

TROPICAL STORM & HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS



Tropical storms and hurricanes are a fact of life possibility that costal residents must be aware of, and for which prudent advance planning is essential.

These storm preparedness notes are designed to help Laguna Pointe owners prepare for both potential storm activity and the recovery after an actual event.

The official Escambia County Department of Public Safety has a website at <http://www.bereadyescambia.com/> has important information for pre and post storm planning. Also, review the information at http://www.escambia-emergency.com/Hurricane_Preparedness/.

Hurricane Information

Hurricane Season is June 1 - November 30

Hurricanes go through three storm stages

1. Tropical disturbances, storms that have wind speeds less than 39 miles per hour,
 2. Tropical storms, have wind speeds of 39 miles per hour and move in a circular pattern.
 3. Hurricanes are storms that continue to grow until the winds reach 74 miles per hour and move in a counter-clockwise direction
- Hurricane levels are classified according to wind strength above 74 m.p.h. as Category I through V.

Strong winds, heavy rains, thunder, lightning, flooding and possibly tornadoes characterize hurricanes.

Storm surge can be the most dangerous aspect of hurricanes. During a hurricane, ocean tides rise dramatically, creating large waves, which hit the shore with great force. These waves, due to their large size and strength carry inland much further than normal waves.

Storm Preparation Responsibilities

Laguna Pointe is (as are all areas south of Gulf Beach Highway) in the mandatory evacuation zone for all hurricane warnings.

The Storm Preparedness Committee has a checklist of basic duties to secure common areas. These duties will include securing the elevators and shutting off power, and powering down the water boost pump and parking lot gates, and securing the pool area. These preparations will be taken immediately when a hurricane warning is posted.

The association IS NOT staffed to perform preparedness functions in individual units, even on a "best effort basis".

This means that it is the *owner's responsibility* for preparing individual units prior to evacuating. If you, the property owner, are not on site when a storm emergency is declared, it is imperative that you have individual arrangements with someone local who can take the necessary steps to

secure your own property.

Advance Hurricane Preparedness

It is very important for every owner to be prepared in advance for potential tropical storms. If you wait until after a storm warning is announced, you could find yourself competing with hundreds of people for a limited stock of supplies and equipment. Don't wait too late to get prepared. Act now!

Visit the websites noted above now, ahead of need, and review the links and information carefully. Print or copy the checklists and information that address your individual planning needs. Do it now, and remember after-storm needs as well as pre-evacuation planning.

Keep in mind that post-storm resources will be severely limited and taxed by the number of people needing them. Stock up ahead of time in order to have the resources you need later on!

If you have guests/tenants in your unit, please make sure you or your property manager have given them appropriate telephone numbers for Laguna Pointe and emergency contacts, should a storm arise.

Storm Notices

The national weather service issues two types of storm notices:

- A Storm/Hurricane Watch - means a tropical storm/hurricane may threaten coastal areas and that hurricane conditions are a real possibility. It does not mean a storm is imminent; however, you should have already started preparatory actions.
- A Hurricane Warning - is issued when a hurricane is expected to strike within 24 hours.

The Escambia County Emergency Management Agency is responsible for determining when an evacuation order is issued. Laguna Pointe is in a Category I evacuation zone.

Prior to Evacuating

Please make these final preparations prior to evacuating the area:

- **Remove and store ALL patio furniture, plants, and other objects from your patio and from the front door area.**
- **Close and lock patio doors and all windows.**
- **Close drapes, curtains, and lower blinds to keep out flying objects.**
- **It is suggested that you wedge slider doors to help keep strong winds from lifting them off their tracks, and to place towels or other absorbent material at doors to absorb water that might blow under.**
- **Ensure anything you can not afford to lose is removed from your ground floor storage room.**
- **Move trailers, motorcycles, boats or other vehicles from underneath buildings, so that a storm surge will not batter them against the building pilings.**

Storm preparation and evacuation planning should consider that, depending on the storm severity, public utilities in the area may be purposely shut down in order to minimize potential damage. The Storm Prep Committee team will secure the elevators and other checklist items immediately when a hurricane warning is posted.

Re-entry Policy

Many owners will want to inspect their condominiums immediately after a hurricane to check for any damage. The time frame for being able to return to Laguna Pointe will vary from storm to storm, depending on the extent of damage to specific areas.

After a hurricane, access to the Gulf Beach Highway area will be controlled by the Escambia County Sheriffs Department. All streets/roads must be cleared of as much debris as possible or deemed to be safe for vehicular traffic in damaged areas.

In the event of a catastrophic storm with major damage, local officials may restrict access to only residents and property owners. Ensure you have a drivers license, utility bill, or something with your name and Laguna Pointe address for that eventuality.

If you return immediately after the hurricane danger is over, you should expect that utilities, such as electricity, water, phones and TV cable might not be fully operational. The length of time before they are all restored will depend on the extent of damage to the area. Your property may not be habitable until the basic utilities are restored.

Snakes, animals, and insects instinctively travel to higher ground to escape floodwater. Expect them and be prepared to protect yourself.