

## **It is the peak of hurricane season: what you should know and how you should prepare!**

As residents of Southwest Florida, we are well acquainted with the thought of hurricanes and the emotions that come with them like fear and stress for most families. Hurricanes are created over warm oceans in low-pressure areas. This collected energy forms hurricanes ranging from a category 1 to a category 5. Hurricanes can cause minimal damage to pure devastation, some communities may face mandatory evacuations, or the closure of businesses and school cancellations. But overall, the most important thing you can do during a disaster like a hurricane is for you and your family to be prepared for these devastating times. As of now we have a strong hurricane coming to the U.S called Hurricane Helene that is predicted to come out of the Caribbean and work its way through the United States at a category 3. This hurricane will be the strongest hurricane that we will see all of hurricane season. Helene will cause devastating damage to our community so we have to prepare.

Here are the steps for preparation:

1. Plan to evacuate:

- Know where you will go, how you will get there, and where you will stay

1. Plan to shelter:

- Be prepared to live without power, water, gas, and internet for some time.
- Find a designated space to shelter in for intense wind; this room should be small and windowless on the lowest level of the building.
- Protect your home by securing lawn furniture and sealing your windows with shutters or hardwood.

1. Gather emergency supplies

- Gather food with some nutritious value:
  - Canned Soup- is safe to eat cold and is a healthy and nutritious meal for when a disaster hits
  - Powdered milk- When water is added, it can give you nutrients like calcium which you might not get during a disaster.
  - Peanut butter- This is a good option for a snack or a meal and can be good with foods like crackers and bread.
  - Granola or energy bars- This is a good snack that doesn't have to be refrigerated and can give you some energy and vitamins.
  - Saltine crackers- This has high protein and is a filling snack.
  - Dried fruit- Fruit nutrients without having to be refrigerated.
  - Trail mix- High protein and energizing snack with the different kinds of nuts
  - Canned vegetables- These are safe to eat out of a can and can last for a very long time without going bad.
  - Whole grain bread- This is a statement for fiber and protein.
- Gather water:
  - Bottled water- This is the best option for having water at a disastrous time and can be used to bathe, brush teeth, wash dishes, and drink. (TIP: Don't open a bottle unless it is necessary!)
- Gather a Survival kit:
  - First aid kit- 1 month supply of medical supplies and equipment
  - Battery powered Radio

- Batteries and flashlights
- Backup phone batteries
- Keep important documents in a waterproof box.
- Generator

When a disaster like a hurricane is going to strike it is important to stay informed and to stay prepared for the safety of you and your loved ones.