

Water and Wastewater Hurricane Tips

It's hurricane season again! Here are a few water and wastewater-related tips to keep in mind as you prepare your hurricane and evacuation plans:

Make your water do double-duty. Before the storm, freeze jugs and bottles of drinking water. The frozen water will help keep your refrigerator and freezer cool if you lose electricity. When it thaws, drink it.

Be a good neighbor – restrict water use. Flush after a storm and the toilet which bubbles up may be your neighbor's – or your own. Lift stations that aren't working can back wastewater up into the system and people's homes. Even residents connected to septic tanks can experience problems, since septic tanks typically don't work well after excessive rain or flooding. After a storm, avoid unnecessary water use.



Know what a "boil water" notice means. If officials issue a boil water notice, bring water used for cooking, drinking and brushing teeth to a full rolling boil for one minute. Cool before using.

Protect your private well. Check to make sure the ground slopes away from your well so stormwater won't pool around the casing. Make sure the well cap is secure, sealed and the vent screen is intact so contaminants cannot enter. If floodwaters do cover the well casing or if there are any changes in the appearance or taste of the water, the well will need to be disinfected, tested and declared safe before normal use can resume.

Don't open sanitary sewer manholes. Homeowners have been known to try and protect their homes

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from sewage overflows by opening the sanitary sewer manholes in streets. Besides being illegal, this creates a dangerous hazard for pedestrians and motorists. In addition, opening the manholes can have the opposite effect of what was intended, by allowing large amounts of rainwater to enter the system.

Know the location of your sewer clean-out cap. In a worst-case scenario where sewage is backing up in your home, you can divert the flow to the yard by removing the sewer clean-out cap. The cap is positioned outdoors, but the location varies depending on the home.

Stay away from standing water. It may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines, or be contaminated by runoff or sewage.

Budget Feedback (Continued from Front)

website; or with a special phone number: (813) 307-8337. The comments and questions will be relayed to the County Commissioners during the hearings and answered or read out loud as time allows. All comments will be reviewed by Commissioners.

The public hearings are scheduled to continue on Thursday, July 16; Tuesday, Sept. 8; and Thursday, Sept. 17. All the meeting will start at 6 p.m. and be held in the County Center, 2nd Floor Boardroom, 601 E. Kennedy Blvd., downtown Tampa.

Throughout the budget review process until the budget is adopted on Sept. 17, residents also will be able to give the County Commissioners their opinion via several methods. Residents can call the phone number listed above and leave a voicemail message, which will be checked regularly; they can send an email to the address listed above or use the online budget e-mail form on the County's website; or they can upload a question or comment video via YouTube and submit the link to the County to view.

More information and instructions for all comment options, a link to the dates of the budget hearings and workshops, and to the actual budget document is available on the County's website. A prominent graphic on the home page will take you to the budget section of the website.

Hillsborough County Helps Soldiers Stationed Overseas

For the second time, hundreds of soldiers at MacDill Air Force Base stationed overseas can call their loved ones back home for free. On May 27, Sgt. Patti Conover and Capt. Scott Dunlap from Hillsborough County's Security Services Department, along with Ligia Large from Hillsborough Television, delivered an additional 2,000 calling cards to the base.

The *Cell Phones For Soldiers* organization sent the County the calling cards in appreciation of the huge cell phone collection project that the County's Security Services organized last winter. The cards delivered in May are in addition to 2,000 cards presented to MacDill in February. According to the organization, the County's collection of 2,000 cell phones is the largest donation since *Cell Phones For Soldiers* formed in 2004.

The phones are sent to ReCellular, Inc., which pays *Cell Phones For Soldiers* for each donated phone. The organization then provides a calling card with 60 minutes of talk time to soldiers abroad for each recycled phone. Hillsborough County's collection turned into 240,000 minutes of calling time for our soldiers overseas to talk to their loved ones back here at home.



The project was so successful, it has been extended to year-round

by County Commission vote. Collection boxes will soon be placed in various sites around the county.

Cell Phones For Soldiers is a program founded in 2004 by two teenagers, Brittany and Robbie Bergquist from Norwell, Massachusetts, with \$21 of their own money. Since then, the non-profit organization has raised almost \$2 million in donations and distributed more than 500,000 prepaid calling cards to soldiers overseas.

Make 9-1-1 Work For You

With summer in full swing and vacations in the works, residents need to keep in mind some important points to ensure they can access emergency service when they need it.

Before going on a road trip, make sure that your cell phone has 9-1-1 location capabilities. Although most cell phones in use today can be located by 9-1-1, residents should check with their service provider to make certain their cell phone has 9-1-1 location capabilities. Those who have cell phones without these capabilities should consider purchasing an upgraded cell phone or make additional preparations in case of an emergency.

In addition, those who travel with their VoIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) adapter should make sure it has 9-1-1 access by consulting with their service provider.

The most important piece of information a 9-1-1 caller can provide an operator is the address or location of the emergency that is being reported. Travelers should be aware of their surroundings and be as detailed as possible. If outside or unaware of the address, look around and find landmarks or cross streets.

Here are some additional tips:

- Use 9-1-1 for emergencies only, which is a situation that requires immediate police, fire or medical assistance to protect life or property. If unsure whether a situation is an emergency or not, err on the side of safety and call 9-1-1.
- Know the phone number you are calling from.
- Never hang up until told to do so. Even if the situation has resolved itself, it is important to let the 9-1-1 operator know this. If a call ends abruptly, the 9-1-1 operator will assume that something has gone wrong, and will either call back or send help anyway.
- Stay calm! It can be hard for a 9-1-1 operator to assess an emergency situation from someone who is crying or yelling. Follow the operator's instructions and answer questions as accurately as possible.

For more information, call the County 9-1-1 Administration at 813-744-5911 or visit www.hillsboroughcounty.org/911administration/.

SouthShore Water Resource Services' Customer Service Center Closed

The downturn in the economy has claimed Water Resource Services' SouthShore customer service center.

The office was located inside the county's SouthShore Regional Service Center, 410 30th St. S.E., in Ruskin. Its closing is one of several steps we've taken in recent months to trim costs.

Water Resource Services has seen a decrease in revenues with the economic downturn. Although the number of customers has remained about the same as last year, they are buying less water, either to cut their water bill costs or to conserve because of water restrictions related to the ongoing drought. Foreclosures and an increase in the number of people who default on their bills also are impacting the department.

Our other customer service centers in Brandon and northwest Hillsborough County remain open. The Brandon office is located in the Brandon Crossings Shopping Center at State Road 60 and Falkenburg Road. The Northdale office is at 15610 Premiere Drive in Northdale. Both centers are open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, contact Water Resource Services Customer Service at (813) 272-6680.

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Published every month by the Communications Department to inform residents about the programs, services and activities of their County government.

For more information, call the Hillsborough Information Line at (813) 272-5900, or visit the County's Web site at: www.hillsboroughcounty.org

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Let Your Voice Be Heard On The County's Budget

Hillsborough County government is advancing citizen participation with its budget review process this year. The public will have a variety of opportunities to give their ideas and opinions and find more out about the budget from the comfort of their home or office.

Championed by County Commissioner Al Higginbotham, the four public hearings this year for the proposed budget will be interactive, and allow residents to call in or e-mail questions and comments during the meetings. In addition to attending in person, residents will be able to watch the meeting live on Hillsborough Television (HTV) on Bright House channel 622 or Verizon and Comcast channel 22 or on the County's website at: www.hillsboroughcounty.org through live streaming video.



Viewers then will be able to submit questions or comments to a special e-mail address: hcbudget@hillsboroughcounty.org; by using an online budget email form on the County's

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