

BEFORE HURRICANE SEASON STARTS:

During the month of May:

- **Curatorial staff** will assess the available disaster supplies (boxes, drop-cloths, bubble wrap, etc.) as needed for existing and proposed exhibits and facilities, and submit a requisition to replenish supplies as necessary. Those items with a limited shelf life should be replaced (batteries, tape, etc.). By June 1, the supplies should be on hand and stored away to prevent everyday use.
- **Maintenance staff** will assess the available cut-to-size lumber or other coverings for windows and doors of all buildings, and replace any damaged or missing pieces.
- **Chief Operating Officer, Facilities Manager, Historic Preservationist, Chief Curator, and Maintenance Chief** will review current hurricane procedures plan and make changes as necessary.

DEFINITIONS:

- **LANDFALL:** The point at which the eye of the storm first touches land. The overall size and strength of a hurricane determines how far in advance of the eye that gale and hurricane force winds will occur.
- **CONE OF PROBABILITY:** A tool used by The National Hurricane Center to indicate the most probable projected path of the storm. *If the cone of probability is projected to come within 75 miles of Escambia Co., FL, on either side, West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. will take action to protect our properties and collections.*
- **HURRICANE WATCH:** When the hurricane is **48 hours** from landfall, the National Weather Service will declare a **Hurricane Watch** to be in effect. This means hurricane conditions (sustained winds greater than 73 mph) **are possible** in our area within **48 hours**.
- **HURRICANE WARNING:** This is issued when hurricane conditions **are expected** in our area in **36 hours or less**.
- **ESSENTIAL PERSONEL:** **All West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. employees are considered essential employees for both hurricane preparations and hurricane recovery operations.** We are not dependent on the University to determine when to close the museums, or when to return to work.

HURRICANE PROCEDURES:

- **WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT FOR UWF:** Because of our location within two blocks of the bay, our limited number of staff, and the large number of buildings included in our operation, the University has given us permission to close and begin hurricane preparations in advance of the rest of the University. The decision to act will be made by the Chief Operating Officer or his designated substitute.
- **USE THE PHONE-TREE:** If a storm develops and threatens our area **outside of normal working hours**, staff should refer to the telephone calling tree (provided to all employees for posting at their home phones) and make necessary calls

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indicated for instructions for returning to WFHPI to assist in preparing for disaster conditions. **NOTE:** Email only works for those who have internet access at home and also still have electricity. If it is necessary to contact someone by email, request a reply to acknowledge that the message has been received.

- **If you are evacuating**, contact your supervisor & provide a telephone number and email address at which you can be reached.

WHEN A STORM NEARS OR ENTERS THE GULF OF MEXICO, THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR WILL ALERT STAFF TO:

- Monitor radio and television broadcasts for weather reports and instructions from the local Civil Defense office.
- Have appropriate clothing, flashlights, portable radios, etc. available.
- Move available supplies (plastic sheeting, boxes, bubble pack, tape, carts, etc.) to buildings or offices where they will be used. Protect all items in behind-the-scene areas such as the archives, graphics room, file cabinets, storage areas, etc.
- Clean up your office/work space, putting away everything you possibly can. Plan to take home personal items you don't want to lose.
- Determine which files and records need to be moved to a more secure location, and obtain boxes for this purpose.
- Make sure all carts, dollies and hand trucks for moving collections, if necessary (before or after the storm), are easily available & not in use.

In Addition:

- **Collections Staff** will check all storage and archival areas for items left sitting on the floor, and use bricks or pieces of wood (2 x 4's) to raise them at least two inches above floor level; check for boxes pushed back against the wall on shelving and pull the boxes forward until they are at least one inch away from the wall; **with help from maintenance staff**, elevate any exhibit cases stored in Wentworth basement at least two inches off the floor.
- **Curator of Collections** will check that supplies and equipment needed for covering museum and historic house exhibits are still located where indicated on the various pages of the Hurricane Prep flipchart.
- **Volunteer coordinator** will contact docents and volunteers to determine who will be available in case they are needed, and to advise them where and to whom they should report.
- **Business Manager** will alert tenants and advise them of their responsibilities.
- **Events Coordinator** will alert appropriate people involved in scheduled events at museum facilities of a potential shut down of buildings.
- **Maintenance Staff** will check location of fabric shields and cut-to-size lumber for windows & doors, tools & equipment (ladders, hammers & nails, etc.) for quick use when needed; fill all trucks, equipment and containers with gasoline; make sure generators are working and easily accessible.
- **Facilities Manager or Historic Preservationist** will contact Wescon (434-9398) to set up post hurricane damage assessment; have Wescon coordinate with water

mitigation company and roofing company to be on site as soon as reasonable; contact UWF Maintenance for help with covering 2nd & 3rd story windows in Village.

When the decision is made by the Chief Operating Officer to begin closing down and securing buildings, the staff will take action to secure all museum facilities using the **Hurricane Preparations flipchart** provided to each employee as a guide.

- Start with Lavalle and Julee (room vignettes) because once shutters are closed, there is little or no electric lighting available.
- Second priority should be MOC and Lear; then move on to the rest of the buildings. Seale and Pfeiffer are the lowest priorities.

AFTER THE STORM:

ALL West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. employees are considered ESSENTIAL PERSONNEL, and are expected to come in to help in the recovery effort once they and/or their families are safe and their personal property is secure. All employees should use the calling tree to get instructions for returning to work, even if the announcement is made that the University is closed. Contact your supervisor if, for any reason, you are not able to respond. Listen for local radio or TV announcements if you are unable to make contact. WUWF-FM radio, WCOA-AM radio, and WEAR-TV (channel 3) are all part of the local emergency network.

NOTE: Everybody will be trying to use cell phones, overwhelming whatever towers may still be in use. Text messaging may work, if your phone is programmed (and funded) to send and receive text messages. A wired land-line telephone may be more reliable.

First Responders (Facilities Manager &/or Historic Preservationist & Chief Curator):

- Inspect all building exteriors for damage and possible water intrusion.
- Check electrical service to buildings (hanging wires, meters, sparking).
- Check building interiors for water intrusion and damage.
- Make written list of all damages seen during inspection, and decide which cleanup tasks can be done by West Florida Historic Preservation, Inc. staff, and where outside contractual help is needed.

WFHPI STAFF:

Wear cool, loose fitting clothing and be prepared to work outside and in non-air conditioned buildings. Wear sunscreen and hat, and sturdy shoes. You will probably be involved in a variety of tasks including but not limited to the examples below:

- Take photos of all debris and damages, exterior and interior, BEFORE cleanup begins AND during cleanup process.
- Remove debris from streets and building entrances to allow hand carts & vehicles free access to buildings as needed.
- Help collections staff remove documents & artifacts from damaged areas.
- Mop &/or vacuum (if electricity works) interior water.

- Remove & store drop cloths from undamaged public areas.
- Open shutters & remove plywood & fabric shields from buildings.
- Cover damaged roofs with tarps / patch flat membrane roofs as needed.
- Clear drainage channels in parking lot.
- NOTE: After first storm of the season, do NOT remove plastic from storage areas. Leave it up & save time prepping for the next storm. Store the plastic used to cover your office in a drawer or marked box in that office. This ensures that it will not be appropriated for something else!

ADVICE FOR GETTING THROUGH A DISASTER

(Courtesy: The Historic New Orleans Collection)

Keep in mind:

- Most forms of communication will fail.
- You are on your own in most instances.
- No single source will provide adequate information concerning real events: weigh all information carefully and whenever possible, rely on trusted sources in the area.
- Individuals or small groups working independently are most effective.
- Professionals involved in activities unrelated to what authorities regard as the central economic interests of the city and region will be marginalized.
- Data redundancy is highly desirable.