Preparation for Hurricanes, Tornadoes and other Disasters

April 2012

PLAN AHEAD -- You need to DECIDE NOW to…

- **Stay or leave** – where to go – how to get there?
- Whom to **notify** (out of area)?
- Consider special **health needs**?

- Box up **valuable papers** (insurance policies, bank records, bills, health records, important contact info) in waterproof container.
- Plan for **your pet** (food, water, meds, crate, toys)(hotels that take pets?)
- **If you are leaving** in advance of storm (or for a period during hurricane season)…
  - **LEAVE EARLY** to avoid traffic congestion and outer bands of storm;
  - let someone out of area know your route and status along way; and
  - give a neighbor or friend a key to your home so they can check on it.
- Decide where your **safe room** will be (interior windowless room or closet or hall).
- Assemble your **disaster kit**: food, water, medicines, first aid kit, phone, valuable papers, flashlights, tarps, supply of batteries for above , etc.) (See supply list and food suggestions on reverse.).
- Have **portable radio/TV** (for news and entertainment) and **weather radio** to get severe weather updates.
- Have a **corded phone** (the old-fashioned kind) – not a cordless phone—with a cord that reaches to your safe room.
- **Don't count on cell phones** – even if towers are operating, they may be reserved for emergency management only
- If you have **storm shutters** – make sure they comply with Solivita ARC regulations: only approved types (see Reflections May 2007 article); install up to 50 hrs in advance of expected storm arrival; remove within 72 hours after end of watch or warning. Make sure *you* can put them up (labeled, fit properly, have fasteners, tools needed).

As storm approaches (if there's time??)

- **GET CASH** – ATMs may not be working later. Credit card systems may not be working later.
- **Top off your car with GAS** – stations may not be working later
- Stock/check your **NON-PERISHABLE FOOD** supply. (See list on reverse.)
- Store **drinkable WATER** (either bottled or in clean bottles from tap) – at least 1 gal per person/pet per day
- **FILL A BATHTUB** to have water for bathing and flushing toilets if pressure is off.
- **POLICE YOUR YARD** – bring inside anything that will blow around (this includes lanai furniture and gas grills)
- **USE UP EXTRA FOOD** in refrigerator and freezer to reduce potential losses.
- Make/buy/store **EXTRA ICE** cubes or bottles of water to keep refrigerator (food) cool longer and you, too
- Power – **SHUT DOWN A/C AND FURNACE** circuit breakers (both) when power goes out. Leave on only a small lamp as an indicator when power returns. When power returns wait a few minutes before turning on A/C.

After a storm passes

- Water Supply

Pay attention to local authorities. **Use only bottled or disinfected water for drinking and cooking** until the public water supplies have been declared safe. Boil-water orders are often issued after a hurricane because the system has lost pressure, making it possible for contaminants to enter water lines. Bacterial contamination can cause severe diarrhea. Untreated diarrhea can be life-threatening.

Water that you saved in bottles before the storm should be good for up to six months, if properly stored. To prevent the spread of disease, wash your hands frequently with disinfected water and soap.

- Sanitation system

With power loss, the system may be unable to move sewage, causing back-ups at lift stations. To reduce your impact on the sewage system, **minimize water usage**. Don't bathe as often. Don't flush after every use of toilet. Don't touch waste water seen emanating from manholes in the street—yes, it will stink.

- Assistance

If you have questions, **Solivita CERT will set up a Command Post** in the Computer Gallery ***after*** a severe storm passes to answer your questions and assist in recovery. The phone number ***when the CP is manned***: **427-4786**. Watch Channel 9 (or 702) if power is on for announcements or FM stations 97.5 or 98.3 or AM stations 1230 or 1430. (over)