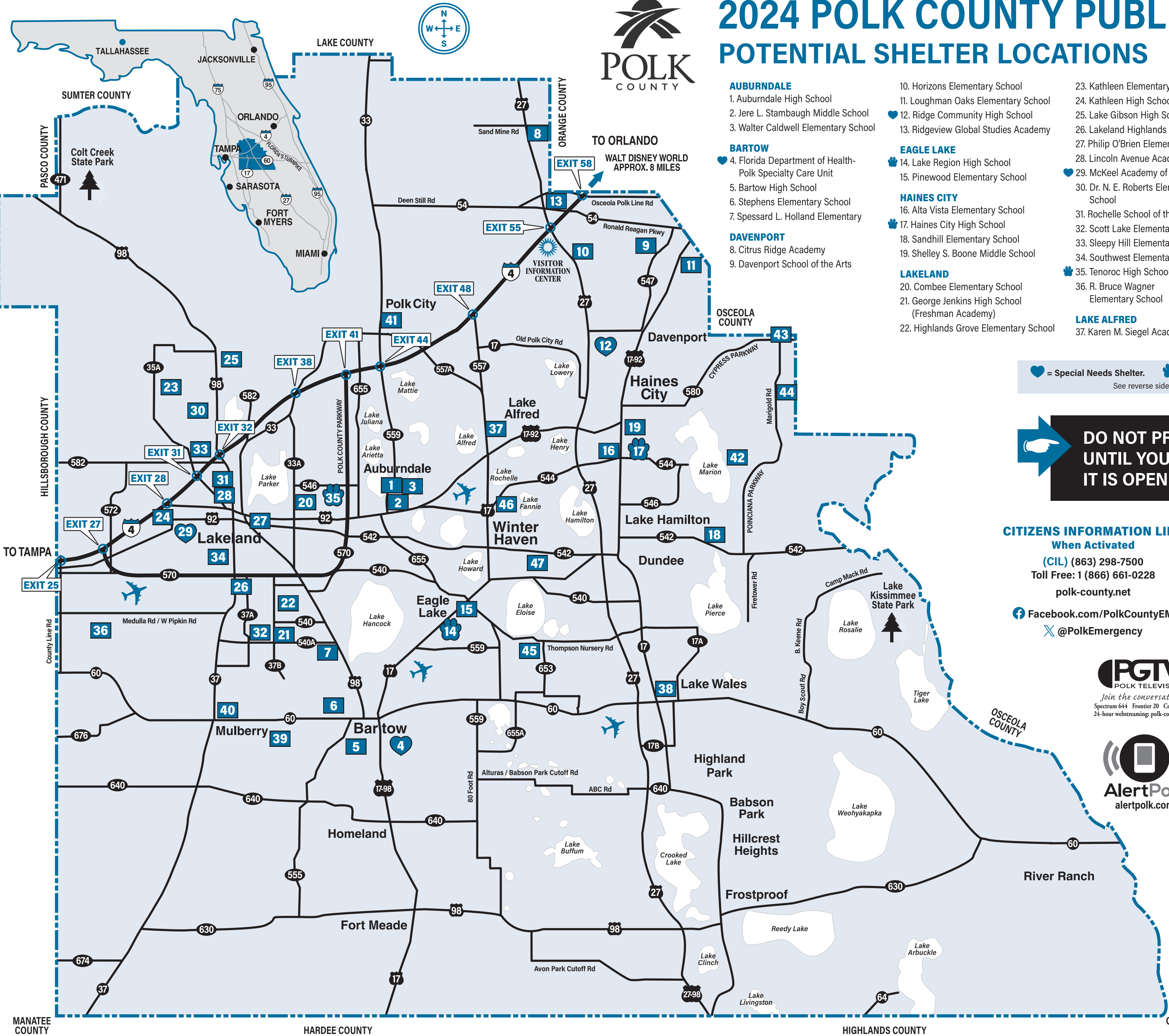


# 12 WAYS TO PREPARE

<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Sign up for Alerts and Warnings</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Make a Plan</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Save for a Rainy Day</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Practice Emergency Drills</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Test Family Communication Plan</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Safeguard Documents</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Plan with Neighbors</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Make Your Home Safer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Know Evacuation Routes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Assemble or Update Supplies</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Get Involved in Your Community</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <b>Document and Insure Property</b>



# 2024 POLK COUNTY PUBLIC SHELTERS POTENTIAL SHELTER LOCATIONS



- AUBURDALE**
  - Auburndale High School
  - Jere L. Stambaugh Middle School
  - Walter Caldwell Elementary School
- BARTOW**
  - 4. Florida Department of Health-Polk Specialty Care Unit
  - 5. Bartow High School
  - 6. Stephens Elementary School
  - 7. Spessard L. Holland Elementary
- DAVENPORT**
  8. Citrus Ridge Academy
  9. Davenport School of the Arts
- DAVENPORT**
  10. Horizons Elementary School
  11. Loughman Oaks Elementary School
  12. Ridge Community High School
  13. Ridgeview Global Studies Academy
- EAGLE LAKE**
  - 14. Lake Region High School
  - 15. Pinewood Elementary School
- HAINES CITY**
  - 16. Alta Vista Elementary School
  - 17. Haines City High School
  - 18. Sandhill Elementary School
  - 19. Shelley S. Boone Middle School
- LAKELAND**
  20. Combee Elementary School
  21. George Jenkins High School (Freshman Academy)
  22. Highlands Grove Elementary School
- LAKE ALFRED**
  - 23. Kathleen Elementary School
  - 24. Kathleen High School
  - 25. Lake Gibson High School
  - 26. Lakeland Highlands Middle School
  - 27. Philip O'Brien Elementary School
  - 28. Lincoln Avenue Academy
  - 29. McKeel Academy of Technology School
  - 30. Dr. N. E. Roberts Elementary School
  - 31. Rochelle School of the Arts
  - 32. Scott Lake Elementary School
  - 33. Sleepy Hill Elementary School
  - 34. Southwest Elementary School
  - 35. Tenoroc High School
  - 36. R. Bruce Wagner Elementary School
  - 37. Karen M. Siegel Academy
- LAKE WALES**
  - 38. Spook Hill Elementary School
- MULBERRY**
  39. Mulberry Middle School
  40. Purcell Elementary School
- POLK CITY**
  - 41. Donald Bronson Community Center
- POINCIANA**
  42. Lake Marion Creek Middle School
  43. Laurel Elementary School
  44. Palmetto Elementary School
- WINTER HAVEN**
  45. Chain of Lakes Elementary School
  46. Jewett School of the Arts
  47. Winter Haven High School

= Special Needs Shelter. 
 = Pet-Friendly Shelter. 
 = Primary Shelter. 
 See reverse side for directions to individual shelters.

**DO NOT PROCEED TO ANY SHELTER UNTIL YOU HAVE CONFIRMED THAT IT IS OPEN AND OPERATING.**

**CITIZENS INFORMATION LINE When Activated**  
 (CIL) (863) 298-7500  
 Toll Free: 1 (866) 661-0228  
 polk-county.net  
 Facebook.com/PolkCountyEM  
 @PolkEmergency

- PUBLIC SHELTER POLICIES**
- All shelters are **not** automatically activated for each possible emergency. Shelters are opened as they are needed. They are not preassigned by geographic area.
  - For shelter information, monitor local radio and television or call the CIL at (863) 298-7500.
  - Prepare a 7-day disaster supply kit to take with you. A shelter won't have the comforts of home so make sure to take what you'll want or need.
  - NO PETS** (except at designated pet-friendly sites), **NO WEAPONS** and **NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES** are allowed in Public Shelters.
  - For further information, call the Emergency Management office at (863) 298-7000 or visit polk-county.net.



Visit **Central Florida**  
 For accommodations, contact  
 1 (800) 828-7655 or (863) 420-2586  
 VisitCentralFlorida.org



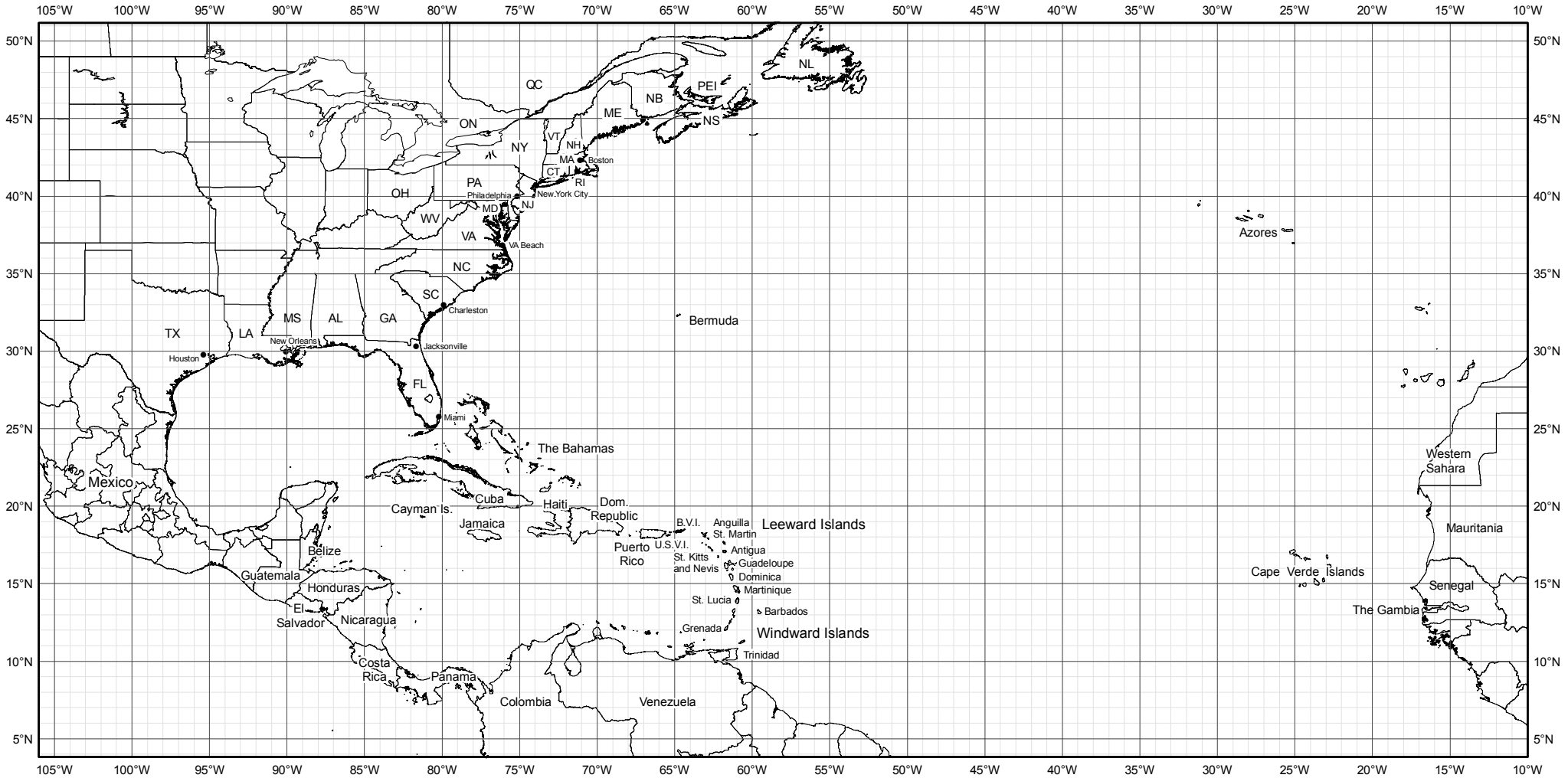






# Atlantic Basin Hurricane Tracking Chart

## National Hurricane Center, Miami, Florida



Alberto, Beryl, Chris, Debby, Ernesto, Francine, Gordon, Helene, Isaac, Joyce, Kirk, Leslie, Milton, Nadine, Oscar, Patty, Rafael, Sara, Tony, Valerie, William

# Polk County hurricane evacuation map

## Sources of disaster/emergency information

### Evacuation information:

Citizen information line (available only during emergency activation) .....(863) 534-0321  
 Radio (primary emergency broadcast system stations):  
 WONN .....1230 AM  
 WPCV .....97.5 FM  
 Travelers information system (western Polk County).....1610 AM  
 En Español: WAUC (Wauchula) .....1310 AM  
 Television: Consult television listings for local stations.

### Weather:

The Weather Channel .....Consult local cable television listings  
 Local radio/TV stations .....See above  
 The Lakeland Ledger LINC .....(863) 291-4444  
 (Weather update: Code 1200; tropical weather update: Code 1210)  
 National Weather Service (Ruskin).....(863) 645-2323

## Important telephone numbers

### Polk County Emergency Management

(863) 534-5600

### Polk County Communications Center

(863) 534-0360

### Polk County EMS/Fire/Sheriff EMERGENCIES

911

### American Red Cross

(863) 294-5941

### Polk County Animal Services

(863) 499-2600

### United Way Information Referral Service

1-(800) 881-UWAY

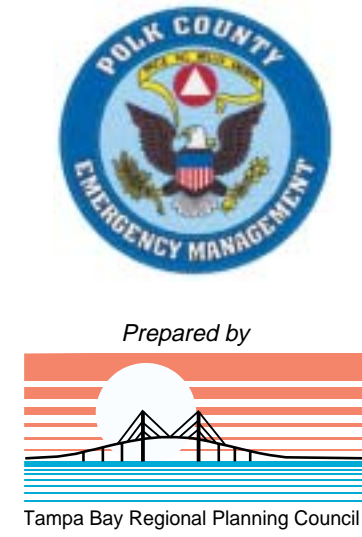
# Shelters in Polk County

- 1 Auburndale High School, 1 Bloodhound Trail, Auburndale
- 2 Caldwell Elementary School, 141 Dairy Road, Auburndale
- 3 \*\*Stambaugh Middle School, 226 N Main St., Auburndale
- 4 \*Polk Co. Health Dept. Specialty Care Units, 5 Brice Road, Bartow
- 5 Bartow Middle School, 550 E Clower St., Bartow
- 6 Bartow Senior High School, 1270 S Broadway, Bartow
- 7 James Stephens Elementary School, 1350 N Maple Ave., Bartow
- 8 Davenport Elementary School, 8 Palmetto St., Davenport
- 9 Ridgeview Global Studies School, 1000 Dunson Road, Davenport
- 10 Lake Region High School, 1995 Thunder Road, Eagle Lake
- 11 Fort Meade Jr./Sr. High School, 700 Edgewood Drive, Fort Meade
- 12 Lewis Elementary School, 115 S Oak Ave., Fort Meade
- 13 Frostproof Elementary School, 118 W Third St., Frostproof
- 14 Frostproof Jr./Sr. High School, 1000 N Palm Ave., Frostproof
- 15 Alta Vista Elementary School, 801 Scenic Highway, Haines City
- 16 Boone Middle School, 225 S 22nd St., Haines City
- 17 Eastside Elementary School, 1820 E Johnson Ave., Haines City
- 18 Haines City High School, 2800 Hormet Drive, Haines City
- 19 Sandhill Elementary School, 1801 Tyner Road, Haines City
- 20 Blake Elementary School, 510 Hartsell Ave., Lakeland
- 21 Churchwell Elementary School, 8201 Park Byrd Road, Lakeland
- 22 Crystal Lake Middle School, 2410 N Crystal Lake Drive, Lakeland
- 23 George Jenkins High School, 6000 Lakeland Highlands Road, Lakeland
- 24 Kathleen High School, 2600 Crutchfield Road, Lakeland
- 25 Kathleen Middle School, 3627 Kathleen Pines, Lakeland
- 26 \*\*Lake Gibson High School, 7007 N Socrum Loop Road, Lakeland
- 27 Lake Gibson Middle School, 6901 N Socrum Loop Road, Lakeland
- 28 Lakeland High School, 726 S Hollingsworth Road, Lakeland
- 29 Lakeland Highlands M.S., 740 Lake Miriam Drive, Lakeland
- 30 Lime Street Elementary School, 1225 E Lime St., Lakeland
- 31 Padgett Elementary School, 110 Leelon Road, Lakeland
- 32 Dr. N.E. Roberts Elementary School, 6600 Green Road, Lakeland
- 33 Rochelle School of the Arts, 1501 Martin Luther King Jr. Ave., Lakeland
- 34 Scott Lake Elementary School, 1140 E CR 540 A, Lakeland
- 35 McKeel Academy, 1810 W Parker St., Lakeland
- 36 Southwest Middle School, 2815 S Eden Parkway, Lakeland
- 37 R. Bruce Wagner Elementary School, 5500 Yates Road, Lakeland
- 38 Lake Alfred Elementary School, 550 E Cummings St., Lake Alfred
- 39 Lake Wales High School, 1009 N Sixth St., Lake Wales
- 40 McLaughlin Middle School, 800 S Fourth St., Lake Wales
- 41 Roosevelt Academy of Leadership and Applied Technology, 115 E St., Lake Wales
- 42 Mulberry High School, 1 Panther Place, Mulberry
- 43 Mulberry Middle School, 500 SE Ninth Ave., Mulberry
- 44 Polk City Elementary School, 125 S Bougainvillea Ave., Polk City
- 45 Denison Middle School, 400 Ave. A SE, Winter Haven
- 46 Jewett Academy, 601 Ave. T NE, Winter Haven
- 47 Westwood Middle School, 3520 Ave. J NW, Winter Haven
- 48 Winter Haven High School, 600 Sixth St. SE, Winter Haven

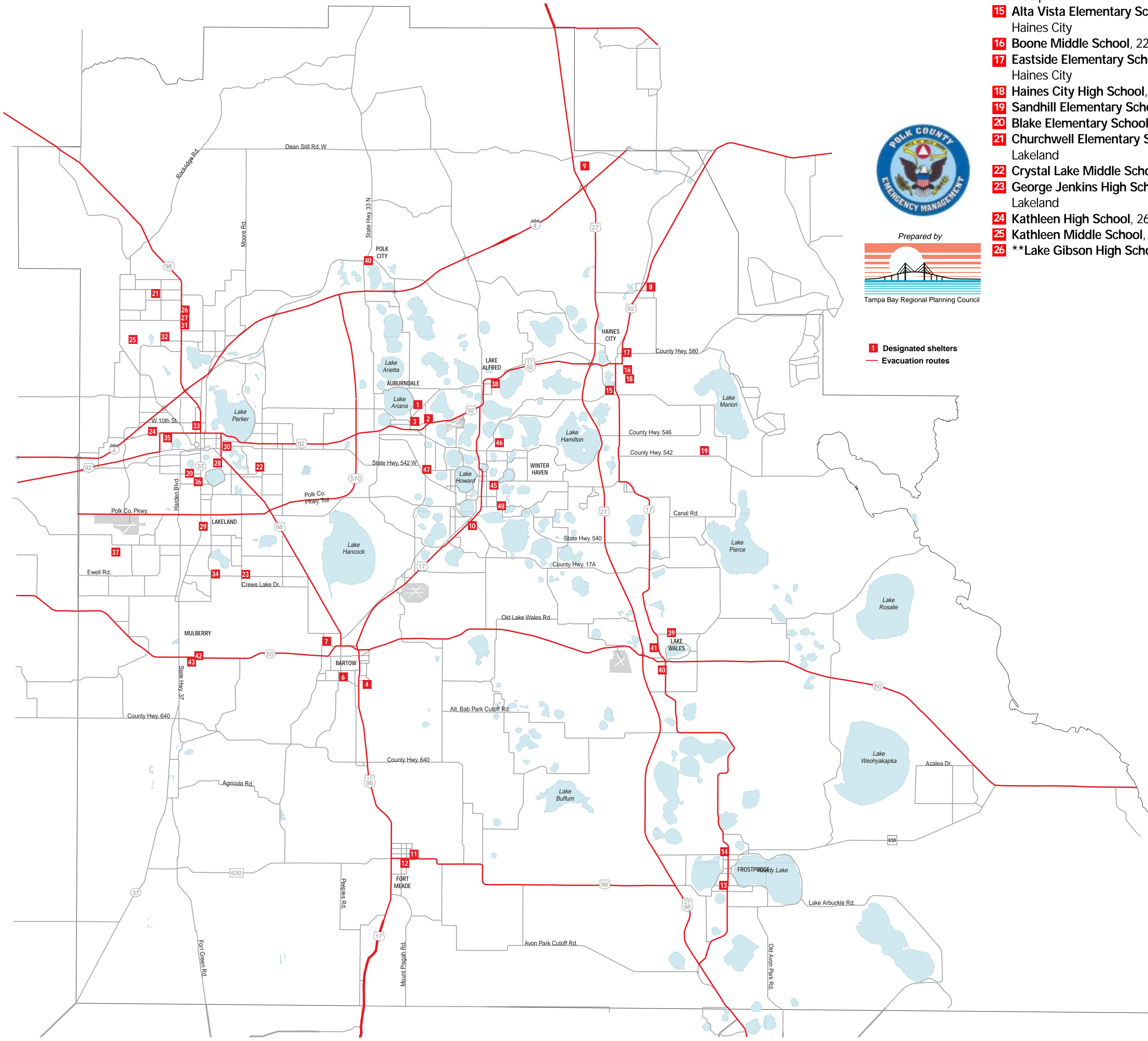
\* Special care shelter only

\*\* Special care shelter located with emergency shelter

Do not proceed to any shelter until you have confirmed that it is open and operating.



1 Designated shelters  
 — Evacuation routes



## Hurricane tracking map

When a hurricane is threatening land, newspapers and radio and television stations will give its latest position in latitude and longitude. Plotting a storm's position as a series of points lets you follow its track.



# Polk County evacuation policy

It is the policy of the Polk County Emergency Management Division to recommend in-place shelter as the primary option during a disaster. For those unable to remain in place, especially those in mobile homes, the remaining choices should be considered in order of preference. Whichever of the following options is selected, it is advised that a 72-hour survival kit be assembled and ready, a course of action be planned and that the plans be executed as soon as practicable before the disaster hits. The recommended options are:

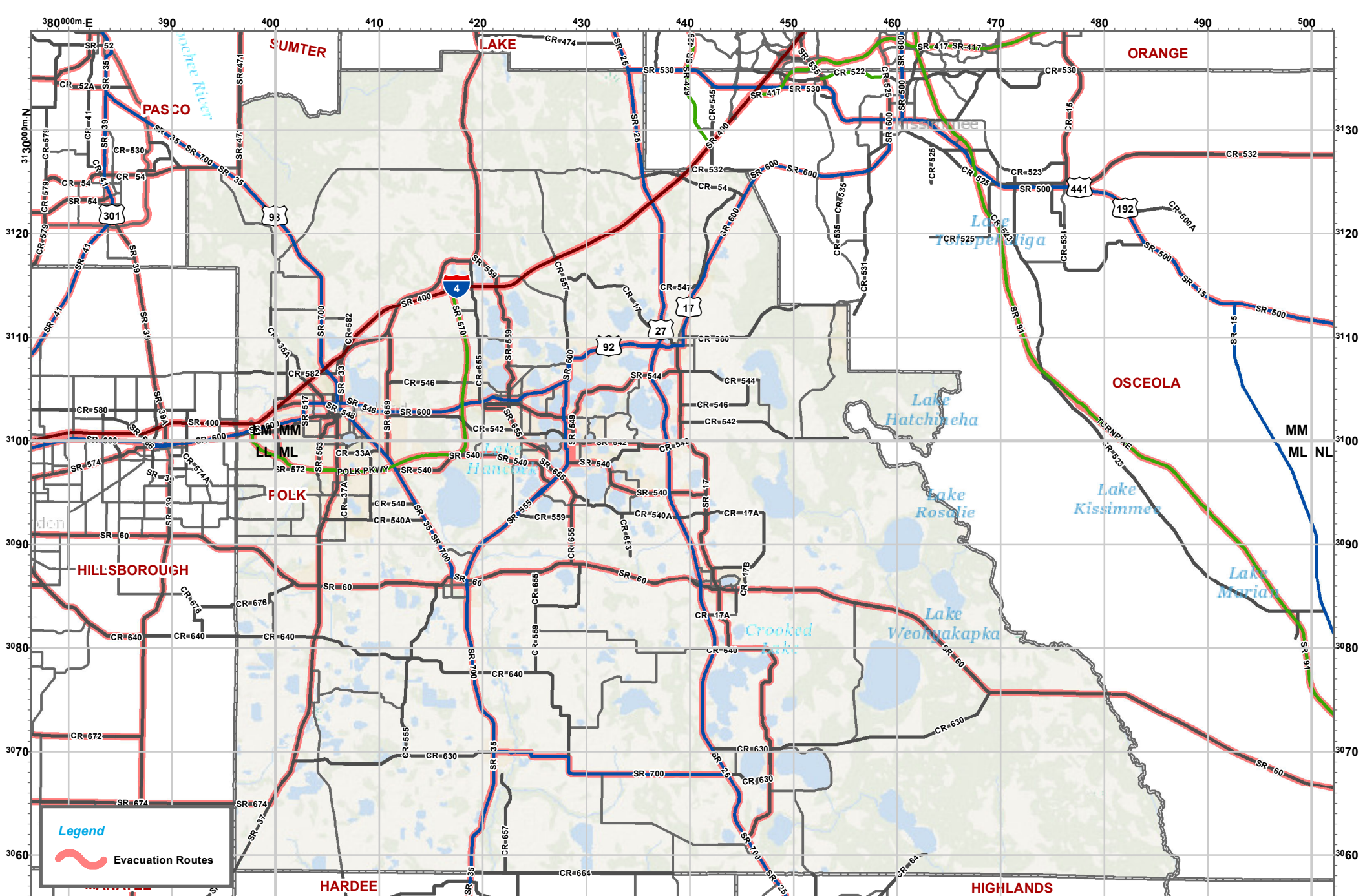
1. **In-place shelter:** Plan to remain in residence during the emergency, if possible.
2. **Evacuate to friend's or relative's residence:** If forced to evacuate, it is less traumatic for all concerned to be sheltered with familiar people, in more comfortable surroundings.
3. **Evacuate the area:** Other people leaving this area or areas in the projected path of the storm will also be on the road; leave at least 48-72 hours before the storm is expected to strike.

4. **Evacuate to a hotel/motel:** Make arrangements early as rooms will fill quickly with other evacuees.

5. **Evacuate to a public shelter:** Confirm your shelter of choice is open before proceeding to that location or select another open shelter.

### Special care program

The Polk County Special Care Program is designed to provide sheltering at specific locations for clients with medical or physical conditions who require assistance during an emergency. The program also provides transportation to shelters for those unable to evacuate on their own. A large number of people in the program need electrical power for their medical support equipment. They are assigned to these specially designed shelters because emergency generator power is available. Two of the three special care shelters in Polk County are located with the public shelters at Stambaugh Middle School (3) and Lake Gibson High School (26). The third, located at the Polk County Public Health Department Specialty Care Units (4), is a special care shelter only.



Disclaimer: Map is intended for reference only  
 No warranty for accuracy provided

Created By: GIS Section  
 Requested By: Standard Map Product  
 Date: 8/18/2021  
 Time: 1:00:48 PM  
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## POLK EVACUATION ROUTES



0 2.5 5 7.5 10 Miles





# DISASTER SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST



## General

- Two week minimum supply of medication, regularly used medical supplies, and a list of allergies
- A list of the style, serial number, and manufacturer information of required medical devices
- Batteries
- Flashlights  
*Do not use candles*
- NOAA Weather Radio  
*Battery operated or hand cranked*
- Cash  
*Banks and ATMs may not be available after a storm*
- Cell phone chargers
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

## Phone Numbers

- Maintain a list of important phone numbers including:  
*County emergency management office, evacuation sites, doctors, banks, schools, veterinarian, a number for out of town contacts, friends and family*

## Clothing

- Rain gear such as jackets, hats, umbrellas and rain boots
- Sturdy shoes or boots and work gloves

## Special Needs Items

- Specialty items for infants, small children, the elderly, and family members with disabilities

## First Aid

- First Aid Manual
- Sterile adhesive bandages of different sizes
- Sterile gauze pads
- Hypoallergenic adhesive tape
- Triangular bandages
- Scissors
- Tweezers
- Sewing needle
- Moistened towelettes
- Antiseptic
- Disinfectant wipes
- Hand sanitizer
- Thermometer
- Tube of petroleum jelly
- Safety pins
- Soap
- Latex gloves
- Sunscreen
- Aspirin or other pain reliever
- Anti-diarrheal medicine
- Antacid
- Laxative
- Cotton balls
- Q-tips

## Food and Water

- Food  
*Nonperishable packaged or canned food and beverages, snack foods, juices, baby food, and any special dietary items to last at least 7 days*
- Water  
*1 gallon per person per day*
- Non-electric can opener
- Paper plates
- Napkins
- Plastic cups
- Utensils

## Important Documents

- Insurance cards
- Medical records
- Banking information
- Credit card numbers
- Copies of social security cards
- Copies of birth and/or marriage certificates
- Other personal documents
- Set of car, house, and office keys
- Service animal I.D., veterinary records, and proof of ownership
- Information about where you receive medication, the name of the drug, and dosage
- Copy of Will

*\*Items should be kept in a water proof container*

## Vehicle

- Keep your motor vehicle tanks filled with gasoline

## Pet Care Items

- Pet food and water to last at least 7 days
- Proper identification
- Medical records/microchip information
- A carrier or cage
- Muzzle and leash
- Water and food bowls
- Medications
- Supplies for your service animal

Find more disaster preparedness tips at  
[FloridaDisaster.org](http://FloridaDisaster.org)

## Preparedness Checklist

### Medication Requirement

All Floridians need to take a few basic steps to plan for their personal/family needs and protection in the event of a disaster or emergency. People with disabilities/special needs often have unique challenges that require more detailed planning. Click the link below, or scroll down, for a comprehensive checklist of actions to take before a disaster strikes.

- Form Your Personal Support Network
- Give at least one trusted member of your Personal Support Network a key to your house or apartment
- Show members of your support group where you store your emergency kit and run through what is included
- Have at least three or more people in your network
- Arrange for more than one person in your Personal Support Network to check on you in an emergency
- Teach caregivers, Personal Support Network members and anyone who may assist you in an emergency how to operate necessary equipment
  
- Complete a Personal Assessment
- Make a list of your personal needs and your resources for meeting them in a disaster environment (This should include daily living needs such as personal care/personal care equipment, adaptive feeding devices and electricity-dependent equipment.)
  
- Get Educated, Get Informed
- Know the specific hazards that threaten your community (hurricanes, tornadoes, wildfires, etc.)
- Learn about community disaster plans and community warning systems
- Learn your community's evacuation routes
  
- Register with Your Local/County Emergency Management Office
  
- Considerations for People with Disabilities/Special Needs
- Contact your physician to discuss emergency planning
- Know how to connect and start a back-up power supply for essential medical equipment
- If you use an electric wheelchair or scooter, have a manual wheelchair as a back-up
- Label medical equipment, assistive devices and any other necessary equipment and attach laminated instructions for equipment use. Also include your identification information
- Store back-up equipment (mobility, medical, etc.) at an alternate location (friend's, family member's, neighbor's or caregiver's home, school or workplace)
- If you have visual/sensory disabilities, plan for someone to convey essential emergency information to you if you are unable to use the television or radio
- If you use a personal care attendant from a home healthcare agency, check to see if the agency has special provisions for emergencies (i.e. providing services at another location should an evacuation be ordered)
- If you live in an apartment, ask the management to identify and mark accessible exits and access to all areas designated for emergency shelter or safe rooms
- Have a cell phone with an extra battery
- Learn about devices and other technology available to assist you in receiving emergency instructions and

warnings from local officials

\_ Consider getting a medical alert system that will allow you to call for help if you are immobilized in an emergency

\_ Have a Plan for Your Pets

\_ Utilities

\_ Know how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity at the main switches and valves

\_ Keep any tools you will need near gas and water shut-off valves

\_ Show caregivers, personal support network members and everyone in your household how to shut off utilities when necessary

\_ Turn off utilities only if you suspect lines are damaged or if local officials instruct you to do so

\_ Safety Devices

\_ Be sure your caregivers and everyone in the household know where your fire extinguishers are located and how to use them

\_ Install smoke alarms on every level of your home, especially near the bedrooms

\_ Individuals with sensory disabilities should consider installing smoke alarms with strobe lights and vibrating pads

\_ Several times a year, test your smoke alarms to ensure they are working properly

\_ Insurance Coverage

\_ Check with your insurance agent or carrier to make sure you have adequate insurance coverage

\_ Important Records & Documents

\_ Keep copies of important family records and other documents (birth and marriage certificates, Social Security cards, passports, wills, deeds, financial, insurance, medical/immunization records and copies of current bills) in a safe deposit box or other safe location

\_ First Aid/CPR & AED

\_ Take first aid and CPR/AED classes (American Red Cross courses can accommodate people with disabilities - just discuss your needs when registering for the classes.)

\_ Inventory Home Possessions

\_ Make a record of your possessions - in writing or video - to help you claim reimbursement in case of loss or damage

\_ Reduce Home Hazards

\_ Keep the shut-off switch for oxygen equipment near your bed or chair so you can get to it quickly if there is a fire

\_ Have defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections repaired

\_ Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves

\_ Hang pictures and mirrors away from beds

\_ Have cracks in ceilings and foundations repaired

\_ [Prepare an Emergency Kit](#)



# CREATE YOUR FAMILY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN



FEMA

Creating your *Family Emergency Communication Plan* starts with one simple question: “What if ”

“What if something happens and I’m not with my family ” “Will I be able to reach them ” “How will I know they are safe ” “How can I let them know I’m OK ” During a disaster, you will need to send and receive information from your family.

Communication networks, such as mobile phones and computers, could be unreliable during disasters, and electricity could be disrupted. Planning in advance will help ensure that all the members of your household—including children and people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs, as well as outside caregivers—know how to reach each other and where to meet up in an emergency. Planning starts with three easy steps:



## 1. COLLECT.

Create a paper copy of the contact information for your family and other important people/offices such as medical facilities doctors schools or service providers.



## 2. SHARE.

Make sure everyone carries a copy in his or her backpack, purse, or wallet. If you complete your *Family Emergency Communication Plan* online at [ready.gov/make-a-plan](http://ready.gov/make-a-plan) you can print it onto a wallet-sized card. You should also post a copy in a central location in your home, such as your refrigerator or family bulletin board.



## 3. PRACTICE.

Have regular household meetings to review and practice your plan.

**TEXT  
IS  
BEST!**

If you are using a mobile phone, a text message may get through when a phone call will not. This is because a text message requires far less bandwidth than a phone call. Text messages may also save and then send automatically as soon as capacity becomes available.

The following sections will guide you through the process to create and practice your *Family Emergency Communication Plan*.



## HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

Write down phone numbers and email addresses for everyone in your household. Having this important information written down will help you reconnect with others in case you don't have your mobile device or computer with you or if the battery runs down. If you have a household member(s) who is Deaf or hard of hearing, or who has a speech disability and uses traditional or video relay service (VRS), include information on how to connect through relay services on a landline phone, mobile device, or computer.

## SCHOOL, CHILDCARE, CAREGIVER, AND WORKPLACE EMERGENCY PLANS

Because a disaster can strike during school or work hours, you need to know their emergency response plans and how to stay informed. Discuss these plans with children, and let them know who could pick them up in an emergency. Make sure your household members with phones are signed up for alerts and warnings from their school, workplace, and/or local government. To find out more about how to sign up, see *Know Your Alerts and Warnings* at [ready.gov](http://ready.gov). For children without mobile phones, make sure they know to follow instructions from a responsible adult, such as a teacher or principal.

## OUT-OF-TOWN CONTACT

It is also important to identify someone outside of your community or State who can act as a central point of contact to help your household reconnect. In a disaster it may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town because local phone lines can be jammed.

## EMERGENCY MEETING PLACES

Decide on safe, familiar places where your family can go for protection or to reunite. Make sure these locations are accessible for household members with disabilities or access and functional needs. If you have pets or service animals, think about animal-friendly locations. Identify the following places:

- Indoor:* If you live in an area where tornadoes, hurricanes, or other high-wind storms can happen, make sure everyone knows where to go for protection. This could be a small, interior, windowless room, such as a closet or bathroom on the lowest level of a sturdy building, or a tornado safe room or storm shelter.
- In your neighborhood:* This is a place in your neighborhood where your household members will meet if there is a fire or other emergency and you need to leave your home. The meeting place could be a big tree, a mailbox at the end of the driveway, or a neighbor's house.
- Outside of your neighborhood:* This is a place where your family will meet if a disaster happens when you're not at home and you can't get back to your home. This could be a library, community center, house of worship, or family friend's home.



- Outside of your town or city:* Having an out-of-town meeting place can help you reunite if a disaster happens and:

- You cannot get home or to your out-of-neighborhood meeting place; or
- Your family is not together and your community is instructed to evacuate the area.

This meeting place could be the home of a relative or family friend. Make sure everyone knows the address of the meeting place and discuss ways you would get there.

## OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND INFORMATION

You should also write down phone numbers for emergency services, utilities service providers, medical providers, veterinarians, insurance companies, and other services.



- Make copies of your *Family Emergency Communication Plan* for each member of the household to carry in his or her wallet, backpack, or purse. Post a copy in a central place at home. Regularly check to make sure your household members are carrying their plan with them.
- Enter household and emergency contact information into all household members' mobile phones or devices.
- Store at least one emergency contact under the name "In Case of Emergency" or "ICE" for all mobile phones and devices. This will help someone identify your emergency contact if needed. Inform your emergency contact of any medical issues or other requirements you may have.
- Create a group list on all mobile phones and devices of the people you would need to communicate with if there was an emergency or disaster.
- Make sure all household members and your out-of-town contact know how to text if they have a mobile phone or device, or know alternative ways to communicate if they are unable to text.
- Read *Know Your Alerts and Warnings* at [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) and sign up to receive emergency information.



Once you have completed your *Family Emergency Communication Plan*, made copies for all the members of your household, and discussed it, it's time to practice!

Here are some ideas for practicing your plan:

- Practice texting and calling. Have each person practice sending a text message or calling your out-of-town contact and sending a group text to your mobile phone group list.
- Discuss what information you should send by text. You will want to let others know you are safe and where you are. Short messages like "I'm OK. At library" are good.

- Talk about who will be the lead person to send out information about the designated meeting place for the household.
- Practice gathering all household members at your indoor and neighborhood emergency meeting places. Talk about how each person would get to the identified out-of-neighborhood and out-of-town meeting places. Discuss all modes of transportation such as public transportation rail and para-transit for all family members, including people with disabilities and others with access and functional needs.
- Regularly have conversations with household members and friends about the plan, such as whom and how to text or call, and where to go.
- To show why it's important to keep phone numbers written down, challenge your household members to recite important phone numbers from memory—now ask them to think about doing this in the event of an emergency.
- Make sure everyone, including children, knows how and when to call 911 for help. You should only call 911 when there is a life-threatening emergency.
- Review, update, and practice your *Family Emergency Communication Plan* at least once a year, or whenever any of your information changes.

To help start the conversation or remind your family why you are taking steps to prepare and practice, you may want to watch the 4-minute video *It Started Like Any Other Day*, about families who have experienced disaster, at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=w\\_omgt3MEBs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_omgt3MEBs). Click on the closed captioning (CC) icon on the lower right to turn on the captioning.

After you practice, talk about how it went. What worked well? What can be improved? What information, if any, needs to be updated? If you make updates remember to print new copies of the plan for everyone.

### **OTHER IMPORTANT TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING IN DISASTERS<sup>1</sup>**

- Text is best when using a mobile phone, but if you make a phone call, keep it brief and convey only vital information to emergency personnel and/or family or household members. This will minimize network congestion, free up space on the network for emergency communications, and conserve battery power. Wait 10 seconds before redialing a number. If you redial too quickly, the data from the handset to the cell sites do not have enough time to clear before you've re-sent the same data. This contributes to a clogged network.
- Conserve your mobile phone battery by reducing the brightness of your screen placing your phone in airplane mode, and closing apps you do not need. Limit watching videos and playing video games to help reduce network congestion.
- Keep charged batteries, a car phone charger, and a solar charger available for backup power for your mobile phone, teletypewriters (TTYs), amplified phones and caption phones. If you charge your phone in your car, be sure the car is in a well-ventilated area (e.g., not in a closed garage) to avoid life-threatening carbon monoxide poisoning.

<sup>1</sup> Federal Communications Commission, Public Safety and Homeland Security Bureau. (n.d.). *Tips for communicating in an emergency*. Retrieved from <http://transition.fcc.gov/pshs/emergency-information/tips.html>

- If driving, do not text, read texts, or make a call without a hands-free device.
- Maintain a household landline and analog phone (with battery backup if it has a cordless receiver) that can be used when mobile phone service is unavailable. Those who are Deaf or hard of hearing, or who have speech disabilities and use devices and services that depend on digital technology (e.g., VRS, Internet Protocol [IP] Relay, or captioning) should have an analog phone (e.g., TTY, amplified phone, or caption phone) with battery backup in case Internet or mobile service is down.
- If you evacuate and have a call-forwarding feature on your home phone, forward your home phone number to your mobile phone number.
- Use the Internet to communicate by email, Twitter, Facebook, and other social media networks. These communication channels allow you to share information quickly with a widespread audience or to find out if loved ones are OK. The Internet can also be used for telephone calls through Voice over Internet Protocol. For those who are Deaf or hard of hearing, or who have speech disabilities, you can make calls through your IP Relay provider.
- If you do not have a mobile phone, keep a prepaid phone card to use if needed during or after a disaster.
- Use a pay phone if available. It may have less congestion because these phones don't rely on electricity or mobile networks. In some public places, you may be able to find a TTY that can be used by those who are Deaf or hard of hearing, or who have speech disabilities.

*The reader recognizes that the Federal Government provides links and informational data on various disaster preparedness resources and events and does not endorse any non-Federal events, entities, organizations, services, or products.*



# 12 WAYS TO PREPARE

<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Sign up for Alerts and Warnings</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Make a Plan</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Save for a Rainy Day</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Practice Emergency Drills</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Test Family Communication Plan</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Safeguard Documents</b></p>
<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Plan with Neighbors</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Make Your Home Safer</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Know Evacuation Routes</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Assemble or Update Supplies</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Get Involved in Your Community</b></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>  <p><b>Document and Insure Property</b></p>

# FAMILY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION PLAN

## HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

Home #: .....

Address:.....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: .....

Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

.....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: .....

Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

.....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: .....

Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

.....

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....

Other # or social media: .....

Email: .....

Important medical or other information: .....

.....

## SCHOOL CHILDCARE CAREGIVER AND WORKPLACE EMERGENCY PLANS

Name: .....

Address:.....

Emergency/Hotline #: .....

Website: .....

Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

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**SCHOOL  
CHILDCARE  
CAREGIVER AND  
WORKPLACE  
EMERGENCY PLANS**

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Name: .....  
Address:.....  
Emergency/Hotline #: .....  
Website: .....  
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

Name: .....  
Address:.....  
Emergency/Hotline #: .....  
Website: .....  
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

Name: .....  
Address:.....  
Emergency/Hotline #: .....  
Website: .....  
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up: .....

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**IN CASE OF  
EMERGENCY  
(ICE CONTACT)**

---

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....  
Home #: ..... Email: .....  
Address: .....

---

**OUT-OF-TOWN  
CONTACT**

---

Name: ..... Mobile #: .....  
Home #: ..... Email: .....  
Address: .....

---

**EMERGENCY  
MEETING PLACES**

---

Indoor: .....  
Instructions: .....  
Neighborhood: .....  
Instructions: .....

Out-of-Neighborhood: .....  
Address:.....  
Instructions: .....

Out-of-Town: .....  
Address:.....  
Instructions: .....

**IMPORTANT  
NUMBERS OR  
INFORMATION**

Police: ..... Dial 911 or #: .....

Fire: ..... Dial 911 or #: .....

Poison Control: ..... #: .....

Doctor: ..... #: .....

Doctor: ..... #: .....

Pediatrician: ..... #: .....

Dentist: ..... #: .....

Hospital/Clinic: ..... #: .....

Pharmacy: ..... #: .....

Medical Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Medical Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Homeowner/Rental Insurance: .....

#: .....

Policy #: .....

Flood Insurance: ..... #: .....

Policy #: .....

Veterinarian: ..... #: .....

Kennel: ..... #: .....

Electric Company: ..... #: .....

Gas Company: ..... #: .....

Water Company: ..... #: .....

Alternate/Accessible Transportation: .....

#: .....

Other: ..... #: .....

Other: ..... #: .....

Other: ..... #: .....



**FEMA**

FEMA P-1094  
Catalog No. 17166-2

# Hurricane

## Preparedness Checklist

Hurricanes and tropical storms are rotating storms that form over warm waters. These storms bring high winds, heavy rain, storm surge (rise in water level), flooding and tornadoes. Climate change has caused hurricanes to strengthen faster and bring heavier rainfall. The most common cause of death during a hurricane is from drowning. These storms are dangerous and can damage places far inland. But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones and your home.



## What to Do: Before

### Make Plans to Stay Safe

Determine your best protection from high winds and flooding.  
Have a plan to evacuate and a plan to shelter safely.



#### If advised to evacuate, do so immediately

- You may have to leave your home quickly and go to a safe place.
- Know where you will go, how you will get there and where you will stay.
- Plan well in advance if you will need help leaving or use public transportation.
- Mobile, manufactured, trailer homes and recreational vehicles (RVs) are not safe in high wind events. Plan ahead by preparing to evacuate to a safe location.



#### Plan to shelter safely

- Be ready to live without power, water, gas, phone and internet for a long time.
- Practice going to a designated safe shelter for high winds. The next best protection is a small room with no windows on the lowest level of a sturdy building that is not likely to flood.
- Be aware that flooding can happen quickly. Have a plan to evacuate fast before floodwaters reach you.
- Create a personal support team of people you may assist and who can assist you.



#### Plan to stay connected

- Sign up for free emergency alerts from your local government.
- Plan to monitor local weather and news.
- Have a backup battery or a way to charge your cell phone.
- Have a battery-powered radio during a power outage.
- Understand the types of alerts that you may receive and have a plan to respond when you receive them.
  - A WATCH means **Be Prepared!**
  - A WARNING means **Take Action!**

- Alerts you may receive include: Hurricane Watch & Warning, Tropical Storm Watch & Warning, Extreme Wind Warning, Storm Surge Watch & Warning, Flash Flood Watch & Warning, Flood Watch & Warning.



### Learn emergency skills

- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power. Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power.



### Gather emergency supplies

- Gather food, water and medicine. Stores and pharmacies might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home Kit.
- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
  - Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies.
  - Have a 1-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
  - Keep personal, financial and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up). Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.



### Protect Your Home

#### Wind

- Secure or bring inside outdoor items, such as lawn furniture and trash cans, that could be picked up by high winds and hurt someone.
- Anchor objects that would be unsafe to bring inside, such as gas grills and propane tanks.
- Trim or remove trees close enough to fall on your home.
- Protect windows with permanent storm shutters or sheeting.



## Protect Your Home

### Flood

- Clean out drains, gutters and downspouts.
- Stockpile protective materials such as plastic sheeting and sandbags.
- Consider installing a sump pump with battery backup.
- Consider elevating the heating system, water heater and electric panel.
- Review insurance policies with your agency.

## What to Do: During



### If local authorities advise you to evacuate, go right away.

- Bring your Go-Kit.
- Follow evacuation routes and do not try to take shortcuts because they may be blocked.
- Check with local officials for shelter locations. Download the Red Cross Emergency App to find shelters near you.



### Determine your best protection for high winds and flooding.

- Take shelter in a designated storm shelter or an interior room for high winds.
- Stay away from glass windows and doors.
- Move to higher ground before flooding begins.

**Never walk, swim, or drive through floodwater.  
Remember, Turn Around! Don't Drown!**

## What to Do: After



### Stay Safe

- Wait for officials to say it is safe before going back home.
- Avoid damaged or fallen power lines, poles and downed wires. They can electrocute you.
- Do not touch floodwaters because they may contain sewage, bacteria and chemicals that can make you ill.
- If power is out, use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns to reduce fire risk.
- Be aware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices should never be used inside a home, basement, garage, tent or camper – or even outside near an open window. Carbon monoxide can't be seen or smelled, but it can kill you fast. If you start to feel sick, dizzy or weak, **get to fresh air right away – do not delay.**



### Cleanup Safely

- Wear appropriate protective equipment including gloves, goggles and boots.
- Clean and disinfect everything that got wet.
- When cleaning heavy debris, work with a partner.
- Make sure that you have proper training before using equipment, such as chainsaws.
- Heart attacks are a leading cause of deaths after a hurricane. Be mindful of overworking.
- Cleaning up is a big job. Take breaks and take care of yourself.



### Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have a lot of bad feelings, stress or anxiety.
- Eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- You can contact the Disaster Distress Helpline for free if you need to talk to someone. Call or text **1-800-985-5990**.



### Stay Healthy

- **When in doubt, throw it out!** Throw out food that got wet or warm.
- Ask your healthcare provider or doctor about refrigerated medicines.
- Hurricanes and flooding can make drinking water unsafe. Monitor your local health department for information about drinking water safety.

Prepare so you can protect. | For more information, visit [redcross.org/prepare](https://redcross.org/prepare) | Download the Emergency App





# Tornado

## Preparedness Checklist

A tornado is a tube of spinning air that forms from a thunderstorm and touches the ground. Tornadoes are dangerous. They can knock down buildings, uproot trees, move vehicles and destroy things in their path. Heavy rains, lightning, flash flooding and hail are possible. Tornadoes can happen anywhere. Prepare now so you can stay safe.



### What to Do: Before



#### **Find Shelter Locations from High Winds in the Places Where you Spend a lot of Time.**

- Find a safe room built to withstand high winds. The next best protection is a small room with no windows on the lowest level of a sturdy building.
- Mobile, manufactured, trailer homes and recreational vehicles (RVs) are not safe in high wind events. Plan ahead by finding a sturdy building to shelter in before a tornado watch or warning.



#### **Practice Tornado Drills**

- With your entire household, practice moving quickly to the safe locations that you identified.
- Create a personal support team of people you may assist and who can assist you.
- If you live in a mobile home, practice going to a safe place.



#### **Plan to Stay Connected**

- Sign up for free emergency alerts from your local government.
- Plan to monitor local weather and news.
- Have a backup battery or a way to charge your cell phone.
- Have a battery-powered radio during a power outage.
- Know the difference between a Tornado Watch and a Tornado Warning.
  - Tornado Watch: **Be Prepared!** Tornadoes are possible in and near the watch area. Be ready to act fast!

-Tornado Warning: **Take Action!** A tornado is near. There is danger. Move to safe location right away.

- You may not always receive a tornado warning. Know the signs of a tornado. Take shelter if you feel you are in danger.



#### **Learn Emergency Skills**

- Learn First Aid and CPR.
- Be ready to live without power. Utilities may be offline. Be ready to live without power, gas, and water. Plan for your electrical needs, including cell phones and medical equipment. Talk to your doctor. Plan for backup power.



#### **Gather Emergency Supplies**

- Gather food, water and medicine. Stores and pharmacies might be closed. Organize supplies into a Go-Kit and a Stay-at-Home Kit.
- Go-Kit: at least three days of supplies that you can carry with you. Include backup batteries and chargers for your devices (cell phone, CPAP, wheelchair, etc.)
- Stay-at-Home Kit: at least two weeks of supplies. Stores and pharmacies might be closed.
- Have a 1-month supply of medication in a child-proof container and medical supplies or equipment.
- Keep personal, financial, and medical records safe and easy to access (hard copies or securely backed up). Consider keeping a list of your medications and dosages on a small card to carry with you.

## What to Do: During



### Closely Monitor Weather Conditions

- Tune in to radio, TV or other news sources for more information about Tornado Watches and Warnings to be ready to take action.



### Seek Safe Shelter Immediately

- If a Tornado Warning is issued. Or, if you suspect a tornado, seek safe shelter right away. After getting to your safe shelter, use your arms to protect your head and neck.

## What to Do: After



### Avoid Injury

- Keep listening to radio, TV or other news sources. Stay in your shelter until the tornado warning is over.
- Do not enter damaged buildings.
- If the building you are in has been damaged, exit with extreme care and stay out. Look around for things that might fall or dangerous debris. Do not use matches or lighters inside. If you smell gas or see spills that could be flammable, leave immediately.
- If you are trapped, try to cover your mouth with a cloth or mask to avoid breathing dust. Try to send a text, bang on a pipe or wall, or use a whistle instead of shouting.
- Watch out for exposed nails and broken glass.
- Stay clear of fallen power lines or broken utility lines.



### Treat Injuries

- People may be injured. Provide first aid as needed.
- Do not attempt to move a person with a back or neck injury unless they are in immediate danger. Seek immediate medical assistance.



### Clean Up Safely

- Be careful during clean-up. Wear thick-soled shoes, long pants and work gloves to reduce injuries.
- Children should not take part in disaster cleanup work.
- If power is out, use flashlights or battery-powered lanterns to reduce fire risk.
- Be aware of carbon monoxide poisoning. Do not use gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, basement, garage, tent or camper — or even outside near an open window. Carbon monoxide can't be seen or smelled, but it can kill you fast. If you start to feel sick, dizzy or weak, **get to fresh air right away — do not delay.**



### Take Care of Yourself

- It's normal to have a lot of bad feelings, stress or anxiety.
- Eat healthy food and get enough sleep to help you deal with stress.
- You can contact the Disaster Distress Helpline for free if you need to talk to someone. Call or text **1-800-985-5990**.

Prepare so you can protect. | For more information, visit [redcross.org/prepare](https://redcross.org/prepare) | Download the Emergency App



# Be Red Cross Ready

## Flood Safety Checklist

Floods are among the most frequent and costly natural disasters. Conditions that cause floods include heavy or steady rain for several hours or days that saturates the ground. Flash floods occur suddenly due to rapidly rising water along a stream or low-lying area.

### Know the Difference

**Flood/Flash Flood Watch**—Flooding or flash flooding is possible in your area.

**Flood/Flash Flood Warning**—Flooding or flash flooding is already occurring or will occur soon in your area.

### What should I do?



- Listen to area radio and television stations and a NOAA Weather Radio for possible flood warnings and reports of flooding in progress or other critical information from the National Weather Service (NWS).
- Be prepared to evacuate at a moment's notice.
- When a flood or flash flood warning is issued for your area, head for higher ground and stay there.
- Stay away from floodwaters. If you come upon a flowing stream where water is above your ankles, stop, turn around and go another way. Six inches of swiftly moving water can sweep you off of your feet.
- If you come upon a flooded road while driving, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car quickly and move to higher ground. Most cars can be swept away by less than two feet of moving water.
- Keep children out of the water. They are curious and often lack judgment about running water or contaminated water.
- Be especially cautious at night when it is harder to recognize flood danger.
- Because standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding, it's important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions that impact the U.S. For more information on flood insurance, please visit the National Flood Insurance Program Web site at [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov).

### What supplies do I need?



- Water—at least a 3-day supply; one gallon per person per day
- Food—at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare food
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered or hand-crank radio (NOAA Weather Radio, if possible)
- Extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Medications (7-day supply) and medical items (hearing aids with extra batteries, glasses, contact lenses, syringes, cane)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, deed/lease to home, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers
- Family and emergency contact information
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Map(s) of the area
- Baby supplies (bottles, formula, baby food, diapers)
- Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- Tools/supplies for securing your home
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Extra clothing, hat and sturdy shoes
- Rain gear
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Camera for photos of damage

### What do I do after a flood?



- Return home only when officials have declared the area safe.
- Before entering your home, look outside for loose power lines, damaged gas lines, foundation cracks or other damage.
- Parts of your home may be collapsed or damaged. Approach entrances carefully. See if porch roofs and overhangs have all their supports.
- Watch out for wild animals, especially poisonous snakes that may have come into your home with the floodwater.
- If you smell natural or propane gas or hear a hissing noise, leave immediately and call the fire department.
- If power lines are down outside your home, do not step in puddles or standing water.
- Keep children and pets away from hazardous sites and floodwater.
- Materials such as cleaning products, paint, batteries, contaminated fuel and damaged fuel containers are hazardous. Check with local authorities for assistance with disposal to avoid risk.
- During cleanup, wear protective clothing, including rubber gloves and rubber boots.
- Make sure your food and water are safe. Discard items that have come in contact with floodwater, including canned goods, water bottles, plastic utensils and baby bottle nipples. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Do not use water that could be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, make ice or make baby formula.
- Contact your local or state public health department for specific recommendations for boiling or treating water in your area after a disaster as water may be contaminated.

### Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community experiences a flood, or any disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site available through [RedCross.org/SafeandWell](http://RedCross.org/SafeandWell) to let your family and friends know about your welfare. If you don't have Internet access, call **1-866-GET-INFO** to register yourself and your family.

# Be Red Cross Ready

## Returning Home After a Hurricane or Flood

**Preparing to return home after evacuating will keep you safer while inspecting and cleaning up the damage to your home. Before traveling, ensure local officials have declared that it's safe to enter your community and that you have the supplies you will need. Follow the suggestions below for returning to, inspecting and cleaning your home.**

### Items to Take When Returning Home:

- Government-issued photo ID and proof of address
- Important phone numbers
- Bottled water and non-perishable foods
- First aid kit
- Cleanser/ hand cleaning gel for personal use
- Hygiene products and toilet paper
- Insect repellent and sunscreen
- Long sleeved shirts, long pants, sturdy waterproof boots and work gloves
- Flashlight, portable radio and extra batteries
- Cameras for photos of damage for insurance claims

### Before Returning



- Find out if it is safe to enter your community or neighborhood. Follow the advice of your local authorities.
- Carry plenty of cash. ATMs may not work and stores may not be able to accept credit or debit cards.
- Bring supplies such as flashlights, batteries, bottled water and non-perishable foods in case utilities are out.
- Create back-up communication plans with family and friends in case you are unable to call from affected areas.
- Plan for delays when traveling. Bring extra food, water, pillows, blankets and other items that will make the trip more comfortable. Keep the fuel tank of your vehicle as full as possible in case gas stations are crowded, out of fuel or closed.
- Carry a map to help you route around heavy traffic or impassable roads.
- Find out if local medical facilities are open and if emergency services are functioning again. Do NOT call 9-1-1 or the local emergency number to do this.
- Understand that recovery takes time. Focus on the positive and have patience. Others will have similar frustrations.

### First Inspection



- If possible, leave children and pets with a relative or friend. If not, keep them away from hazards and floodwater.
- Beware of rodents, snakes, insects and other animals that may be on your property or in your home.
- Before entering your home, look outside for damaged power lines, gas lines, foundation cracks and other exterior damage. It may be too dangerous to enter the home.
- Smell for gas. If you smell natural gas or propane, or hear a hissing noise, leave immediately and contact the fire department.
- If your home was flooded, assume it is contaminated with mold. Mold increases health risks for those with asthma, allergies or other breathing conditions.
- Open doors and windows. Let the house air out before staying inside for any length of time if the house was closed for more than 48 hours.
- Turn the main electrical power and water systems off until you or a professional can ensure that they are safe. NEVER turn the power on or off, or use an electrical tool or appliance while standing in water.
- Check the ceiling and floor for signs of sagging. Water may be trapped in the ceiling or floors may be unsafe to walk on.

### Using Generators Safely

- When using a portable generator, connect the equipment you want to power directly to the outlets on the generator. Do not connect a portable generator to a home's electrical system.
- If you are considering getting a generator, get advice from a professional, such as an electrician. Make sure that the generator you purchase is rated for the power that you think you will need.

### Cleaning Your Home



- Wear protective clothing, including rubber gloves and rubber boots.
- Be careful when moving furnishings or debris since they may be water logged and heavier.
- Throw out all food, beverages and medicine exposed to flood waters and mud, including canned goods and containers with food or liquid that have been sealed shut. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Some cleaning solutions can cause toxic fumes and other hazards if mixed together. If you smell a strong odor or your eyes water from the fumes or mixed chemicals, open a window and get out of your home.
- Throw out items that absorb water and cannot be cleaned or disinfected (e.g. mattresses, carpeting, cosmetics, stuffed animals and baby toys).
- Remove all drywall and insulation that has been in contact with flood waters.
- Clean hard surfaces (e.g. flooring, countertops and appliances) thoroughly with hot water and soap or a detergent.
- Return to as many personal and family routines as possible.

### Caution: Carbon Monoxide Kills

- Never use a generator, grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace, or any partially enclosed area. Locate unit away from doors, windows and vents that could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors.
- The primary hazards to avoid when using alternate sources for electricity, heating or cooking are carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning, electric shock and fire.

### Let Your Family Know You're Safe

If your community has experienced a flood, or any disaster, register on the American Red Cross Safe and Well Web site, available through [RedCross.org](https://www.redcross.org), to let your family and friends know about your welfare. You may also call **1-866-GET-INFO** to register yourself and your family.



Polk County Special Needs  
 Emergency Operations Center  
 1890 Jim Keene Blvd.  
 Winter Haven, Florida 33880  
 Phone: 863-298-7027  
 Fax: 863-298-7172  
 Email: [specialneeds@polk-county.net](mailto:specialneeds@polk-county.net)

## SPECIAL NEEDS REGISTRATION FORM

### INDIVIDUAL INFORMATION

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Full Time Resident: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Street Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Street: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Unit/Lot #: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address (if different) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Mobile Home: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Park Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Caregiver: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Lives Alone: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency Contact: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Primary Language: \_\_\_\_\_ Pets: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 Pet Shelter Arranged: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Service Animal: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

### MEDICAL INFORMATION

Stroke: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Diabetic: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 Cognitive Impairment: YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ If yes, what? \_\_\_\_\_

Wound Care: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Cancer: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Incontinent: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Visually Impaired: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Heart Disease: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Dialysis: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Contagious Disease: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Hearing Impaired: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

List any other medical conditions: \_\_\_\_\_

List any medical equipment that requires electricity: \_\_\_\_\_

List of medications:

_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

PROVIDER INFORMATION:

Home Health

Agency: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Physician: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Oxygen Supply

Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Medical Equipment

Supply Company: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dialysis Center: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

OXYGEN DEPENDENT

Oxygen Dependent: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Nebulizer: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Concentrator: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Portable Tank: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Hours Per Day: \_\_\_\_\_ Liter Flow: \_\_\_\_\_

### SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Bedridden: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Ventilator: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Assistance with medication: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Combative/Violent: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Continuous Equipment: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Wheelchair: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Electric Wheelchair: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Hoyer Lift: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Walker: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

### TRANSPORTATION

Transportation required: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Transportation Only: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Ambulance: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ Wheelchair Lift: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Stretcher: YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ How many steps to front door? \_\_\_\_\_

### SHELTER ASSIGNMENT (to be completed by special needs personnel)

Shelter: \_\_\_\_\_ Transportation: \_\_\_\_\_