



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**CONTACT: GOVERNOR'S PRESS OFFICE**  
(850) 717-9282  
[media@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:media@eog.myflorida.com)

## **Gov. Scott Issues Updates on Hurricane Matthew Preparedness Efforts as Storm Approaches Florida**

**FT. PIERCE, Fla.** – Governor Rick Scott this morning visited the Florida State Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee and will be in Ft. Pierce, Rockledge and Jacksonville today to meet with emergency management officials as the state prepares for Hurricane Matthew, a life-threatening category three storm. Florida remains under both tropical storm and hurricane watches. Governor Scott has remained in constant communication with state and local leaders, utility companies and sheriffs who are working to ensure the state is prepared for the storm.

### **EVACUATIONS**

- Brevard County: Mandatory evacuations for barrier islands is at 3 pm today.
- St. Lucie County: Voluntary evacuations have begun.
- Flagler County: Voluntary evacuations have begun.
- Duval County: Voluntary evacuations have begun.

### **SHELTERS**

- Many coastal counties are planning on opening shelters today, including shelters for people with special needs, pets and general populations. A list of all open shelters will be available at <http://floridadisaster.org/shelters/summary.htm>
- The state is working with the American Red Cross to identify shelter capacity both during and following the storm in the potential impact areas.
- The state has a 110,000 meal capacity a day, which can be delivered using 24 Emergency Response Vehicles, 31 canteens, and 2 mobile trailers

### **POWER**

- There are currently no power outages in Florida due to Hurricane Matthew.
- Utilities have been put on notice to be prepared to quickly report outage and restoral information once applicable. The outage reporting is expected to begin Thursday morning.
- Utilities are contacting their mutual aid partners to determine availability if external resources are needed to restore services.

- The state is monitoring the power grid for sufficient power in the state and the natural gas infrastructure for any damages that can cause a loss of service to power plants.
- Governor Scott spoke with utilities across the state yesterday to ensure utilities are pre-positioned and there are no unmet needs.

## **FUEL**

- There are no current supply, distribution or retail fuel shortages or issues.
- The state will continue to monitor fuel assistance requests; currently there are no requests for assistance. The current fuel supply in the state will last for at least 8 days, even if all ports close.
- The state is working with fuel partners and suppliers to increase the number trucks moving fuel from the ports to retail locations.
- The state has contacted emergency fuel and equipment providers for status of emergency fuel supply and equipment.

## **SCHOOL CLOSURES**

- The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) activated its emergency contact system for the east coast Florida school districts and colleges, and is monitoring closures made at the district and college levels.
- District school closures include:
  - Brevard County – Closed Thursday and Friday.
  - Broward County – Closed Thursday and Friday. Eastern Florida State College will be closed until Monday.
  - Martin County – There will be early dismissal today. Schools closed Thursday and Friday.
  - Indian River County - There will be early dismissal today. Schools closed Thursday and Friday.
  - Okeechobee County - Schools closed Thursday and Friday.
  - Palm Beach County – Closed Thursday and Friday.
  - St. Lucie County – There will be early dismissal today. Schools closed Thursday and Friday.
  - Florida School for Deaf and Blind – Closed today, Thursday and Friday.
- Universities/ college closures include:
  - Florida Atlantic University – Classes will be cancelled beginning at 5PM today and remain cancelled Thursday and Friday.
  - University of North Florida - Classes will be cancelled beginning at 3PM today and remain cancelled Thursday and Friday.

## **GOVERNMENT CLOSURES**

- DCF offices in Brevard County are closing as of noon today due to mandatory coastal evacuations. They will also be closed Thursday and Friday per Brevard County.

## **MILITARY SUPPORT**

- Today, the Governor activated 300 Florida National Guard members who will be staging across the state. This is in addition to the approximately 200 members of the National Guard activated yesterday to support hurricane preparedness and response.
- In addition to this, Florida has over 6,000 National Guard members ready to be deployed if needed.
- The National Guard will be focused on staging to perform search and rescue efforts as well as providing reconnaissance teams, equipment such as high wheeled vehicles security, and staffing and planning support to assist counties as needed.

## **LAW ENFORCEMENT, FIRE FIGHTING AND SEARCH & RESCUE**

- The Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV), and other partnering agencies are identifying resources for deployment if necessary to respond to the storm and are preparing to assist with evacuations.
- FWC has two advance reconnaissance teams actively deploying from Ocala with equipment to move debris from water access points in order to assist search and rescue missions. Additionally, FWC's teams will be partnered with 164 field personnel that are on standby to provide humanitarian aid when needed.
- The Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) has made contact with local troops in preparation for supporting evacuations in the major corridors, from south to north and east to west. FHP has also placed all troops on alert and has ten 33-member quick response force teams, for a total of 330 troopers on standby for deployment.
- State Emergency Response Plan (SERP) Coordinator and Regional Coordinators have been notified so staffers and resources can be prepared for deployment.
- 60 Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigations (Department of Financial Services), Florida Fish and Wildlife Special Operations Group boat teams, and members of the Florida National Guard are staging at Florida State Fire College in Ocala tomorrow in preparation for deployment to perform search and rescue missions.
- Five Urban Search and Rescue Task Force teams will be available to assist with search and rescue based on the current track of the storm.
- State firefighting representative are working with DOH to assist with tracking and patient movement if needed.
- Consulting with federal partners to identify any assets that may be needed as state assets become committed during response activities.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL**

- DOH is working with healthcare facilities on potential evacuations and preparing for storm impacts.
- DOH is also standing by to monitor and support special needs shelter activations.
- The state is preparing personnel for deployment to help analyze the impacts to vulnerable populations in counties affected by the storm.

## **TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS**

- The state has held teleconferences with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) districts and agency partners - Army Corps of Engineers, Water Management Districts, Civil Air Patrol and Federal Highway Administration to ensure all infrastructure needs are met.
- FDOT halted construction work on all FDOT projects on Interstates, Limited Access facilities, coastal and evacuation route roadways effective immediately in preparation for the approaching Hurricane Matthew. Contractors are being instructed to secure all equipment and open travel lanes by removing all unnecessary barricades, signs and drums.

- FDOT District offices have placed emergency crews on standby, and are continuing to test and inventory equipment and monitor flood prone areas. FDOT will continue to reach out to county emergency operations centers directly to coordinate any necessary response actions including activating traffic counters, providing local evacuation support and providing maintenance of traffic and other assistance.
- FDOT is coordinating with the U.S. Coast Guard to lock down Intracoastal Waterway bridges along the eastern Florida coast prior to sustained winds of 40 mph. Intracoastal bridges in Palm Beach County will be locked down by 8 p.m. Wednesday.
- Drawbridges along the Miami River and the Intracoastal Waterway in Miami-Dade County will be locked down beginning at 8 p.m. on Wednesday. During lock-down, the bridge is closed, power turned off and the traffic arms may be removed. Closure of bridges on the Intracoastal Waterway (ICWW) will begin at 12:01 a.m. Thursday morning.
- Additional road and bridge closure information can be found at [www.fl511.com](http://www.fl511.com).
- Florida Highway Patrol traffic incidents by region can be found [here](#).
- The Florida Turnpike Enterprise has ensured service plazas along the Florida Turnpike have Road Rangers and fuel. Additional fuel, Road Rangers and resources such as variable message boards to guide evacuees are on standby. If evacuation orders are given, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise is prepared to suspend tolls.
- Army Corps of Engineers and Water Management Districts are monitoring waterways and are prepared to adjust flows as necessary.
- FDOT is monitoring live traffic counters in South Florida, Central Florida, and along the East Coast of Florida.

## **HUMAN SERVICES**

### Resources and Supplies

- Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR), Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (DACS) and DEM Logistics are running projection models for human-service's needs (food and sheltering) based on major hurricane impacts to Miami Dade County to Duval County, and Seminole County to Nassau County.
- DACS is inventorying school food supplies in schools and state warehouses.
- The state is contacting potential vendors for quotes on baby needs and other items.
- Food Safety Assessment teams on standby to monitor power outages and flooding to ensure safety at food establishments

### Volunteer Organizations

- The state is establishing local points of contact with mass care organizations and volunteer agencies for potentially impacted counties.
- The state is working with Volunteers and Donation agencies to identify available volunteers through Florida Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) and AmeriCorps to staff shelters if needed. Thirty-nine AmeriCorps teams

statewide are on call for anticipated response to Hurricane Matthew. Volunteer Florida grantee Literacy Coalition of Palm Beach is deploying AmeriCorps today to the Palm Beach County EOC and Special Needs Shelter. Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are also available.

- The state is assessing available housing for responders and volunteers. Volunteer Florida is identifying fixed kitchens from potentially impacted counties in anticipation of feeding needs.

#### Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)

- APD is communicating regularly with staff, providers, waiver support coordinators, and stakeholders about the hurricane and preparedness measures.
- All group homes and individuals in Supported Living have their own disaster plans.
- Regional Residential Planning Coordinators are assessing all available open beds in group homes statewide in case they are needed during or after the storm. Supported Living Coaches are checking on their customers in independent living to ensure they are safe and prepared. If someone needs to go to a group home during the storm, APD will authorize Respite and pay for the service.
- Mutual Aid support from non-affected Regional Offices have been identified to support Regional Offices that may be impacted by the hurricane.

#### Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA)

- Three of the state veterans' nursing homes operated by the FDVA are on the east coast of Florida.
- All of these facilities have permanent generators and administrators are working to ensure staff and supplies are available for residents

### **BUSINESS, INDUSTRY, & ECONOMIC STABILIZATION**

- The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and DEM have activated the Florida Virtual Business Emergency Operations Center (FLVBEOC) to help identify and alleviate unmet needs between businesses and response partners. They are also working with businesses to make sure they have what they need to prepare for the storm.
  - The FLVBEOC is available at [www.flvbeoc.org](http://www.flvbeoc.org)
- The state has activated the Private Sector Hotline at 850-410-1403. The hotline is available for business inquiries about the storm, preparedness information and post-impact information from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM ET.
- VISIT FLORIDA stands ready to activate the Emergency Accommodations Module to keep visitors informed if major evacuations are ordered.
- VISIT FLORIDA will also with local tourism partners to collect and share information regarding the open status for major retailers and hotels. More information can be found [HERE](#).

### **TELECOMMUNICATIONS**

- The Department of Management Services' Division of Telecommunications is currently monitoring telecommunication services to ensure first responders, residents and visitors are able to communicate response and recovery needs.
- The division is working with DEM to provide consistent communication services for the state emergency response team.
- The division is working with telecommunications partners on proactive and protective measures to prepare equipment, facilities and response personnel for Hurricane Matthew, as well as encouraging partners to report any communications outages or affects.
- The state is coordinating with state, federal and industry partners, and is prepared to help assess impacts to telecommunications facilities and infrastructure following the storm. The state is also monitoring fuel assistance requests; currently there are no requests for assistance

### **SEAPORTS**

- The state is monitoring conditions at the following seaports and all are still open:
  - Duval – JAXPORT (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Nassau - Port of Fernandina (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Broward - Port Everglades (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Palm Beach - Port of Palm Beach (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Saint Lucie - Port of Ft. Pierce (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Brevard - Port Canaveral (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Miami-Dade - Port Miami (*\*Seaport Access Restricted*)
  - Monroe - Port of Key West

### **U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE)**

- Routine inspections of the Herbert Hoover Dike are taking place and additional inspections will begin once the lake exceeds 17 feet. The lake level is currently at 15.86 feet.
- Discharges from Lake Okeechobee are currently being maintained at current targets (West: 4,000 cubic feet per second / East: 1,800 cubic feet per second).
- Working with Water Management Districts to monitor waterways; prepared to adjust flows as necessary.
  - USACE maximizing releases from Lake Okeechobee.

### **SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT (SFWMD)**

- SFWMD has elevated its readiness condition to Condition 3. Condition 3 readiness actions include the following:
- Upper East Coast: Water managers are gradually lowering canals.

Field Station readiness actions include the following:

- Inspecting key parts of the flood control system and critical flood control structures.
- Inspecting canals and levees for any obstructions.
- Inspecting heavy equipment.
- Ensuring adequate fuel supplies for pump stations and other equipment.

- Securing items vulnerable to high wind at pump stations and laydown yards in Homestead, Miami, Ft. Lauderdale and West Palm Beach.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

- The Florida Department of Environmental Protection completed all pre-storm beach erosion surveys.
- DEP has activated FLWARN is are ready to deploy generators to water treatment plants if needed.
- Household Hazardous Waste debris and drop off sites have been established in all 67 counties
- Partial State Park Closures:
  - Tomoka campground
  - Gamble Rogers campground
  - Anastasia campground
  - Faver Dykes
  - Hontoon Island campground
  - Kissimmee Prairie campground
  - Cross FI Greenway (east) Rodman campground
  - Fort Clinch State Park
  - Little Talbot Island State Park
  - Johnathon Dickinson State Park
  - John Pennekamp Coral Reef State Park
  - Long Key State Park
  - Curry Hammock State Park
  - Bahia Honda State Park
- Full State Park Closures:
  - Sebastian Inlet State Park
  - Okeechobee Battlefield State Park
  - Avalon State Park
  - Ft. Pierce Inlet State Park
  - Jack Island State Park
  - Savannahs State Park
  - St. Lucie Inlet State Park

### **CONTACTS:**

- The Florida Emergency Information Line (FEIL) has activated and can be reached at 1 (800) 342-3557.
- State Emergency Operations Center Media Line: 850-921-0217.
- Follow @FLSert or @FLGovScott on Twitter for live updates on Hurricane Matthew.
- Visit <http://www.floridadisaster.org/info> to find information on shelters, road closures, and evacuation routes.