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Governor Ron DeSantis Issues Updates on State Response and Recovery Efforts for Hurricane Milton

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Today, Governor Ron DeSantis was joined by Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) Executive Director Kevin Guthrie and Major General John D. Haas Adjutant General of Florida in Bradenton Beach and Manasota Key to provide updates on immediate response efforts for Hurricane Milton.

As of this afternoon, approximately 2,281,626 million Floridians are without power. The State of Florida has restored 1,789,487 accounts.

The State Assistance Information Line is now open and accepting calls 24/7 with English, Spanish and Haitian-Creole speakers available at 1-800-342-3557.

Governor DeSantis issued Executive [Order 24-215](#), amending [EO 24-214](#) and declaring a state of emergency for 51 counties.

To learn more about navigating hurricane season, residents can visit FloridaDisaster.org/Guide. For updates on county resources available visit FloridaDisaster.org/Counties for a list of all 67 county emergency management contacts.

State Response and Recovery Efforts

- The **Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM)** has activated the State Emergency Operations Center to Level 1 since Tuesday, September 24, for Hurricane Helene, and is at a Level 1 for Hurricane Milton, leading coordination efforts for the State Emergency Response Team.

- The State Emergency Response Team engaged in over 2,300 missions to assist counties in their preparations and immediate response for Hurricane Milton. These missions accomplish vital tasks like staging resources to deploy for immediate response, protecting critical infrastructure facilities like hospitals and utility stations, and coordinating personnel statewide.
- Since landfall, nearly 1,400 individuals and over 140 animals have been rescued by Urban Search and Rescue Teams and the Florida National Guard.
- FDEM is coordinating the opening of Points of Distribution (PODs) in impacted areas. Currently, 27 PODs are mobilizing in impacted counties.
- FDEM is overseeing the opening of three base camps for responders and resources in Pasco and Pinellas counties.
- FDEM has 1 million gallons of diesel and more than 730,000 gallons of emergency fuels on-hand, with 51,500 gallons of diesel and 35,900 gallons of gas deployed in the field supporting operations. An additional 449,000 gallons of diesel and 480,500 gallons of gas have been ordered to come into the state.
- The State of Florida partnered with Uber and Lyft to provide residents in mandatory evacuation zones free rides returning home from local shelters.
 - To get a ride with Uber, residents should: open the Uber app, tap Account on the bottom right and tap Wallet, and add promo code MILTONRELIEF1.
 - Lyft has activated the Lyft Up Disaster Response Program to provide free and discounted rides to help those in affected areas travel to and from designated shelters with critical resources. Riders can use code MILTONRELIEF24 for two rides up to \$25 to and from state-approved shelters.
- Additionally, residents can find open shelters in their area by visiting FloridaDisaster.org/shelters.
- The **Florida State Fire Marshal's Office's** US&R teams have successfully rescued 349 civilians, 47 pets and provided assistance to 164 others.
- Engine Strike teams are also deployed to offer support to the communities as needed.
- The Special Missions Unit of the Florida State Guard (FSG) has deployed with search and rescue, K9, paramedic, and swift water rescue teams, assisting with route clearance and search and rescue, both on water and over land, in Pasco and Charlotte counties.

- The **Florida State Guard** has completed 67 rescues in the wake of Hurricane Milton.
- The Maritime Response Squadron has deployed alongside FWC to assist in waterborne patrols, and search and rescue efforts in Charlotte County. The Aviation Response Squadron's Blackhawk helicopters UAS (drone) teams are conducting aerial reconnaissance in Polk, Sarasota and Hillsborough counties.
- The Crisis Response Battalion has deployed to conduct hasty route clearance and high-water rescue missions in Pasco County.
- The **Florida National Guard (FLNG)** has activated over 6,500 service members for Hurricane Milton response operations, and is expected to grow to nearly 7,300 with EMACs from other states for Hurricane Milton preparedness operations
- FLNG is providing immediate response in affected areas with liaison officers, search and rescue, humanitarian assistance, route clearing, ground and air reconnaissance, protection of critical infrastructure, flood mitigation and high wheeled vehicle support with state and local officials.
- FLNG has 31 rotary wing aircraft, approximately 500 high-wheeled tactical vehicles, including approximately 200 high-wheeled tactical vehicles and over a dozen boats prepared to provide search and response and damage assessment support post-storm.
- Over 100 **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC)** officers have rapidly deployed high-water vehicles and all other storm response resources to areas of Florida impacted by Hurricane Milton to assist Floridians in need.
- In the 24-hour period following Hurricane Milton's landfall, FWC officers rescued 645 individuals and performed 336 welfare checks. They also cleared trees, vessels, and debris from numerous roads, homes, and driveways.
- FWC officers have responded by providing:
 - 47 boats including airboats and shallow draft boats
 - ATVs/Side-by-sides
 - 132 high-water capable four-wheel drive vehicles
 - 29 high-water capable swamp buggies and UTVs
 - 3 SOG support trailers

- 4 aerial surveillance drones
- Self-sustainment equipment, including BERG container units, hygiene trailers, generators and mobile command posts
- Fuel trucks
- Skid Steers
- In addition to search and rescue, FWC officers have conducted welfare checks alongside counterparts at the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office.
- Preliminary numbers, as of midnight:
 - 7 rescues
 - 3 welfare checks
 - 2 arrests
- 38 strike teams embedded with local law enforcement in Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Manatee, Charlotte, Lee, and Sarasota counties have begun rescue and recovery efforts.
- 17 FWC officers embedded with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office performed numerous high-water rescues in the area. Most of these rescues took place using high water vehicles, as the winds were still too high at the time to safely operate vessels.
- FWC officers conducted an emergency highwater rescue in the Sherwood RV Park for a patient who lost her oxygen tanks in the storm.
- Local officers made 22 highwater evacuations in the Thousand Oaks subdivision.
- Officers also assisted with road clearing, including 17 road blockage removals, and conducted nine welfare checks.
- In a multi-agency response, FWC officers and partner agencies rescued and evacuated approximately 426 people and 45 pets from flood waters in a Clearwater apartment complex. FWC officers used a high-water swamp buggy, UTV, and shallow-draft vessels during the rescue effort.
- Hillsborough County officers assisted with the rescue and evacuation of 111 senior citizens from two different assisted living facilities. Teams also rescued an additional 15 individuals from their flooded residences and one individual from their car that was stuck on a flooded road.
- 38 local officers from the NE Region and 15 NC Region SOG team officers assisted with rescue and recovery efforts in Volusia County using airboats,

shallow draft vessels, and high-water vehicles; combined, they rescued 49 individuals and 1 pet.

- Officers in Plant City assisted with rescuing 35 individuals from flooded waters and checked 150 homes.
- FWC officers have conducted 216 welfare checks in Charlotte and Sarasota Counties.
- Polk County FWC Officers are assisting Polk County Sheriff's Office in conducting welfare checks by airboat in a flooded neighborhood in north Lakeland.
- FWC Captive Wildlife Investigators are contacting captive wildlife facilities and conducting site visits storm impacted areas. There have been no reported escapes.
- The **Florida Department of Law Enforcement's (FDLE)** mutual aid team is managing 46 active law enforcement missions with more than 70 completed. The missions include:
 - Fuel and Water escorts
 - Traffic control
 - Search and rescue
 - The FDLE Sworn Training Unit cut team is in Tampa Bay making temporary, emergency repairs to the homes of first responders so they can quickly get back to work.
- FDLE aviation assets are conducting overwatch missions for patrol officers in impacted areas.
- More than 300 law enforcement officers are assigned to missions related to Hurricane Milton.
- The **Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs (FDVA)** has announced that outpatient appointments at VA Clinics in the impacted areas are being rescheduled or converted to virtual. See www.FloridaVets.org for closure details.
- State Veterans' Service Officers are available to take your call at (727) 319-7440 or via email at FDVA.VSO@FDVA.FL.GOV.
- All State Veterans' Homes in Florida are operational and undamaged. The Baldomero Lopez State Veterans' Nursing Home in Land O' Lakes is running on full generator power.

- The VISN 8 Clinical Contact Center is operational 24/7/365 for virtual care and tele-emergency care to support Florida Veterans enrolled for VA Health Care. Call 1-877-741-3400.
- Power has been restored at the Emory L. Bennett State Veterans' Nursing Home in Daytona Beach.
- All youth and staff in the **Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ)** facilities are accounted for and safe. DJJ continues to assess its facilities for damage and most facilities have had minimal storm impacts.

Health and Human Services

- The **Florida Department of Health (DOH)** deployed nearly 600 emergency response vehicles (e.g., ambulances, ambulance buses, paratransit vehicles) to support emergency evacuations and patient transport as needed.
- DOH is supporting 38 special needs shelters, which are accepting clients, located in the following counties: Brevard (1), Charlotte (1), Collier (1), DeSoto (1), Duval (2), Flagler (1), Hardee (1), Hernando (1), Highlands (1), Hillsborough (3), Indian River (1), Lake (1), Lee (1), Levy (1), Manatee (1), Marion (1), Orange (1), Osceola (1), Pasco (2), Pinellas (4), Polk (3), St. Johns (1), St. Lucie (1), Sarasota (1), Seminole (3), Sumter (1), and Volusia (2).
- [DOH](#) and the [Office of Insurance Regulation \(OIR\)](#) sent information regarding early prescription refills permitted under [Executive Order 24-215](#). This information was sent to the public, health insurers, managed care organizations, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacy chains and health care providers.
- The State Surgeon General signed Emergency Order 24-003, which:
 - Waives competitive procurement requirements in order to procure commodities, goods, and services expeditiously in response to the emergency.
 - Permits emergency medical transportation services licensed in other U.S. states, territories, and/or districts to operate in Florida in response to the emergency.
 - Permits paramedics, emergency medical technicians, and their medical directors licensed in other U.S. states, territories, or districts to practice in Florida in response to the emergency without penalty.
 - Permits pharmacies and prescription department managers to operate in multiple or mobile locations.

- There are 26 active Boil Water Notices as a result of Hurricane Milton. A comprehensive statewide list of notices for residents to access online can be [found here](#):
 - Charlotte (2), Citrus (2), Hillsborough (1), Lake (8), Lee (2), Manatee (1), Orange (1), Pasco (1), Pinellas (2), Putnam (4), and Sarasota (2).
- There have been two rescinded Boil Water Notices in the following counties:
- Okeechobee (1), and St. Lucie (1).
- The State Surgeon General signed [Emergency Order 24-004](#), which:
 - Permits paramedics, emergency medical technicians, and their medical directors, physicians and physician assistants, osteopathic physicians and physician assistants, advanced practice registered nurses, registered nurses, licensed practical nurses, certified nursing assistants, mental health counselors, clinical social workers and marriage and family therapists licensed in other U.S. states, territories, or districts to practice in Florida in response to the emergency without penalty.
 - Waives telehealth registration requirements for physicians and physician assistants, osteopathic physicians and physician assistants, advanced practice registered nurses, mental health counselors, clinical social workers, and marriage and family therapists.
- The **Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA)** has initiated an event in the Health Facility Reporting System (HFRS). Healthcare providers have been requested to provide information on census, available beds, evacuation status, accepting evacuees and generator needs from counties declared under [EO-24-114](#). This information allows AHCA to assist healthcare providers in transferring patients if needed and ensure that healthcare providers in impacted areas have the necessary resources and adequate power.
 - 374 health care facilities have reported evacuations. This includes:
 - 26 adult family care home
 - 200 assisted living facilities
 - 5 crisis stabilization and short term RFT
 - 8 hospices
 - 20 hospitals
 - 7 hospitals ED

- 7 intermediate care facilities for the developmentally disabled
- 72 nursing homes
- 4 residential treatment centers for children and adolescents
- 17 residential treatment facilities
- 8 Transitional living facilities
- As of this 7:30 AM, there are 670 health care facilities with loss of power across the state. This includes:
 - 34 adult family care home
 - 413 assisted living facilities
 - 10 crisis stabilization and short term RFT
 - 8 hospices
 - 25 hospitals
 - 8 hospitals ED
 - 6 intermediate care facility for the developmentally disabled
 - 126 nursing homes
 - 8 residential treatment centers for children and adolescents
 - 22 residential treatment facilities
 - 10 Transitional living facilities

AHCA is conducting daily calls with the Florida Hospital Association and Florida Healthcare
- Association to ensure nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and hospitals are prepared and have their needs met.
- The Agency has waived all prior authorization requirements for critical Medicaid services beginning October 7, 2024, until further notice.
- 100% of operating long-term care facilities have a generator on-site. The Generator Status Map for long-term care facilities is [available here](#).
- Agency surveyors have completed 28 post storm assessment visits to ensure health care facilities in impacted areas are able to safely care for residents.
- The **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)** is working with Florida's ports and fuel industry partners to ensure adequate fuel

supplies are available, and with Florida's agricultural partners so producers have adequate resources.

- A total of 13 generators were deployed to commercial agricultural facilities to prevent disruption to food and agricultural critical infrastructure.
- Commissioner of Agriculture Wilton Simpson has approved an [emergency order](#) temporarily suspending the intrastate movement requirements for the transportation of animals and livestock fleeing Hurricane Milton. In addition, the following states have waived their interstate import requirements for Florida pets, horses and livestock leaving the state: Alabama, Georgia (does not include livestock), Mississippi, and North Carolina.
- Commissioner Wilton Simpson has issued an [emergency order](#) suspending requirements related to the distribution, delivery, storage, and sale of liquid fuels — such as gasoline and diesel — to assist with efforts to ensure adequate distribution and supply of fuel.
- Commissioner Wilton Simpson has issued an [emergency rule](#) to aid the distribution of liquefied petroleum gas to disaster response and recovery operations.
- Floridians are encouraged to call 1-800-HELP-FLA to report water-contaminated fuel issues to the department.
- Food safety inspectors are responding to impacted areas to conduct damage assessments and ensure the safe operation of permitted food establishments.
- Agricultural partners can request critical assistance for livestock and animals in critical need, please [complete this form](#) and send it to DAIOPSAssessment@FDACS.gov, or call 863-993-5460.
- The **Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA)** continues to contact all Area Agencies on Aging partners to receive updates. Post-storm call-downs to clients are ongoing and there are currently no unmet needs.
- The **Agency for Persons with Disabilities (APD)** continues response protocols and communication with APD-operated facilities, regions, and providers within the counties under declared state of emergency to provide updates on Hurricane Milton, evacuation orders, office closures, anticipation of unmet needs, and verifying client status.
- APD has conducted outreach to over 51,000 clients for Hurricane Milton.
- APD has conducted outreach to over 2,000 APD group homes within the counties of Hurricane Milton's impact.

- APD has sourced behavioral and therapeutic tools to compile sensory kits for Floridians in need within the path of Hurricane Milton.
- APD Hope Florida Navigators, and APD emergency recovery teams have deployed to Hope Florida Distribution sites throughout affected areas.
- APD leadership is conducting wellness checks to Group Homes in Sarasota and providing clients and individuals with therapeutic sensory kits that include notes of encouragement from Developmentally Disabled clients in the unaffected areas.
- APD is directly addressing the needs of clients, providers, and staff affected by Hurricane Milton.
- The **Department of Children and Families (DCF)** is in the process of contacting all foster families, group homes, and providers to assess for unmet needs after the storm. So far DCF has contacted families and group homes serving over 8,700 individuals and over 5,900 providers in impacted areas to ensure all children and families served are safe and to determine needs.
- DCF is supporting over 35 shelters in impacted areas.
- All State Mental Health Treatment Facilities and Crisis Stabilization Units are fully operational.
- In the areas impacted by storm, the Managing Entities' behavioral health providers remain available for crisis intervention via telehealth to ensure continued support during this time.
- The Hope Line is available to assist those in need of resources or other assistance after the storm. It is now available 24/7 for the next two-plus weeks at 833-GET-HOPE.
- Activate Hope has been deployed to help connect Floridians impacted by the storm with needed resources like food, supplies, home repairs, and more. Serving as the emergency response component of the Hope Florida initiative, Activate Hope connects the private sector, nonprofits, and government to help Floridians get back on their feet following a natural disaster. [Fill out the form here to get help.](#)

Infrastructure, Roads and State Closures

- The **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)** has over 2,000 FDOT team members working directly on storm response.

- Damage assessment teams are active in the field and are surveying impacts.
- Cut and Toss Operations on state-owned facilities are complete, except for inaccessible areas or roadways with hazards. 486 crew members cleared over 12,000 miles of roadway.
- FDOT has shifted efforts towards debris pickup on state roads.
- Bridge inspections are 92% complete with over 2,300 bridges inspected.
- 85% of traffic signals in the impacted area are operational. Crews are working to deploy generators to temporarily restore power to locations that are non-operational.
- FDOT has mobilized team members to our agency's base camp in Seffner.
- I-4, I-75, I-95, and Alligator Alley are cleared and open for travel. The Sunshine Skyway, the Gandy Bridge, Howard Frankland Bridge, and the Courtney
- Campbell Causeway area were inspected, cleared, and reopened immediately following the storm.
- Teams continue to monitor water levels at low-lying bridges near major river crossings.
- ITS trailers, drone teams, pumps, Starlink devices and other equipment are being deployed in the field as needed.
- FDOT has lifted weight restrictions and is allowing bypass of weigh stations for emergency response vehicles, including utility vehicles staging for rapid response.
- FDOT has coordinated efforts with Georgia and Alabama to allow a bypass of weigh stations for emergency response and supply vehicles.
- [Tolls have been suspended](#) on facilities in West Florida and Central Florida as well as Alligator Alley and 595 Express to help facilitate traffic flow as Floridians evacuate. Specific details and facilities [can be found listed here](#).
- At the direction of Gov. DeSantis, FDOT coordinated and completed the removal of debris on barrier islands in Pinellas and Manatee Counties ahead of Hurricane Milton with the Florida National Guard, Florida State Guard, Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Department of Agriculture, amongst others.
 - 2,241 truckloads and nearly 40,338 cubic yards of debris have been removed from Pinellas County barrier islands.

- 792 truckloads and over 14,256 cubic yards of debris have been removed from Manatee County barrier islands state roads.
- Road Ranger service has been expanded to assist motorists along critical roadways.
FDOT encourages drivers to download the FL511 app or visit FL511.com for road/bridge
- closures and detours that may be activated. Remember to always follow the direction of local law enforcement and emergency personnel.
- Remember to never drive through flooded areas. The area of the roadway beneath the water may be washed out or may conceal debris or even power lines. Turn Around; Don't Drown.
- Construction projects located in the following counties may resume normal work operations on all roads and interstates: Alachua, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Dixie, Duval, Gilchrist, Hamilton, Lafayette, Levy, Madison, Nassau, Putnam, Union, St. Johns, Suwannee, Taylor, Bay, Calhoun, Escambia, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Holmes, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Wakulla, Walton, and Washington, Broward, Indian River, Martin, Palm Beach, St. Lucie, Miami Dade, Monroe
- **Transportation Modes:**
 - Please check with your service providers directly regarding potential service impacts, such as flight schedules, passenger rail service, and transit schedules.
- **Seaports:**
 - Port St. Pete and SeaPort Manatee remain closed at this time. Florida Seaports Fuel Supplies are being closely monitored and plans are in place for maintaining adequate supply levels across the state as we work to recover from the storm.
- **Airports:**
 - Commercial airports that remain closed: Sarasota/Bradenton International
- **Railroads:**
 - SunRail: Resuming service on October 14.
- **State-Owned Road & Bridge Closures (As of 2:00 p.m., 10/11/24)**
State road & bridge closures listed below. For real-time updates, Check

FL511.com.

Bridge inspections by FDOT underway where safe and others beginning at first light.

- **Flagler County**

- Flooding on ramp from N State St to SR-100. All lanes closed.
- Flooding on SR-100 East, at US-1.
- Flooding on SR-100 West, at US-1.
- Flooding on SR-100 Eastbound near Deen Rd.

- **Hillsborough County**

- Flooding on E Fowler Ave Both Directions from N 15th St to Bruce B Downs Blvd. All lanes closed.
- Debris on Roadway on Sligh Ave Both Directions at Altier Estates Ct. All lanes closed.
- Debris on Roadway on SR-574 Both Directions from N Turkey Creek Rd to Sammonds Rd. All lanes closed.

- **Lake County**

- Flooding on SR-46 East, before US-441.

- **Lee County**

- Access Restricted on Estero Blvd Both Directions near Broadway Channel.
- Debris on Roadway on Pine Island Rd Westbound near Shoreview Dr. All lanes closed.
- Debris on Roadway on Pine Island Rd Eastbound near Little Pine Creek. All lanes closed.
- Access Restricted on SR-865 Southbound near Main St.
- Access Restricted on SR-865 Northbound near 5th St.

- **Manatee County**

- Access Restricted on Cortez Rd Eastbound at Gulf Dr N.
- Access Restricted on Cortez Rd Westbound at 127th St W.

- Access Restricted on Manatee Ave Westbound at Martinique Dr.
- Access Restricted on Manatee Ave Eastbound at East Bay Dr. All lanes closed.
- Access Restricted on SR-789 Southbound near 13th St S.
- Access Restricted on SR-789 Northbound near N Shore Rd.
- Flooding on Verna Bethany Rd Both Directions 0.48 Mi South of Sr-64 E. All lanes closed.
- **Orange County**
 - Flooding on I-4 East, before MM 67/SR-536. Off-ramp left lanes blocked.
 - Flooding in Orange County on SR-436 / Semoran Blvd / Altamonte Dr North, at Line Dr.
- **Pasco County**
 - Debris on Roadway on Cecelia Dr Both Directions at George St.
- **Pinellas County**
 - Emergency vehicles on I-275 South, ramp to Mile Marker 13, Skyway North Rest Area. Off-ramp closed.
 - Emergency vehicles on I-275 North, ramp to Mile Marker 13, Skyway North Rest Area. Off-ramp closed.
- **Polk County**
 - Flooding on US-92 Eastbound at Airport Rd. All lanes closed.
 - Flooding on US-92 Westbound at N Galloway Rd. All lanes closed.
- **Sarasota County**
 - Access Restricted on Gulf of Mexico Dr Both Directions at The Colony Beach & Tennis Resort.
 - Access Restricted on John Ringling Blvd Southbound near S Washington Dr.
 - Access Restricted on John Ringling Cswy Northbound at Sunset Dr.
 - Access Restricted on Siesta Dr Westbound at San Remo Ter.
 - Access Restricted on Siesta Dr Eastbound at Norsota Way.

- Flooding on SR-789 South, before Washington Drive. All lanes closed.
- Flooding on SR-789 North, at Sunset Drive. All lanes closed.
- Access Restricted on SR-789 at Main St Dr.
- Access Restricted on St Armands Cir Both Directions near John Ringling Blvd
- **Seminole County**
 - Flooding on SR-426 Westbound near Wrights Rd.
- **Volusia County**
 - Flooding on I-4 West, before MM 111AB/Orange City/Deltona. Off-ramp closed.
 - Flooding on I-4 West, before MM 129/US-92. On-ramp closed.
 - Flooding on I-4 East, before MM 111/Saxon Blvd.
 - Flooding on I-4 West, before MM 111/Saxon Blvd.
 - Flooding on Ocean Shore Blvd Northbound at Wisteria Dr. All lanes closed
 - Flooding on Ocean Shore Blvd at Sunny Beach Dr. All lanes closed.
 - Major Road Damage on S Volusia Ave Southbound at Enterprise Rd. All lanes closed
 - Flooding on SR-415 North, at Howland Blvd.
 - Flooding on SR-421 / Dunlawton Ave North, at Spruce Creek Rd. All lanes closed.
 - Flooding on SR-421 / Dunlawton Ave South, at Railroad Crossing. All lanes closed.
 - Flooding on SR-430 West, at Carswell Ave.
 - Emergency road construction on SR-472 East, at N Kentucky Ave. Right lane blocked.
 - Debris on Roadway on US Highway 17 Both Directions at Prevatt Rd.
 - Flooding on US-17 North, at Blue Springs Ave.
 - Flooding on US-17 North, at SR-40.
 - Flooding on US-92 West, at I-4 Ramp Overpass. Right lane blocked.

- Flooding on US-92 East, at Indian Lake Rd.
- Flooding on US-92 East, at Beach St.
- The **Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)** is actively working to provide any needed assistance to drinking water, wastewater and hazardous waste facilities. Outreach to these facilities to determine operational status is ongoing.
- DEP's online portal WaterTracker is live for drinking and wastewater facilities to report their operational status, and staff have begun outreach to facilities. DEP is working with Florida's Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (FlaWARN), the Florida Rural Water Association and other response agencies to dispatch generators, fuel and pump trucks and other resources to assist drinking and wastewater facilities.
- DEP and response agencies are working 1-on-1 with partially- and non-operational drinking and wastewater facilities to get them back to operational status as quickly as possible to meet the immediate service needs of the communities they serve. Areas under boil water advisories can be found here.
- DEP has authorized 152 Disaster Debris Management Sites (DDMS) for Hurricane Helene and an additional 1 for Hurricane Milton. These sites are a critical component of expediting clean-up and reducing environmental and public health impacts post-storm. DEP is coordinating EPA Landfill Strike Teams to assess DDMS operating as a result of these storms.
For counties and local governments in need of additional debris disposal locations, DEP
 - For has approved all pending DDMS site activation requests and DEP stands ready to approve the activation of any additional pre-authorized or new DDMSs that may be needed.
DEP is coordinating the deployment of a mobile testing lab from the U.S. Environmental
- Protection Agency (EPA) to expedite testing for drinking and surface water samples to protect public health.
DEP is coordinating post-storm beach surveys to determine impacts to shorelines and
- erosion, as well as inspecting damage to beach projects in impacted counties along both coasts.
- DEP's Hazardous Area Response Teams, working in conjunction with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the U.S. Coast Guard, will

identify oil spills and hazardous material releases in coastal and inland waterways.

- DEP received approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to temporarily adjust certain regulatory requirements statewide so the state can ensure a sustained, useable fuel supply.
- EPA also approved DEP's No Action Assurance Letter for Duke Crystal River, which allows for low load operations to maintain grid stability.
- Florida's water management districts are actively engaging local governments and drainage operators throughout the state to support flood control efforts, including deploying temporary pumps to alleviate localized flooding.
- The Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) has activated the Tampa Bypass Canal System to help protect the cities of Temple Terrace and Tampa from river flooding. The Hillsborough Flood Detention Area (HFDA) is now considered activated, and the empty reservoir is filling with floodwaters. This action stops all or part of the flow of the Hillsborough River before it reaches the cities of Temple Terrace and Tampa and stores it in the HFDA. The stored water can then be safely moved down to McKay Bay using the Tampa Bypass Canal.
- Beaches teams are performing assessments on the West Coast and will be utilizing aerial oblique videography (AOV) to conduct initial assessment of most impacted areas. On the East Coast, assessment teams are in place and plan to start initial assessments today.
- 59 state parks have reopened following Hurricane Milton. DEP published a storm updates webpage to keep state park visitors updated of closures: [FloridaStateParks.org/StormUpdates](https://www.floridastateparks.org/StormUpdates). Visitors with existing camping and cabin reservations at closed parks have been notified of their reservation status.
- Following the issuance of the Governor's Executive Order, DEP issued an Emergency Final Order allowing for the activation of disaster debris management sites to store and process storm generated solid waste and debris.
- DEP's Emergency Final Order also removes barriers for expediting necessary repair, replacement and restoration of structures, including coastal structures, equipment, surface water management systems, works and other systems that may be damaged by the storm.
- The **Florida Highway Patrol (FHP)** have deployed high-water rescue vehicles to areas impacted by Hurricane Milton.

- FHP is actively conducting patrols of evacuated communities and those damaged by Hurricane Helene to suppress criminal activity and prevent looting.
- FHP Unmanned Aerial Systems Teams are conducting surveys of bridges and hospitals for damage.
- 75 FHP QRF Members mobilized from Camp Blanding to the southwest Florida area to assist with road clearing and emergency relief efforts.
- FHP is actively conducting escorts of ambulance and other first responder convoys.
FHP is conducting traffic control at emergency supply distribution warehouses in Orlando.
- FHP is conducting post storm convoy escorts, which include power, air support, debris cleanup, food and water, and other critical community needs.
FHP's fleet of 6 skid steers is deployed in affected areas to clear debris, open roadways,
- and restore order.
- FHP air support is deployed in areas impacted by storm-damage from Hurricane Milton.
- The **Florida Department of Education (DOE)** is in contact with all school districts following Hurricane Milton and the Department is working with FDEM to address critical needs. Of the 50 school districts that closed for Hurricane Milton, the Department expects at least 30 school districts will be open on Monday, October 14. For more information on school district, state college and university reopenings, visit <https://www.fldoe.org/storminfo>.
- The **State University System of Florida** has been in communication with universities in all impacted areas. Less than 48 hours after Hurricane Milton made landfall, six out of the 12 universities within the State University System of Florida are open. For the latest information about the operational status of universities, please visit <https://www.fldoe.org/storminfo>.
- The **Florida Department of Corrections (FDC)** reported that all staff and inmates in the path of Hurricane Milton have been accounted for. Updates will be made available to the public at www.fdc.myflorida.com/weather-updates.

Resources for Employees, Businesses and Consumers

- The **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR)** continues to stage assets and personnel across 13 offices statewide. As soon as it is safe to do so, teams will begin disaster inspections of food service

establishments, damage assessments of licensed locations and sweeps to check for unlicensed contracting activity.

- DBPR is leading the coordination of state agency participation at 11 Multi-Agency Resource Centers across ten counties, each scheduled to open by Monday, October 14.
- DBPR's Division of Hotels and Restaurants has shared emergency reopening guidance with 137,000 restaurants and lodging licensees across the state to ensure they are operating safely following the storm.
- DBPR's Emergency Order 2024-08, issued at the direction of Governor DeSantis in response to Hurricane Helene, in part allows food service businesses to operate temporary food kitchens. The order also applies to businesses impacted by Hurricane Milton, and DBPR has encouraged impacted food service businesses to take advantage of this option as the Department works to help them re-open as soon as possible. Food service operators can register their temporary kitchens [here](#).
- The Florida Disaster Contractors Network has been activated to connect homeowners with licensed contractors and suppliers to perform emergency repairs. DBPR encourages Florida's licensed contractors who provide post-storm construction-related services to register with its Florida Disaster Contractors [Network at DCNOnline.org](#).
- **Volunteer Florida** partner resources:
 - Disaster Legal Hotline is open to assist and refer callers: 833-514-2940
2-1-1 is open and ready to receive calls.
Red Cross Hotline is open to assist: 1-800-Red Cross
 - Crisis Cleanup number: 844-965-1386
 - Volunteer opportunities promoted through [Volunteer Connect](#)
 - New email for hurricane-related inquiries: hurricane@volunteerflorida.org.
- **FloridaCommerce** is communicating and coordinating with more than 200 private sector partners across the state.
- Governor Ron DeSantis activated the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program, making \$50 million available for businesses impacted by Hurricane Milton. Florida small business owners in need of assistance, including sole proprietors, are encouraged to visit www.FloridaJobs.org/EBL to apply for the

Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program. The program provides short-term, zero-interest loans to small businesses that experienced economic injury or physical damage due to Hurricane Milton. Interested applicants can apply now through December 4, 2024, or until all available funds are expended.

- In record time, FloridaCommerce has approved more than \$1.1 million in funding through the Florida Small Business Emergency Bridge Loan Program for small businesses impacted by Hurricane Milton. To date, 26 businesses have been approved to receive these funds to bridge the gap while they wait on other funding, such as insurance, with more applications being approved daily. FloridaCommerce has approved more than \$9.6 million to 233 small businesses impacted by Hurricane Helene.
- FloridaCommerce and the State Emergency Response Team (SERT) activated the Business Damage Assessment Survey in response to Hurricane Milton. Business owners can self-report physical and economic damage caused by Hurricane Milton. Survey responses will allow the state to expedite Hurricane Milton recovery efforts by gathering data and assessing the needs of impacted businesses. Businesses can complete the survey online by visiting FloridaDisaster.biz and selecting “Hurricane Milton” from the dropdown menu. More than 380 Business Damage Assessment Surveys have been completed.
- FloridaCommerce deployed 18 agency employees into communities across the state providing outreach and support to individuals and businesses, including four small business canvassing strike teams in North Florida, Central Florida and South Florida, and other teams joining the Hope Florida buses and DBPR, DJJ, and APD in Sarasota County, Charlotte County and Lee County.
- Florida Housing Finance Corporation (FHFC) has disaster relief resources and information for Floridians in need of housing options and other housing related support. For more information [click here](#). FHFC has also activated FloridaHousingSearch.org to assist hurricane-impacted Floridians in locating an affordable rental property. This free, statewide search platform is being constantly updated to ensure all listings are accurate. Floridians can also call 1-877-428-8844.
- FloridaCommerce continues to work with the Florida Chamber, the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association and other private sector partners to consistently updates business open/close status at FloridaDisaster.biz. FloridaCommerce staff have made more than 400 calls to rural and small businesses to help with this effort.

- FloridaCommerce is working with private sector banking partners to ensure that evacuees have access to banks and are able to withdraw cash.
- FloridaCommerce activated the Private Sector Hotline at (850) 815-4925, open daily 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Inquiries may also be emailed to ESF18@em.myflorida.com. FloridaCommerce is hosting daily private sector coordination calls.
- Briefings will be provided by Emergency Support Functions and private sector partners. For call information email ESF18@em.myflorida.com.
- FloridaCommerce and CareerSource Florida is hosting daily calls with the 21 Local Workforce Development Boards and 38 Community Action Agencies across the state to assist employees and employers after the weather event.
- FloridaCommerce has worked with Walmart, City Furniture, Citrus Springs Industrial Holdings, FloridaMakes, Amazon and TECO to successfully identify and secure sites for debris disposal and additional shelters for evacuees.
- Wawa will be distributing ice and bottled water at various store locations in impacted areas. For more information [click here](#).
- Wawa stores in Florida provide free coffee and fountain beverages to all first responders, including the National Guard in Florida in appreciation for all they are doing to support and serve our communities during hurricane response and recovery efforts.
- Wawa will donate \$500,000 to the Florida Disaster Fund to support the state of Florida's private fund established to provide financial assistance to communities as they respond to and recover from times of emergency or disaster. Walmart has donated \$5,000 in gift cards to HOPE FLORIDA for cleaning
- supplies, toiletries and water to assist with post-storm deployment in impacted areas. Additionally, Walmart has donated kosher food to impacted Jewish communities ahead of Yom Kippur.
- Comcast has opened more than 261,000 public Xfinity WiFi hotspots in areas it serves across the state. The free and public hotspots are open for anyone to use, including non-Xfinity customers. For more information visit Finder.wifi.xfinity.com. Comcast is also positioning crews and equipment to immediately respond after the storm, should there be any service interruptions for Comcast Business or Xfinity customers.
- Tesla has available charging stations for those evacuating with electric vehicles available at Tesla.com/findus. The live status and availability of superchargers can also be found in the Tesla app.

- SpaceX has delivered another 400 Starlink kits to the state of Florida to support Hurricane Milton.
- SpaceX has worked with T-Mobile to activate Direct to Cell satellites to provide emergency alerts for all cell phones and carriers in affected areas. SpaceX and T-Mobile have enabled basic texting (SMS) via satellite for T-Mobile users in hurricane affected areas.
- The AT&T Weather Operations Center has a team of degreed meteorologists delivering business-specific weather intelligence, analytics, and forecasts. The FirstNet Response Operations Group™ (ROG) – led by a dedicated team of former first responders – is working around the clock to support public safety’s emergency communications and has liaisons engaged with local and federal agencies.
- Spectrum announced it will help residents stay connected by offering free, unlimited access to Spectrum Wi-Fi access points in Florida. A map of locations can be viewed at [Spectrum Out-of-Home WiFi Map: Get WiFi Access Anywhere.](#)
- FloridaCommerce coordinated with partners to provide generators to several Jewish communities so that they are able to hold services for Yom Kippur.
- **VISIT FLORIDA** Emergency Accommodation Modules on [Expedia](#) and [Priceline](#) are available to provide real-time hotel availability and lodging resources for impacted Floridians and visitors.
- Rosen Hotels & Resorts activated its Florida Resident Distress Rates for those in the 51 counties declared as under a state of emergency by Governor Ron DeSantis.
- Scenic Stays Vacation Rentals in Northwest Florida has a 35% discount with promotion code MILTON. Go to myscenicstays.com or call 850-407-2244 to book.
- Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort has extended special offers for Evacuees and First Responders in need of accommodations in the event of an evacuation. Please see the linked pages below for more information.
 - [EVACUEES](#) Good for stays through October 31. Book by October 29
 - [FIRST RESPONDERS](#) Good for stays through December 31. Book by December 29
 - The Florida SBDC Network is readying its Mobile Assistance Center vehicles and staff to

- deploy to impacted areas to assist business owners in connecting with available disaster resources.
The Florida SBDC Network is coordinating with regional offices and
- stakeholders to better understand impacts to small businesses and share information about state resources.
- The **Office of Financial Regulation (OFR)** offers [online resources](#) to Floridians who may need help finding information about their financial services provider(s), including state-chartered banks and credit unions, mortgage servicers, and other financial businesses and professionals.
- OIR, in coordination with the Florida Department of Health (DOH), sent information regarding early prescription refills permitted under Executive Order 24-215. This information was sent to the public, health insurers, managed care organizations, pharmacy benefit managers, pharmacy chains, and health care providers. [Information can be found here.](#)
- The **Department of Revenue (DOR)** has the following update: Florida law allows exporters, petroleum carriers, and importers to request a temporary fuel tax license during a disaster or declared state of emergency. Out-of-state applicants are not required to submit a fee, secure bonding, or undergo a background check if they apply for and receive a temporary fuel tax license. Visit the Florida Fuel Tax webpage for more information on Florida's temporary fuel tax licensing program: <https://floridarevenue.com/taxes/taxesfees/Pages/fuel.aspx>
- The **Florida Department of Management Services (DMS)** has deployed 146 Starlinks for Hurricane Milton.
- The **Florida Department of State (DOS)** Division of Elections has been reaching out to Supervisors to assess their needs post storm. The Division is prepared to coordinate communications between county Supervisors of Elections and appropriate disaster agencies, if needed. We have also reached out to United States Postal Service (USPS) regarding concerns about elections information and vote-by-mail ballots during this time. The Florida Department of State will continue to follow up with Supervisors throughout this time as their needs evolve.

For previous updates see below:

[10/6/2024 \(1\)](#)

[10/6/2024 \(2\)](#)

[10/7/2024 \(1\)](#)

[10/7/2024 \(2\)](#)

[10/8/2024 \(1\)](#)

[10/8/2024 \(2\)](#)

[10/9/2024 \(1\)](#)

[10/9/2024 \(2\)](#)

[10/10/2024 \(1\)](#)

[10/10/2024 \(2\)](#)

[10/11/2024](#)

Follow FDEM on [X](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#) for updates and visit [FloridaDisaster.org/Updates](#) for information relating to Hurricane Milton.