



FLORIDA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

Matthew M. Carter II, Chairman

Is Your Family Prepared? Don't Be Caught Off-Guard This Hurricane Season

Arthur, Bertha, Cristobal, Dolly, and Edouard are the first names on this year's Atlantic hurricane list. Katrina, Wilma, and Ivan – recent, memorable names to us in Florida – should be motivation enough to create a hurricane or emergency plan for your family. Don't let the quiet hurricane seasons of 2006 and 2007 make you complacent. Arthur and Bertha have already become a reality this hurricane season. Having a hurricane plan is in the best interest of your family and loved ones.

It's easy to put off planning for a potential storm. Don't make this mistake, since it may be too late to finalize preparations when a hurricane is days or hours away and supplies are scarce. Prepare now to protect your families, businesses, and property.

Creating a family plan is not complicated but should be well thought out – and don't forget to include your pets in the plan. To ensure the plan's success, discuss it with your children, extended family, and friends. Also, check with your elderly neighbors to see if they have a plan.

The Florida Public Service Commission (PSC) is also doing its part for hurricane preparation. Last year, the Commission adopted rules that require Florida's five investor-owned utility (IOU) companies to file storm hardening plans for PSC approval that strengthen the electrical grid's ability to withstand severe weather. Each plan must be updated every three years and address the affects of extreme wind, flooding, and storm surges on the utility's electric facilities and explain the company's strategy for improving and strengthening electric service in its area.

Storm hardening plans are part of the Commission's multi-faceted approach to help reduce storm damage and ensure that all Floridians receive safe utility services—before, during, and after storms. Additional PSC directives require the utilities to accelerate tree trimming cycles, develop more detailed storm data, and strengthen existing transmission structures. IOUs, as well as local telephone companies, are also required to inspect their wooden poles once every eight years and strengthen or replace them as necessary.

Federal, state, and local government agencies are working together to ensure that shelters are established and supplies are ready for the 2008 hurricane season. Do your part by making sure your family's hurricane plan is in place should Cristobal decide to call on Florida.

For more information or tips on hurricane preparedness, visit the PSC Web site at www.floridapsc.com or call the PSC consumer assistance hotline at 1-800-342-3552.

Use this checklist as a guide for preparing your emergency supply kit, whether you plan to stay at home or evacuate.

Food and Water for 3-7 days

- Drinking water: at least one gallon per person per day
- Canned meats, fruits, and vegetables
- Snacks, crackers, non-perishable foods
- Canned or bottled drinks
- Special food for infants and elderly
- Manual can opener
- Paper plates and plastic utensils
- Coolers with ice
- Water purification kit

Personal Items

- Toiletries, soap, toilet paper
- Eyeglasses or contacts
- Moisture wipes
- Clothing, rain gear, shoes
- Toys, books, games
- Keys

Important Documents

Pack your documents in a waterproof container.

- Insurance, medical records, bank account numbers
- Social Security card, driver's license
- Pictures or video tape of all valuables

Other Items

- First aid kit and medicines
- Flashlight and batteries
- Battery operated radio with extra batteries
- Cell phone and car charger
- Cash
- Plastic tarps
- Tools and nails
- Cleaning supplies
- Sleeping bags, blankets, pillows
- Camera, film

Remember Your Pets

Check ahead of time to see if a shelter accepts pets.

- Identification and immunization records
- Food, water, medications
- Carrier or cage
- Leash and muzzle