Preparing For Hurricane Season

June 1 marks the beginning of hurricane season for our region. Hurricanes can produce strong winds, large amounts of rain, and cause significant damage to city infrastructure. Due to the high potential for injuries and damage, it’s best to stay prepared and be ready before they make landfall. However, it is also important to remember that this year’s planning may be different due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The first step of planning for any natural disaster is determining your risk. Use the NOAA Coastal Services historical hurricane tracks tool to figure out which hazards are more common in your area and use this website to determine your storm surge planning zone. If you need more information about storm surge planning zones, click here: https://www.miamidade.gov/global/emergency/hurricane/storm-surge-zones.page

Make a plan for you and your family for when a natural disaster occurs. It’s important to have a plan for different scenarios. For example, make sure you have a plan for when kids are at school or when other family members are not home. Be sure to ask the important questions like: Where will I take shelter? Do any of my family members have medical needs? How will I get where I need to be?

The Department of Homeland Security has a form to use as a template, it can be found here: Emergency Plan for Parents

Build a kit. You want to make sure that consumables can last for at least three days for you and your family. This includes three days worth of water (both for drinking and cleaning), food, and phone chargers. Kits should also include first aid kits, money, radios, batteries, cloth face coverings (for those ages 2 and over), hand sanitizer, medications, and important and up-to-date documents. For a more exhaustive list visit https://www.ready.gov/kit

Determine your evacuation route, how you will leave, and where you will take shelter and, if applicable, if they take pets. Throughout this planning, make sure to follow CDC guidelines to protect you and your loved ones from coronavirus.

Make sure that you have several ways for you to receive emergency alerts and warnings. To sign up for Miami-Dade emergency alerts, click here. You can also download the FEMA app by visiting https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app
Hurricane Resources

To find the most up-to-date information and guidance regarding hurricanes in Miami-Dade, visit https://www.miamidade.gov/global/emergency/hurricane/home.page

Covid-19 Resources

To find the most up-to-date information and guidance on COVID-19, please visit the Department’s dedicated COVID-19 webpage.

For any other questions related to COVID-19 in Florida, please contact the Department’s dedicated COVID-19 Call Center by calling 1-866-779-6121. The Call Center is available 24 hours per day. Inquiries may also be emailed to COVID-19@flhealth.gov.

During and After a Hurricane

Continue to stay informed. Listen to the radio, television, and other sources of news during and after a hurricane. By doing so, you will be able to receive updates on hurricane status and the overall safety of your surrounding areas.

Stay indoors. If your house begins to be damaged by the storm climb into a bathtub and use a mattress to protect you from flying debris. Is it starting to flood in your home? If possible, move to higher ground. Avoid wading or swimming in open water.

During evacuation, remember to bring the kit that you and your family prepared as well as any additional medications or paperwork. Never attempt to drive or swim through flooded areas.

If at a shelter, continue to practice social distancing and other CDC guidelines to reduce exposure to the coronavirus and the flu.

After the storm, use the Storm Aides For Everyone (SAFE) application to find open facilities near you such as food distribution centers and hospitals. For information on how to use this app, click here.

Before returning home, make sure that it is safe to do so and that you’ve received the OK from local authorities. Determine if your house is habitable by checking for any electrical, water, or gas line damage. Immediately report any damages to your local authorities and your insurance company.

Protect you and your family from mosquitos. Be sure to empty any standing water, whether it be indoors or outdoors. If possible, repair windows and doors, use repellant, and wear long-sleeved shirts and pants.
The Consortium for a Healthier Miami Dade Children Issues Committee would like to welcome their newest member: Kids United Foundation (KUF). KUF is a non-profit organization started by five teenagers dedicated to making a positive impact in the community and around the globe. Byron Jack Figueredo, the Founder and President, created this organization during the summer when he was told he was too young to attend a mission trip. With a desire to serve and give back to the community, he recruited four friends to start their team and begin to plan community projects. The first project completed was a community-wide baby shower for 35 mothers where they received education and much needed resources. Follow-up projects include “Socks and Sandwiches” which aims to deliver snacks and footcare products to the homeless population in Miami-Dade County. The Project H.E.R.O. (Honoring Every Ranger Overseas) will be their third effort in which the KUF team will send out packages with essentials and treats to soldiers deployed overseas. The final planned project is in collaboration with the Children Issues Committee. KUF will organize a series of free Farmer's Markets for the most at need populations in Miami Dade County. This partnership will enhance the Consortium’s mission and strengthen the already notable impact the Consortium is having in Miami Dade. For more information please visit www.kidsunitedfoundation.org.

**Balance a Healthy Diet for a Healthy Weight**

A healthy lifestyle involves many components and healthy choices. One of those components is to choose a balanced diet or a healthy eating plan. So how does one choose a healthy eating plan? First, it is important to know and understand what makes up a healthy eating plan.

As defined by the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2015–2020*, a healthy eating plan is made up of:
- Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products
- Lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts
- Limited consumption of saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars
- Your daily calorie needs

A healthy eating plan includes a variety of foods you may not have considered. This balance of healthy food options also helps you manage your weight. Ideas for food options include eating a colorful plate of food; fresh, frozen, or canned fruits; fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables; calcium-rich foods like yogurts; and healthier variations of cooking like baking or grilling your chicken or fish.