



## *City of Vero Beach Hurricane Information*

### *What Can I Do To Prepare?*

Call the local emergency management office if you or anyone you know has special needs in case of evacuation.

- The phone number for the Indian River County Emergency Management Office is 772-567-8000 ext - 1444 or [www.irces.com](http://www.irces.com)

Purchase bottled water. The American Red Cross recommends 1 gallon of water per person per day.

- Stock up on non-perishable food, medicine, baby supplies and pet food.

Check emergency equipment:

- Flashlights, battery operated radios, extension cords, emergency generators, and be sure to buy extra batteries.

Install an approved hurricane shutter system over windows and doors—or have on hand alternate coverings such as plywood.

Trim trees that are **not near power lines** and clear and remove debris. Once a hurricane is announced, trash pickup may be suspended.

### *Before the storm approaches*

Monitor official weather bulletins on local radio or TV stations or NOAA Weather Radio.

Keep extra cash on hand since and extend power outage may prevent you from withdrawing money from automatic teller machines or banks.

Review evacuation routes in case you must evacuate

Contact a veterinarian or kennel to arrange for safe sheltering for your pets if you must evacuate. **Public shelters do not accept pets.**

Fill your vehicle's gas tank

Bring loose, lightweight objects such as lawn furniture inside.

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***Electrical Tips—Prepare For The Approaching Storm***

The City of Vero Beach Utilities is always concerned about your safety and well being. Here are some important electrical-related tips to help you and your family prepare for an approaching storm. These tips do not cover everything. Learn all that you can about storms preparedness and post-storm safety so that you can safely weather the storm and minimize damage.

1. If someone in your home is dependent on electric-powered life sustaining medical equipment, review your “family” emergency plan for back-up power or make arrangements to relocate.
2. Before lowering a TV antenna or satellite dish, make sure to turn off and unplug the TV and, and avoid power lines.
3. Turn off all swimming pool pumps and filters, and wrap them in waterproof materials.
4. Turn your refrigerator and freezer to their coldest setting ahead of time to keep food fresh longer if you experience a power outage.
5. Turn off and unplug any unnecessary electrical equipment, especially sensitive electronics.

***Please keep in mind***

For the safety of repair crews, the City of Vero Beach Utilities Department will halt efforts to restore electric service when winds reach 35 miles per hours.

As soon as the storm has passed, damage assessment to the City’s electrical system will be the first priority. This way, when repair crews begin work, essential customers and services will get first attention, followed by efforts to restore service to large groups of customers before individual homes or businesses are scheduled.

Please be patient. Do not call to report your service is out. The City will provide service restoration updates to local newspapers, radio and television to keep everyone informed of our progress.

Do call 772-978-5000 to report power lines that are sparking or obviously unsafe electrical equipment. Encourage everyone to stay away from these hazards.

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## ***If Your Neighbor's Power Is On and Yours Is Not***

You may find that your neighbors have power and you don't. There are several reasons this might happen.

1. You may be on a different feeder line from your neighbor
2. The line to your home may have greater damage
3. You may need to repair your home before it can be connected.

### ***What can you do***

The City's Electrical Utility is not permitted to make repairs or hook up power if there is damage to the

- Power line connection to your home
- The meter box or the piping carrying wire to the meter

You may need to call a licensed electrical contractor to complete necessary repairs. The City will replace the actual meter if it is damaged.

### ***If your home is unsafe***

If inspectors have determined that your home is unsafe, the City is not permitted to connect power to it. You should first call the appropriate licensed contractor to make repair and arrange for any Building Department inspections

### ***If the power connection is damaged***

If the connection between your home and the overhead or underground source of power is damaged, the City will continue to work diligently to repair the problem.

### ***Speeding up the process***

In order to speed the restoration process, the City has established an "assembly line" process. Crews follow each other through a neighborhood, each with a specific task

1. The first crews restore power to the main power lines to the neighborhood.
2. "Clean up" crews follow behind, reconnecting individuals' homes that were identified during the initial survey of the neighborhood.

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***What You Should Know Before the Power Is Turned On***

Looks may be deceiving. Although your home may look safe, it may not be safe to receive power. Here are a few simple steps to avoid injury to yourself and your family, or further damage to your home.

**If your roof or windows have leaked...**There may be water in your walls and ceiling in contact with electrical wiring.

**Then...**You may need a licensed electrical contractor to survey your home. Consider turning off your breaker, removing fuses, unplugging appliances and turning off all wall switches.

**If you're served by overhead power lines...**and you see damage from the house connection to the power line or box surrounding the meter.

**Then...**You may need to call an electrical contractor. The City is not permitted to repair this type of damage. If the meter is damaged, the City will take care of it.

**If you are served by underground wires...**Look at the meter box and determine if it is damaged.

**Then...**You may need to call a contractor

***Don't Make A Close Inspection***

Do not make a close inspection of your wiring or other electrical equipment. Let an electrical contractor perform this job.

If you do call a contractor, make sure that whomever you hire is licensed by the State.

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***Using Portable Generators Safely***

**Gasoline-powered generators produce deadly carbon monoxide fumes**

- Always run portable generators outside the house. Never run generators inside, or in a garage.
- Keep generators well away from open windows—including neighbors—so deadly exhaust does not enter the home.

**Tip:** When buying a generator, also buy a battery-operated carbon monoxide alarm. It works like a smoke alarm, sounding an alert if carbon monoxide levels become dangerous.

**Never connect a generator directly to your home's wiring**

Power from the generator will “back feed” into utility lines, with the potential to injure, or kill a neighbor or utility crew working to restore service.

- Instead, plug appliances directly into the generator's outlet
- Use a heavy-duty extension cord rated for outdoor use and place the generator safely outdoors
- Follow the manufacture's recommendations for grounding the generator

**Tip:** Follow the manufacture's recommendations for proper use and load. Overloading the generator can damage the appliances it is powering. You don't need to run everything at the same time; rotating items allows the use of a small generator which costs less to buy and is easier to move.

**Get the most from your generator**

- Save gas by using appliances only as needed. If no appliances are running, shut the generator off.
- Don't leave a running generator unattended, turn it off at night and when away from home.

**Be a good neighbor**—If the power is off, your neighbors are probably sleeping with their windows open. Consider the sound of your generator may not be music to everyone's ears!

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## **Pre Storm**

### **Q: When should I trim my trees and shrubs?**

A: Complete all major trimming in April and May, before storm season. If you have a question about the health of a tree contact a Certified Arborist to do an inspection. Many of the tree-trimming contractors have a Certified Arborist on staff.

### **Q: Do I need a permit to trim my trees?**

A: Yes, if the trimming removes more than 1/3 of the canopy. The complete removal of a tree does require a permit. Contact the City of Vero Beach Planning and Development Department for permit information 772-978-4550.

### **Q: Can I help prevent flooding in my neighborhood?**

A: Yes, you can. Do not place leaves, grass clippings, palm fronds or other debris in the drainage ditches, canals or curb lines. Not only in tropical events, but even during a normal afternoon storm any debris placed in or near a ditch/drainage facility, can be washed downstream and block the drainage system. By properly disposing of debris you can help prevent flooding. The City of Vero Beach Solid Waste Division collects yard waste every Wednesday. For details on placing your yard waste at street side for pick-up contact the Solid Waste Division at 772-978-5300.

### **Q: If there is a tropical storm/hurricane forecast for our area should I trim just before the storm?**

A: No! Do not trim just before a storm. City Crews are making preparations to begin a recovery effort as soon as the storm passes and will not have time to collect yard waste immediately before a storm strikes. Loose branches could become projectiles and cause additional damage.

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## **Q: What else can I do to prepare for a tropical storm event?**

A: You should have a minimum 3-day supply of drinking water, food, medicine, and toiletries on hand for each person in your household. A battery-operated radio is also critical for obtaining information. If you have a portable generator be sure to have enough fuel to run it for several days.

## **Post Storm**

### **Q: What can I do to help?**

A: Stay put where you are.

Depending on the severity of the storm the best thing you can do is stay put for the first few days. That gives the utility companies and City crews a chance to make repairs and to clear the roads. It also allows relief workers time to arrive and set up supply lines and aid centers. If you prepared properly you should not need to leave your place of shelter for 3 days except for emergencies. If you have a portable generator only run essential appliances from the generator such as the refrigerator. If the refrigerator door is kept closed it will stay cool for several hours. Remember that the lower the demand (the less you have plugged in) the longer your fuel will last.

### **Q: What should I do with vegetative debris after the storm?**

A: Vegetative yard debris and construction debris need to be kept separate.

Vegetative yard debris should be placed in piles near the edge of the road but not in the street. City crews or a contractor hired by the City of Vero Beach will remove yard debris. Depending on the severity of the damage, the City or its contractor will make up to three (3) passes on each street. Once the third pass has been completed normal yard waste collection activities will begin and any fees for that will apply.

If you hire a contractor to trim broken branches or remove trees on your property they should also haul the debris to the Indian River County Landfill or other approved final disposal site.

### **Q: What about construction debris?**

A: Construction debris needs to be kept separate from vegetative debris. Depending on the severity of the event, the City or its contractor will pick up small amounts of construction debris. Place the construction debris in a pile near the edge of the road but not in the street.

Larger amounts of construction debris (extensive wallboard, roofing, wall systems, insulation) will need to be disposed of by the homeowner through his or her own insurance company.