

May 29, 2015  
#150529-DGUIDE

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## ***Hurricane Season Begins June 1*** **- New Santa Rosa County Disaster Preparedness Guide Available -**

Monday, June 1 is the official start to the Atlantic Hurricane Season. The last major storm to hit our area was 10 years ago. It's very easy to forget the major devastation of Ivan and Dennis and become complacent. Santa Rosa has also grown 15 percent since 2005 and there are many families in our community who have never experienced a hurricane. Emergency management would like to remind citizens that the key to reducing the impact of a disaster on you and your family is to ***have a plan, get a kit and stay informed.***

More information on what to do before, during and after a wide variety of disasters that could impact our area is available in Santa Rosa County Division of Emergency Management's latest all-hazards disaster guide. The 2015 guide is available online at [www.santarosa.fl.gov](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov) (click [here](#) for a direct link) and starting the week of June 8 at county offices and libraries, local chambers of commerce, and local retailers including Walmart, Winn Dixie and Publix. Churches, civic groups, and businesses may request multiple copies at no charge for distribution as supplies allow by calling Santa Rosa County Emergency Management at (850) 983-5360.

### ***Five Steps for Making a Family Plan***

1. **Know your zone!** In 2010, hurricane evacuation zones became identified using the letters A-E. Storms are still classified according to wind speeds of categories 1-5, but evacuation orders will be issued using zones A-E to better account for deadly storm surge. During an evacuation, each zone will be evacuated based on the hurricane's track and will take in account projected storm surge, wind speeds and impacts to area roadway accessibility. Use the interactive evacuation zone tool found at [www.santarosa.fl.gov/KnowYourZone](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/KnowYourZone) to see what zone in which you live before a storm threatens our area.
2. **Decide now where you would go** if ordered to evacuate - a friend or relative's home, a hotel, or as a last resort, a public shelter. Think tens of miles, not hundreds.
3. **Have a communication plan.** Your family may not be together when a disaster strikes, so plan now how you will contact one another and where you will meet. Be sure to establish an out-of-town contact your family members can call during an emergency to let them know your plans and to check in. It may be easier to text than call due to overloaded or out of service phone lines. Click [here](#) for a Household Emergency Information form to complete and keep with your important papers.
4. **Plan for those with special needs.** Make arrangements in advance to accommodate those in your family with special needs. Always have an extra three day supply of syringes, ostomy bags, oxygen and medication. If you think you or your family member will need the special needs shelter in the event of a storm, you should pre-register now. Residents can pre-register online for the special needs shelter at [www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/specialneeds.cfm](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/specialneeds.cfm) or by calling (850) 983-5360.
5. **Have a plan for your pets.** The most important hurricane rule is if you evacuate, take your pets. If it is not safe for you, it is not safe for them. If you plan to stay at a shelter, Santa Rosa County has a pet-friendly shelter. Pre-registration for the pet-friendly shelter is required each year and available online at [www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/shelters.cfm](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/shelters.cfm). If you have changes during the year, e-mail the changes to [petshelter@santarosa.fl.gov](mailto:petshelter@santarosa.fl.gov) or call animal services at (850) 983-4680.

## Get a Kit

Your disaster kit should have at least three days of nonperishable food, three gallons of water for each person and pet in your home, a battery operated radio, flashlight batteries and a first aid kit. Adding a few items to your regular shopping list each week is the easiest way to complete your hurricane kit with minimal impact to your budget. An eight week shopping list can be found at <http://santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/documents/hurricaneshoppingguide.pdf>

## Stay Informed

1. A tropical system can develop very quickly. Be sure you take time **every day to monitor the local media.**
2. **Know how to get official information** first hand. Disaster information will always be posted on:
  - [www.santarosa.fl.gov](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov)
  - The county's official social media accounts of [www.twitter.com/SRCBOCC](http://www.twitter.com/SRCBOCC) and [www.Facebook.com/SRCEmergencyManagement](http://www.Facebook.com/SRCEmergencyManagement).
  - You can also subscribe to have the county's disaster related press releases emailed directly by visiting [www.santarosa.fl.gov](http://www.santarosa.fl.gov), clicking on the subscribe button and selecting the information you would like to receive.
3. **Sign up** to receive email and/or text message alerts by subscribing to the county's Breaking News Alerts at <http://santarosa.fl.gov/emergency/publicwarning.cfm>. Residents or businesses who would like to receive emergency notifications via a recorded message on their cell, land or VoIP lines, may sign up for our GeoCast® call out system at <https://santarosa.onthealert.com/Terms/Index/?ReturnUrl=%2f>.

Santa Rosa County Emergency Management issues the annual free publication as a general guideline to follow when preparing for disasters. As seen in the past, hurricanes are not the only disasters that residents face. Santa Rosa County Emergency Management urges citizens to be prepared and have a plan for all potential disasters. The disaster guide is funded by an Emergency Management Preparedness and Assistance Base grant for public awareness and education.

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