

## TIPS WHEN EVACUATING AND RETURNING

### *"Planning to Evacuate"*



In the State of Florida, we have many past examples demonstrating that hurricanes wield incredible power. As they near land, they can bring torrential rains, high winds, floods and even spawn tornadoes. Once Florida is in a target zone, you should have your organization begin securing your facilities.

Our ***"Checklist: Approaching Storm"*** document in our ***Storm Center*** is a good reference that highlights key activities to consider when preparing.

One of the activities you will want to monitor are instructions or evacuation orders by state and local officials. If the storm damage is projected to be significant, they may order a mandatory evacuation for residents to leave the target area promptly. Once evacuation orders are issued, there is very limited time to do any preparation activities. Thus, it is extremely important to begin securing your facilities immediately upon being notified a storm is forecasted to potentially hit in your area. This will allow you to complete the essential tasks before there is a need to evacuate.

**The following are a few tips to consider when preparing for an evacuation, if time allows:**

- **Prioritize** securing any windows and doors that haven't been addressed and covering electronic equipment with plastic or water-resistant material.
- **Ensure** important document files and valuables are taken to a safe location.
- **Move** any remaining items on the floor that can be relocated to a higher area.
- **Confirm** employees have evacuation plans and safe rides. Assist them with evacuation plans including evacuation routes as needed.
- **Turn off** electricity, water and gas. Unplug all electronic equipment.

- **Lock windows and doors.**
- **If a quick return to the facilities is essential (i.e. concerns over looting or flooding) have the designated on-site team stay in a nearby FEMA approved hurricane shelter. Ensure they take the pre-defined stocked disaster kit. Ensure it has food, supplies, power backup and 3 gallons of fresh water per person per day.**
- **Fuel all vehicles, back-up/reserve tanks.**

Please reference our **“Checklist: Approaching Storm”** document in our **Storm Center** for additional information on key activities to consider when preparing for an approaching storm.

### ***“Returning”***

If you’ve evacuated the area, wait for public officials to say it is safe before posting any notice for employees to return to the facilities. If known, include any routes that should be avoided.

Each year, a significant number of people are injured or killed when returning and cleaning up after a hurricane. Thus, care must be taken in how employees are included in the cleanup and recovery process.



A top priority will be cleaning up and getting the facilities back to normal operations as quickly as possible. However, this needs to be methodical to avoid unnecessary risks or doing anything that may inhibit the claim recovery process for any damages or losses.

Our **“Checklist: After the Storm”** document in our **Storm Center** is a good reference that highlights key activities to consider when returning to begin the recovery process.

### ***“Proceed with caution”***

If it was a very intense storm (Category 3-5) with the potential of causing significant damage to the facilities, extra caution should be taken to clear the grounds and buildings before allowing others on-site to begin the cleanup process.



***"When initially arriving back to your facility, even if cleared, keep these safety tips in mind"***

- **Do not wade in floodwaters**, which can contain dangerous debris like broken glass, metal, dead animals, sewage, gasoline, oil, and downed power lines.
- **Beware of downed or loose power lines**. Report them immediately to the power company, police or fire department.
- **Open windows and doors** to ventilate or dry out your facility. Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, leave the building immediately and leave the doors open. Call the gas company.
- **Look for electrical system damage**. If you see sparks or frayed wires, turn off electricity at the main box.
- **Check for sewage and water-line damage**. If you suspect damage, call the water company and avoid using water or toilets until they are inspected.
- **Wear appropriate protective equipment** such as gloves, safety glasses, rubber boots, and masks to protect you from debris and airborne particles.
- **Do not use electrical equipment** if it is wet or if you are standing in water.
- **Take reasonable measures** to prevent any further damage or loss to the property.
- **Take photos and document all damages** and contact your Egis/FIA Account Team to schedule an on-site inspection.

Please reference our ***"Checklist: After The Storm"*** for other helpful tasks that should be considered in the recovery process.

