



Safety Council News

Florida Association of Safety Councils - Newsletter - 10th Edition

July - August 2007 Take care! Safety is no accident!



FASC provides a forum for Florida Safety Councils to examine and act on issues impacting driving, occupational and public safety.

FASC develops safety education programs available to member Councils individually or collectively.

North Central Florida Safety Council
3710 N.W. 51st Street, Suite A, Gainesville, FL 32606
Tel: (352) 377-2566; Fax: (352) 377-7544
Website: <http://www.ncfsc.com>
E-mails: occpncfsc@bellsouth.net

North Florida Safety Council
2003-B Apalachee Parkway, Tallahassee, FL 32301
Tel: (850) 877-5193; Fax: (850) 877-8428
Website: <http://www.nflasafety.com>
E-Mail: nflsc@earthlink.net

Northeast Florida Safety Council
1725 Art Museum Drive, Jacksonville, FL 32207
Tel: (904) 399-3119; Fax: (904) 399-8001
Website: <http://www.nefsc.org>
E-mail: nefsc@nefsc.org

Suncoast Safety Council, Inc.
1145 Court Street, Clearwater, FL 33756
Tel: (727) 373-SAFE (7233); Fax: (727) 442-2321
Website: <http://www.suncoastsafety.org>
E-mails: kjowell@safety.org; safety@safety.org

Safety Council of Palm Beach County
4152 West Blue Heron Blvd., Suite 110
Riviera Beach, FL 33404
Tel: (561) 845-8233; Fax: (561) 848-6873
Website: <http://www.safetycouncilpbc.org>
E-mail: Zondra@safetycouncilpbc.org

Southwest Florida Safety Council
1714 Evans Avenue, Fort Myers, FL 33901
Tel: (800) 437-3008; Fax: (239) 332-3093
Website: <http://www.safedrivingsschool.com>
E-mail: swflsafety1@earthlink.net

Sunshine Safety Council, Inc.
150 North Beach Street, Daytona Beach, FL 32114
Tel: (800) 467-7327; (386) 253-6400
Fax: (386) 252-1875
Website: <http://www.sunshinesafety.org>
E-mail: karin@sunshinesafety.org

Tampa Area Safety Council
1113 E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.,
Tampa, FL 33603
Tel: (813) 248-3009; Fax: (813) 247-3671
Website: <http://tampasafetycouncil.org>
E-mail: TASCPatty@aol.com

Contact A Safety Council Near You!

Attention Floridians

Special Hurricane Edition

What is a Hurricane?

A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone, the generic term for a low pressure system that generally forms in the tropics. A typical cyclone is accompanied by thunderstorms, and in the Northern Hemisphere, a counterclockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface.

All Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas are subject to hurricanes or tropical storms. Parts of the Southwest United States and the Pacific Coast experience heavy rains and floods each year from hurricanes spawned off Mexico. The Atlantic hurricane season lasts from June to November, with the peak season from mid-August to late October.

Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland. Winds can exceed 155 miles per hour. Hurricanes and tropical storms can also spawn tornadoes and microbursts, create storm surges along the coast, and cause extensive damage from heavy rainfall.

Hurricanes are classified into five categories based on their wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential (see chart). Category Three and higher hurricanes are considered major hurricanes, though Categories One and Two are still extremely dangerous and warrant your full attention.

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Before a Hurricane

To prepare for a hurricane, you should take the following measures:

- Make plans to secure your property. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8" marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install. Tape does not prevent windows from breaking.
- Install straps or additional clips to securely fasten your roof to the frame structure. This will reduce roof damage.
- Be sure trees and shrubs around your home are well trimmed.
- Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- Determine how and where to secure your boat.
- Consider building a safe room.

Evacuation Plans

When community evacuations become necessary, local officials provide information to the public through the media. In some circumstances, other warning methods, such as sirens or telephone calls, also are used. Additionally, there may be circumstances under which you and your family feel threatened or endangered and you need to leave your home, school, or workplace to avoid these situations.

The amount of time you have to leave will depend on the hazard. If the event is a weather condition, such as a hurricane that can be monitored, you might have a day or two to get ready. However, many disasters allow no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning ahead is essential.

Evacuation: More Common than You Realize

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. Hundreds of times each year, transportation and industrial accidents release harmful substances, forcing thousands of people to leave their homes. Fires and floods cause evacuations even more frequently. Almost every year, people along the Gulf and Atlantic coasts evacuate in the face of approaching hurricanes.

Ask local authorities about emergency evacuation routes and see if maps may be available with evacuation routes marked.

During a Hurricane

If a hurricane is likely in your area, you should:

- Listen to the radio or TV for information.
- Secure your home, close storm shutters, and secure outdoor objects or bring them indoors.
- Turn off utilities if instructed to do so. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
- Turn off propane tanks. Avoid using the phone, except for serious emergencies.
- Moor your boat if time permits.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.

You should evacuate under the following conditions:

- If you are directed by local authorities to do so. Be sure to follow their instructions.
- If you live in a mobile home or temporary structure—such shelters are particularly hazardous during hurricanes no matter how well fastened to the ground.
- If you live in a high-rise building—hurricane winds are stronger at higher elevations.
- If you live on the coast, on a floodplain, near a river, or on an inland waterway.
- If you feel you are in danger.

If you are unable to evacuate, go to your safe room. If you do not have one, follow these guidelines:

- Stay indoors during the hurricane and away from windows and glass doors.

For further information or assistance, contact:

Safety Council of Palm Beach County

4152 W. Blue Heron Blvd., Suite 110 Riviera Beach, FL 33404

Tel:(561) 845-8233 x12; Fax: (561)848-6873

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- Close all interior doors—secure and brace external doors.
- Keep curtains and blinds closed. Do not be fooled if there is a lull; it could be the eye of the storm - winds will pick up again.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level.

Lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.

Recovering from Disaster

Recovering from a disaster is usually a gradual process. Safety is a primary issue, as are mental and physical well-being. If assistance is available, knowing how to access it makes the process faster and less stressful.

Seeking Disaster Assistance

Throughout the recovery period, it is important to monitor local radio or television reports and other media sources for information about where to get emergency housing, food, first aid, clothing, and financial assistance. The following section provides general information about the kinds of assistance that may be available.

Direct Assistance

Direct assistance to **individuals and families may come from any number of organizations, including:**

- American Red Cross
- Salvation Army
- Other volunteer organizations



The Federal Role

In the most severe disasters, the federal government is also called in to help individuals and families with temporary housing, counseling (for post-disaster trauma), low-interest loans and grants, and other assistance. The federal government also has programs that help small businesses and farmers.

Most federal assistance becomes available when the President of the United States declares a "Major Disaster" for the affected area at the request of a state governor. FEMA will provide information through the media and community outreach about federal assistance and how to apply.

Florida Division of Emergency Management

Contact 1-850-413-9969

Your Local Safety Council

Contact your area Safety Council for information on any safety related subject for your home or business.

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MISSION STATEMENT



The **Florida Association of Safety Councils (FASC)** members are private, not-for-profit, public service organizations.

The objective of the Safety Councils is to promote safety education for businesses, government, traffic, home and recreation. Our goal is to reduce accidents, injuries and deaths. The Florida Association of Safety Councils provides a forum for Safety Councils to examine and act on issues impacting Floridians on driving, safety and health issues.



FASC is affiliated with the **American Association of Safety Councils (AASC)**, an international association of independent safety councils.

The Florida Association of Safety Councils are proud members of the **Florida Trucking Association (FTA)** and the **Safety Management Council (SMC)**.



The *Safety Council News* is published six times a year to keep business and industry informed of the Florida Association of Safety Council's activities and safety and health news and developments. NOTE: The information herein was obtained from sources believed reliable and the Association has exercised reasonable care to assure its accuracy. However, the Florida Association of Safety Councils does not guarantee that the contents of the *Safety Council News* are correct and statements from other sources do not necessarily reflect the opinion or position of the Association.

Save the Date!

October 13th, 2007

*9th Annual RIMS Classic
Golf Tournament @
Madison Green*