

## It's Not Too Late to Start Hurricane Preparations

*Floridians are getting ready for impending hit from Hurricane Michael*

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla.** – Even though Hurricane Michael is bearing down rapidly on the Florida Panhandle, there is still time for area residents to make emergency preparations to keep themselves, their loved ones, and their homes safe, according to the [National Hurricane Survival Initiative](#) and the [FAIR Foundation](#). The season's 13th named storm is forecast to strike the Panhandle area of Florida as a Category 3 storm, bringing dangerous storm surge, destructive winds, and flooding rainfall.

In advance of a landfall, Floridians in the Panhandle need to heed all warnings from emergency managers and begin preparing if they haven't already done so already. Stores throughout the region are running low on water, batteries, canned goods, and other preparation materials — but many of these stores may restock and are advising consumers to return when they open the following day.

You can download hurricane checklists from the [website of the National Hurricane Survival Initiative](#) (NHSI), but the essential and immediate needs include:

- Store one gallon of water per person per day; keep at least a three-day supply of water per person
- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little to no water — and don't forget a hand-operated can opener
- Assemble a first-aid kit for your home and one for each car
- Fill your vehicles' gas tanks, whether you plan to evacuate or not
- If evacuating, include at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person
- Remember family members with special requirements, such as infants and elderly or disabled persons
- Do not leave your pets behind; keep enough food and water to last one week for each pet
- Keep your important possessions and documents in a waterproof, portable container
- Stock up on toiletries and prescriptions, as road conditions may still be bad following the storm
- To find sandbag locations near you, visit your county's emergency management website

According to a recent survey conducted for NHSI, 13% of Floridians don't know how to properly store or run a generator. "The safety of your loved ones needs to be top priority," said Craig Fugate, former FEMA Administrator. "Generators are not to be inside houses or in enclosed spaces, and those who own one must make sure they are handling it properly, or the consequences could be dire."

Those with loved ones in a potentially affected area should establish a plan to remain connected and updated throughout the storm — whether through a cell phone or a neighbor. Those within Hurricane Michael's path

should be continuously tuning in for updates from their county Emergency Management Office. Heeding all warnings and evacuation orders that may be given is crucial to ensuring that Floridians are protected during this imminent, powerful storm.

The recent survey also found that 1 in 5 Floridians say they would not evacuate even when a Category 3 or 4 storm is forecast to come within 10 miles of their home. “These are powerful storms that carry tremendous potential for destruction and loss of life,” said Guy McClurkan, Executive Director of the FAIR Foundation. “Take the warnings and orders of your local Emergency Management Office seriously. Storm surges can be deadly — and contrary to what many may think, it’s the water, not the wind, that causes the most damage.”

For checklists, preparation tips, and updates on Hurricane Michael, visit [www.hurricanesafety.org](http://www.hurricanesafety.org). For information on the FAIR Foundation and additional resources, visit [www.fairfound.org](http://www.fairfound.org).

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