CEMP - Preparedness | FSU Emergency Management

Florida State University
COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP)

Preparedness Updated November 7, 2014
The Florida State University and its Emergency Management Team engages in numerous preparedness activities aimed at making the university community, including its students, faculty, staff, and visitors, prepared for any potential emergency which may occur.

CORE CAPABILITIES:
Planning. All members of the FSU Emergency Management Team are responsible for planning ahead for all potential emergencies and disasters that may occur at The Florida State University. All Divisions, Departments, and Entities that are part of the Emergency Management Team, as designated in this plan, shall ensure that they have the appropriate policies, plans, and procedures necessary to fulfill their roles and responsibilities as outlined in this Plan. The FSU Emergency Management Coordinator shall provide guidance and technical assistance to the Emergency Coordinating Officers to complete this task. Learn More about Planning>>

Training. The FSU Emergency Management Coordinator is responsible for scheduling and arranging appropriate training in the Incident Command System and Emergency Management for the Emergency Management Team members, Emergency Coordinating Officers, and other appropriate audiences. For more information, visit the Emergency Management Training page. Learn More about Training>>

Exercise. The FSU Emergency Management Team shall conduct at least one exercise internal to the University annually to test policies, plans, and procedures related to this Plan. The exercise may be a tabletop, functional, or full scale exercise. The University shall participate, as appropriate, in all community (city, regional, state) exercises. Learn More about Exercise>>

Community Collaboration. The FSU Emergency Management Coordinator shall ensure that the University is conducting adequate collaboration with its designated community response partners, as defined above. This collaboration may include joint planning, training, exercise, discussion, or mitigation. Learn More about Community Collaboration>>

Public Education. The FSU Emergency Management Coordinator shall ensure that adequate campus and public education is offered to help the campus community (students, faculty, staff, and visitors) prepare for all the potential hazards they may face while on the campus of The Florida State University. Learn More about Keep FSU Safe>>
Florida State University
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Protection Updated November 7, 2014
Also concurrent with Preparedness and Prevention, Protection encompasses those activities the University undertakes to protect itself from hazards, particularly human-caused hazards. This includes activities such as access control, identity verification, cybersecurity, interdiction and disruption, risk management, screening, search, and detection. Most of these activities are typically associated with law enforcement and campus security entities.

CORE CAPABILITIES:
Operational Coordination. As defined in this CEMP, the normal day-to-day operational organization structure of the University is modified during times of emergency to ensure efficient and effective coordination. This plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Incident Commander, Unified Commanders, Executive Policy Group, and Emergency Management Team in organizing and responding to an emergency at the University. It further defines the establishment of various emergency response facilities, such as the emergency operations center, as temporary facilities needed to further ensure an efficient response.

Intelligence, Information and Planning. During an emergency, the effective and efficient management and distribution of critical information is essential. One of the primary purposes of the emergency operations center is to centralize the information management process and to conduct incident action planning. The Planning Section is responsible for all data collection, documentation, reporting, and dissemination. No single university entity is tasked with staffing the Planning Section. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, appropriate and available personnel from unimpacted departments may be recruited to fulfill this function.

Screening, Search, Detection and Monitoring. One of the keys to emergency response is to recognize that one is occurring or impending. Based upon the hazard identification in this plan, there are a number of dection and monitoring activities that are ongoing to ascertain an impending or occurring threat.

Alert, Notification, Warning, and Emergency Public Information. "FSU ALERT" is Florida State University's emergency notification system. If there is a condition which threatens the health and safety of persons on campus, university officials will warn the campus community using one or more of 28 methods of emergency information delivery. Details about the FSU ALERT emergency notification system are available HERE. The FSU ALERT system is governed by Florida State University Policy, OP-G-9.1.3 Emergency Notification and Warning. The Department of Environmental Health & Safety - Emergency
Management Coordinator is the primary coordinating agent for the FSU ALERT system.

CORE CAPABILITIES:

Operational Control. As defined in this CEMP, the normal day-to-day operational organization structure of the University is modified during times of emergency to ensure efficient and effective coordination. This plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Incident Commander, Unified Commanders, Executive Policy Group, and Emergency Management Team in organizing and responding to an emergency at the University. It further defines the establishment of various emergency response facilities, such as the emergency operations center, as temporary facilities needed to further ensure an efficient response.

Information and Planning. During an emergency, the effective and efficient management and distribution of critical information is essential. One of the primary purposes of the emergency operations center is to centralize the information management process and to conduct incident action planning. The Planning Section is responsible for all data collection, documentation, reporting, and dissemination. No single university entity is tasked with staffing the Planning Section. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, appropriate and available personnel from unimpacted departments may be recruited to fulfill this function.

Detection and Monitoring. One of the keys to emergency response is to recognize that one is occurring or impending. Based upon the hazard identification in this plan, there are a number of detection and monitoring activities that are ongoing to ascertain an impending or occurring threat.

Many of the identified hazards involve severe weather. To that end, Florida State University is a National Weather Service certified StormReady University. This indicates that FSU has the capabilities to receive severe weather warnings, process them, and redisseminate them to its constituents. It also indicates that FSU has systems in place to monitoring ongoing weather threats.

Some technological hazards, such as fires and chemical leaks, are detected by advanced detection and alarm systems in all critical areas on campus, and as required by Code. Utility control systems are monitored 24 hours a day from the Central Utility Plant.

The FSU Police Communications Center operates 24 hours a day to answer calls for assistance. Calls may be received by telephone, a network of “Blue Light” safety phones throughout campus, or by observation of FSU Police officers on routine patrol.

FSU Emergency Management and/or FSU Police subscribe to and monitor various notification systems from community response partners, including but not limited to FCIC/NCIC, ThreatCom, HSIN, LEO, FDENS, and USGS. FSU also receives detection and monitoring reports from the State Watch Office on a regular basis.
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Operational Communications. The FSU Department of Information Technology Services (ITS) is the primary coordinating entity for communication issues on campus. ITS works with several commercial service providers such as CenturyLink for provide communication services.

In order to effectively respond to an emergency, responders need to be able to communicate with each other. Depending on the nature and severity of the incident, common modes of communication such as cellular telephones, landline telephones, Internet and E-mail may not be available. The FSU Emergency Management Team has plans in place to ensure the redundant forms of communication are available so that key critical responders can maintain contact with each other. Many Departments on campus have two-way-radio systems.

The FSU Police Communications Center is connected to the Florida Interoperability Network (FIN) and has the ability to connect to a large number of communications systems of emergency response agencies throughout Florida, including all of those identified in this plan.

Resource Management. One of the primary missions of the Logistics Section within the university emergency operations center is to operate a resource management system that addresses the identification, location, acquisition, storage, maintenance and testing, timely distribution and accounting for goods, services, materials, personnel, and facilities needed to respond to the incident or emergency at hand. Resource Management at Florida State University is a combined effort of FSU Facilities, Purchasing, and Human Resources.

Evacuation. Depending on the nature and severity of the emergency, there may be a need to evacuate and relocate persons away from harm. Typically, this will include the evacuation of a specific building (e.g. fire alarm), or a small section of campus (e.g. gas leak). Even a large-scale hazardous materials spill such as a train derailment is unlikely to necessitate the evacuation of the entire campus. Regardless, plans are in place for the alert, notification, and warning of those on campus that an evacuation has been ordered. Resources of the Police Department, Parking and Transportation Services Department, Housing, etc have been identified to help facilitate the evacuation process. Based upon experience on 9/11/2001, the immediate departure of all students, faculty, staff at the same time can and will result in significant gridlock and traffic jams. The FSU Police Department would be the primary coordinating agency for any needed evacuation of campus.
Mass Care, Food, and Water. It is assumed that in any large-scale disaster, such as a hurricane, classes will be cancelled and most students will return to their home towns. However, there will be a small portion of the student body that cannot exercise that option (e.g. international students). As needed, Florida State University has plans in place to ensure the adequate provision of food for those persons on campus during a major emergency, including emergency response workers. Seminole Dining Services is tasked with providing meals during an emergency. As a division of Aramark Corporation, Seminole Dining Services also has the ability to tap the resources of its parent company for additional feeding capacity, if needed. As a last resort, the University would coordinate with the County and/or State Emergency Support Function 6 - Mass Care to arrange for alternate feeding options on campus.

Sheltering. The FSU Housing Department has emergency plans in place to facilitate the relocation of its clientele in the event that some of its facilities become unusable. These facilities are not available, due to contractual and security reasons, to any person who is not currently a tenant of the Department.

Leon County Emergency Management, in partnership with the American Red Cross, provides public shelter to the community. No public shelters are located on the campus of Florida State University.

If deemed necessary, FSU has identified facilities on campus that may be used for the sheltering of its students, faculty, staff and their immediate families. However, this option is deemed to be a "last resort" and utilized only if all other reasonable options have been exhausted.

Needs, Damage and Situational Assessment. Following an emergency or disaster, there is a need to assess the damages and ascertain immediate needs of survivors as soon as possible. For purposes of this Plan, the responsibility for needs and damage assessment rests with each participating Emergency Management Team entity to assess damages and needs pertinent to their area of expertise.

For example, Facilities is responsible for conducting a damage assessment on all structures, infrastructure, etc. Housing will conduct a damage assessment on its facilities. Student Counseling Center and the Employee Assistance Program will ascertain the mental health needs of its survivors. These are only examples. It is incumbent upon each Department to develop its damage and needs assessment plans in its internal plans and protocols.

Law Enforcement, Security and Protection. The FSU Police Department is the primary law enforcement agency holding jurisdiction for Florida State University. It is also the coordinating agency for all external law enforcement assistance, regardless of source. Secondary law enforcement agencies serving Florida State University include: Tallahassee Police Department, Leon County Sheriff Office, and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. There are numerous additional state-level law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction on campus, but with specialized scope (e.g. Fish and Wildlife Commission, Florida Highway Patrol, Alcohol Beverages and Tobacco). There are also numerous federal-level law enforcement agencies with jurisdiction on campus (e.g. Federal Bureau of Investigations). In all cases, these agencies coordinate directly with FSU Police regarding any on-campus activity.
Fire Protection, Hazardous Materials, Search & Rescue. The Tallahassee Fire Department is the primary holding jurisdiction for fire response, emergency hazardous materials response, and search and rescue agency at Florida State University. It is also the coordinating agency for all external law enforcement assistance, regardless of source. The FSU Department of Environmental Health & Safety is the on-campus coordinating entity with TFD.

Emergency Medical Services. The Leon County Emergency Medical Services is the primary holding jurisdiction for emergency medical service agency at Florida State University. The FSU First Responder Unit also provides immediate basic life support services on campus until Leon County EMS arrives.

Public Health. The Leon County Health Department is the primary holding jurisdiction for public health provider services at Florida State University. LCHD works in close conjunction with the Thagard Student Health Center, located on campus.

Transportation. The FSU Department of Transportation and Parking Services coordinates all transportation needs for Florida State University in conjunction with its community partners: StarMetro, Leon County School District, and Florida Department of Transportation (ESF-2).

Utilities. The City of Tallahassee Utilities is the primary provider of electricity, potable water, natural gas, and sewage services for Florida State University. The University manages its own storm water systems in conjunction with the City of Tallahassee and Leon County. The FSU Facilities Department, Utilities Section is the primary coordinator of on-campus issues with the City.

Public Works and Engineering. The FSU Facilities Department is the primary public works and engineering services provider for Florida State University. The Department of Environmental Health & Safety administers all Florida Building Code compliance and inspection issues.

Agriculture and Animal Management. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services is the primary agency holding jurisdiction for agricultural and animal issues at Florida State University. FDACS also coordinates with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) and US Department of Agriculture on animal related issues. The FSU Department of Lab Animal Resources manages care of all research animals on campus, in conjunction with the FSU Department of Environmental Health & Safety.

Military Support. All potential uses of resources from the Florida National Guard and/or U.S. Department of Defense must be coordinated through the Florida State Emergency Operations Center.

Volunteers and Donated Goods. During any emergency or disaster, there is often an outpouring of volunteers and donated goods from the community at large. It is the responsibility of the Department of Student Affairs, Center for Leadership and Civic Education to coordinate with VolunteerLeon and Volunteer Florida (ESF-15) to ensure adequate systems are in place to manage volunteers and donated goods. The FSU Foundation is envisioned in having a pivotal role in collecting financial donations.
Special Needs Populations. The FSU Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC) is the primary coordinating element for all special needs on campus.

Fatality Management and Mortuary Services. The Florida District Two Medical Examiner's Office is the primary agency having jurisdiction for fatality management and mortuary services at Florida State University.
Florida State University
COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP)

Continuity
Updated November 7, 2014

Continuity, or commonly referred to as Business Continuity, is the concept of maintaining an institution's most core-critical functions online, even under compromised or austere conditions.

Continuity asks the question: "What programs, services or systems must remain operational at all costs? Which are the most critical? Which are the next most important? What can wait a while? What is unessential?"

It then follows up with detailed planning in terms of what policies, plans, procedures and resources are needed to accomplish those goals.

Continuity differs from "response" and "recovery" in several ways. Response is focused on those immediate actions required to protect life and property. Recovery is concerned with "getting everything back to normal." Continuity bridges the gap in between, focusing on those functions which need to stay online or come back online as soon as possible, even if in temporary conditions.

For example: A fire in the Registrar's office requires the immediate evacuation of people. The Fire Department responds and puts out the fire. Facilities scrambles to prevent further damage of all the water flowing through the building. All that was "Response." The fire caused a considerable amount of damage that will take weeks to repair. However, it is the first week of the semester and the Registrar cannot wait weeks to get back to business. Enter "Continuity." What is the plan to temporarily relocate the Registrar's Office to another location, re-establish a working office space, restore critical information systems, and reopen to service students? If the Registrar's Office has a good Continuity Plan, they should be able to set up shop in another location within a few hours and be back in business. Once "Recovery" gets the original office back to normal, they can move back in.
Florida State University  
COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP)  

Recovery Updated November 7, 2014  
Once an incident or disaster has occurred and the immediate response phase has been completed, the University will turn its efforts to Recovery. Often, Recovery coincides with Continuity. The key difference is that Continuity focuses, in the immediate short-term, on staying in business while in a compromised state. Recovery is focused, long-term, on getting the University back to its original (or better) condition. Depending on the severity of the incident, Recovery can take days to weeks to months. In some of the most extreme situations, Recovery can take years.  

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Economic Recovery, Health and Social Services, Housing, Infrastructure Systems, Natural and

https://emergency.fsu.edu/cemp/recovery
Cultural Resources.
Mitigation

Updated November 7, 2014

Mitigation is the process of the University making investments (time, people, money, etc) today to prevent or reduce losses tomorrow. Mitigation activities take many different shapes and forms, including but not limited to: structural enhancements; establishing and enforcing codes, policies, procedures; and training people to avoid hazards and risks.

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Community Resilience. Long-Term Vulnerability Reduction. Risk and Disaster Resilience Assessment. Threat and Risk Identification, Risk Assessment, and Consequence Analysis

- Hazard Identification
• Risk Assessment
• Consequence Analysis
Florida State University

FSU ALERT Emergency Notification & Warning System

Policy & Plan

Updated November 7, 2014

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OBJECTIVES
The Higher Education Opportunity Act (Public Law 110-315) (HEOA) was enacted on August 14, 2008. Under Title IV, the federal law requires all colleges and universities to have a notification and warning plan in place to alert the campus community of an emergency. The U.S. Department of Education is still in the process of developing the regulations that will coincide with this law and will amend the Code of Federal Regulations (34CFR) in the fall of 2009.

This policy establishes the emergency notification and warning program at Florida State University. This program is commonly referred to as the "FSU ALERT" emergency notification system. This document, in aggregate, constitutes the University's Emergency Notification and Warning Plan.

The primary objective of the emergency notification and warning system, FSU ALERT, is to provide timely notification and warning to all students, faculty, staff, and visitors of Florida State University of a threat, occurring or imminent, that poses an immediate threat to their health, safety, or general welfare while on campus.

AUTHORITY
Chapter 1001.75, Florida Statutes, K-20 Governance, designates the University President as the chief executive officer of the state university and is made responsible for the operation and administration of the university.

Chapter 1001.75 (16), Florida Statutes, makes the University President responsible to "Ensure compliance with federal and state laws, rules, regulations, and other requirements that are applicable to the university."

U.S. Public Law 110-315, Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA), and Code of Federal Regulations (34CFR) require colleges and universities to have an emergency notification and warning system.

This policy, under the authority of the University President, ensures Florida State University's compliance with the applicable federal law.

ASSUMPTIONS
In order to plan for and consider the effectiveness of the FSU ALERT emergency notification system, one must take into account several planning assumptions:

1. With the exception of some forecasted weather situations, most emergencies requiring activation of the FSU ALERT emergency notification system will be "no notice." This means that there is an immediate threat to individual life safety.
2. With assumption #1 in mind, there is a need to streamline the activation process for FSU ALERT to
ensure timely notification and warning. A delay in providing emergency related information can expose the campus community to dangerous situations.

3. No one-method of communication will reach everyone, everywhere, every time. Utilization of numerous and varied communication methods is required.

4. Electronic communication mechanisms are subject to failure. Redundancy through utilization of numerous and various communication methods is required.

5. Even with numerous and various communication methods, you can never guarantee 100% delivery.

6. Studies have shown that the average person requires three (3) sources of input to fully realize that an emergency is occurring. Inputs may include direct observation of the emergency (explosions, breaking glass, screeching, smoke, chemical or burning smell) or notifications (sirens, blue lights, and a text message). This emphasizes the need to employ multiple delivery methods to reinforce the message.

7. Due to limitations beyond the university's control, a small portion of the intended audience will receive their emergency messages in a later timeframe than desired.

8. Some of the emergency communication methods identified herein are "passive" systems, requiring deliberate action on the part of the recipient to obtain the emergency message. Many will not take this required action.

9. With assumption #7 in mind, a number of the communication methods must be "active" systems, requiring minimal efforts on the recipient's part to receive and comprehend the message.

10. Despite best efforts, errant information may still be generated and distributed by alternate means of communication (i.e. word of mouth). This requires FSU ALERT messages to be clear, concise, succinct, and accurate.

11. Notification systems must account for communication impairments (hearing or sight).

12. Language barriers, such as with international students, will result in misunderstood receipt of messages.

13. Emergency messages must be identifiable as "official" FSU ALERT messages.

14. An aggressive educational campaign is required to introduce the system to every person on campus. This educational campaign must be ongoing to inform each new person that comes on campus through student or new employee orientation.

15. Regular testing of the FSU ALERT system is required to ensure functionality and to familiarize recipients with the system's features. All tests must be evaluated and corrective action recommendations developed, as necessary.

16. As communication technology evolves, new communication methods may be identified as others become obsolete. A constant evaluation of effectiveness is required.

**ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Police Department

The Florida State University Police Department (FSUPD) shall appoint a qualified Director of Emergency Management Coordinator (DEM) to provide oversight, management, and coordination of the University's emergency notification and warning system. The DEM shall ensure compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws pertaining to emergency notification and warning requirements. FSUPD shall initiate an "FSU ALERT" for any immediate or imminent threat to the campus community. FSUPD shall

https://emergency.fsu.edu/camp/fsualert/preamble#Objectives
disseminate an "FSU ALERT" emergency message via delivery methods under its operational control.

University Communications
The Office of University Communications of Florida State University (UniComm) shall participate in the emergency notification and warning system. UniComm shall disseminate an "FSU ALERT" emergency message via delivery methods under its operational control.

Information Technology Services
The Information Technology Services of Florida State University (ITS) and its subsidiaries shall participate in the emergency notification and warning system. ITS shall disseminate an "FSU ALERT" emergency message via delivery methods under its operational control.
FSU Alert Plan - Concept of Operations

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DECISION CRITERIA

Five criteria must be considered to determine if activation of the FSU ALERT system is warranted, which communications will be utilized, and who authorizes activation of the system:

- **Hazard Type**
  - What is the hazard? (Room fire, tornado, hurricane)
  - What is the impact to the University? (Minor, major, catastrophic)
  - What is the potential for the situation to worsen?
  - Is the situation under control?

- **Life Safety/Property Protection**
  - What is the potential for death?
  - What is the potential for serious injury?
  - What is the potential for minor injury?
  - What is the potential for damage?
  - What is the potential for disruption to normal course of business?

- **Urgency**
  - How soon does the message need to go out? (Seconds, hours, days)
  - Is there time for approval?

- **Audience**
  - Who needs to be alerted? (Administration, faculty, staff, students, guests)
  - How many people need to be alerted? (Dozens, hundreds, thousands)

- **Capabilities/Limitations**
  - What are the limitations of the system? (Limited audience, lengthy delivery time)
  - Which system should be used? (Press conference, bulk text message, siren)
  - How quickly can the messages be sent? (Immediately, minutes, hours)

**ALERT LEVELS**

Depending on the nature, severity, and duration of an incident or threat, combined with the results of answering the questions in the decision criteria, one of the following Alert Levels is selected:

- **Full Activation of FSU ALERT:** A situation which requires the immediate activation of ALL Primary delivery methods.
- **Partial Activation of FSU ALERT:** A situation which requires use of only certain, selected Primary delivery methods.
- **Information Only Message**: A situation which is not a warning of an immediate threat, but rather a dissemination of information that mitigates concern or potential for rumors.

- **Public Service Announcement**: The distribution of information which serves to promote safety and a culture of preparedness by raising awareness.

**ACTIVATION APPROVAL HIERARCHY**

Any Level 1 Full Activation or Level 2 Partial Activation of the FSU ALERT system for purposes not pre-approved, must be approved by University officials.

*As practical without jeopardizing life safety*, the following individuals or entities shall be consulted prior to emergency message dissemination. If the preceding person or entity is not available or not feasible, proceed down the list to the next available entity:

- Executive Policy Group
- Senior Vice President of Finance and Administration - or - Vice President of Student Affairs
- Associate Vice President of Finance and Administration
- Chief of Police - or - Environmental Health and Safety Director
- Emergency Manager Coordinator - or - Police Supervisor on duty
- Police Dispatch Supervisor
- Police Dispatcher

**ACTIVATION PROCEDURES**

Activation Procedures of the FSU ALERT emergency notification system are maintained in a separate, secure document. Given the sensitive operational nature of the contents of the Activation Procedures document, it is considered to be CONFIDENTIAL and FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

**PRE-APPROVED SCENARIOS**

The following emergency scenarios and associated FSU ALERT messages are pre-approved by University officials and eligible for immediate Level 1 Full Activation of FSU ALERT.

The following scenarios and associated FSU ALERT messages are pre-approved by University officials and eligible for immediate Level 2 Partial Activation of FSU ALERT.
Florida State University

COMPREHENSIVE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (CEMP)

Hazard Specific Appendices

Updated November 7, 2014

Here are some of the most common hazards we face at Florida State University. Click on each topic for more information.

- Weather
  - Tropical Storms & Hurricanes
  - Extreme Heat
  - Lightning
  - Winter Weather
  - Thunderstorms
  - Flooding
  - Tornadoes
  - Drought & Wildfire

- Health
  - Moquito-borne Illness
  - Ebola Virus
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: The Basics

Basic Information
What is a tropical cyclone (depression, storm or hurricane)?
A tropical cyclone is a rapidly rotating storm system characterized by a closed low-pressure center, strong winds, and a spiral arrangement of thunderstorms that produce heavy rain. Depending on its strength, a tropical cyclone in the Northern Atlantic Ocean basin is referred to as a tropical depression, tropical storm, or hurricane.

What are the main hazards associated with tropical cyclones?
There are four main hazards associated with tropical cyclones: 1.) Coastal storm surge, 2.) High winds & gusts, 3.) Heavy rainfall and inland flooding, 4.) Tornadoes.

Where do tropical cyclones occur?
Tropical cyclones occur all over the world. Of greatest concern to Florida State University is the North Atlantic basin which includes all of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean coastlines of the United States. Florida, in particular given its geography, is particularly vulnerable to tropical storms and hurricanes on an annual basis.

When do tropical cyclones occur?
The Atlantic Hurricane Season is the portion of the year having a relatively high incidence of hurricanes. The hurricane season in the Atlantic, Caribbean, and Gulf of Mexico runs from June 1 to November 30. Storms can and have occurred earlier (January) and later (December), but this is a very rare occurrence. Hurricane Kate in 1985, which is the last hurricane to directly impact Tallahassee, occurred very late in the season: November 21. Each month of hurricane season has its favored areas of formation: June, July, August, September, October, November.

What is the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale?
The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a 1 to 5 categorization based on the hurricane’s intensity at the indicated time. The scale provides examples of the type of damage and impacts in the United States associated with winds of the indicated intensity. Learn More>>

Who is most at risk from the impacts of a tropical storm or hurricane?
First and foremost, anyone located along the immediate coastline is most at risk from storm surge.
Secondly, anyone located within an inland flood zone, even hundreds of miles from the coast, is at risk of flooding from heavy rainfall. The third greatest threat from a tropical storm or hurricane is wind; anyone located outdoors or in weak structures is at risk of injury from wind damage. Lastly, and most randomly, is the risk of tornadoes.

Definitions & Terms
Tropical Cyclone
A warm-core non-frontal synoptic-scale cyclone, originating over tropical or subtropical waters, with
organized deep convection and a closed surface wind circulation about a well-defined center. Once formed, a tropical cyclone is maintained by the extraction of heat energy from the ocean at high temperature and heat export at the low temperatures of the upper troposphere. In this they differ from extratropical cyclones, which derive their energy from horizontal temperature contrasts in the atmosphere (baroclinic effects).

**Tropical Depression**
A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind speed (using the U.S. 1-minute average) is 33 kt (38 mph or 62 km/hr) or less.

**Tropical Storm**
A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind speed (using the U.S. 1-minute average) ranges from 34 kt (39 mph or 63 km/hr) to 63 kt (73 mph or 118 km/hr).

**Tropical Storm Watch**
An announcement that sustained winds of 34 to 63 knots (39 to 73 mph or 63 to 118 km/hr) are possible within the specified area within 48 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone.

**Tropical Storm Warning**
An announcement that sustained winds of 34 to 63 knots (39 to 73 mph or 63 to 118 km/hr) are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone.

**Hurricane Watch**
An announcement that sustained winds of 64 knots (74 mph or 119 km/hr) or higher are possible within the specified area in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds.

**Hurricane Warning**
An announcement that sustained winds of 34 to 63 knots (39 to 73 mph or 63 to 118 km/hr) are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone.

**Storm Surge**
An abnormal rise in sea level accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm, and whose height is the difference between the observed level of the sea surface and the level that would have occurred in the absence of the cyclone. Storm surge is usually estimated by subtracting the normal or astronomic high tide from the observed storm tide.

**Storm Tide**
The actual level of sea water resulting from the astronomic tide combined with the storm surge.
MORE Definitions & Terms

There are many more specific definitions and terms related to tropical storms and hurricanes available from the National Hurricane Center. Learn More>>
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: Details | FSU Emergency Management

Tropical Storm & Hurricane Threat for Florida State University's Florida State University Main Campus in Tallahassee located within an evacuation zone for storm surge?
No. The Main Campus of Florida State University in Tallahassee is not located within an evacuation zone for storm surge. This also applies to Southwest Campus, Innovation Park, Alumni Village, College of Medicine, Intramural SportsPlex, and the Reservation. However, portions of southern Leon County, despite being an inland county, are subject to hurricane storm surge and evacuation. Visit Have a Hurricane Plan and download the 2015 Hurricane Survival Guide for details.

Are other Florida State University campuses located within an evacuation zone for storm surge?
Yes. The Florida State University campus in Panama City, Florida is located in a Category 3 storm surge zone and subject to evacuation. See the Bay County surge zone map for details. The FSU Ringling Museum of Art and FSU College of Medicine regional campus in Sarasota, Florida are located within designated "Orange" zone by Sarasota County. This generally equates to a Category 2 hurricane storm surge and is subject to evacuation. See the Sarasota County surge zone map for details. The FSU Marine Lab (Alligator Point and Turkey Point) in Franklin County, Florida are located within "Zone A" evacuation zones and subject to evacuation for all tropical storms and Category 1 hurricanes or stronger.

Is Florida State University Main Campus in Tallahassee located within an inland flood zone?
Yes! The Main Campus of Florida State University in Tallahassee has a number of designated flood zones on campus that have historically been prone to flooding. Flash flooding as a result of Tropical Storm Allison in 2001 resulted in the loss of an FSU student's life on campus. Many other areas throughout the Tallahassee community are designated flood zones as well, which may include some off-campus housing complexes. Tropical cyclones, including even the weakest tropical storms, can be prolific rain producers. Rainfall amounts in excess of 5 inches are common, with some storms dropping in excess of one foot of rain! Even under the best of conditions, the drainage systems around the region are not capable of adequately managing large amounts of rain, especially if they fall within a short period of time. If the region is already saturated from previous rainfall before the storms arrive, almost all of the rain that falls will be in the form of runoff. See the table of historical storms below for a sampling of rainfall amounts to have impacted FSU in the past. For more information about flooding on the Main Campus of Florida State University and throughout the Tallahassee community, visit the flooding hazard page.

Is Florida State University Main Campus in Tallahassee vulnerable to high winds?
The Main Campus of Florida State University in Tallahassee has been historically very well built from its beginnings in 1851. The university has always built to the appropriate building code of the time, and in most cases exceeded it. The Florida Building Code, or its predecessors, have taken hurricane wind design
seriously, especially since 1985. Even before that, the university built most of its buildings strong and well, incorporating reinforced concrete, reinforced masonry, and/or heavy steel construction. As such, there is high confidence that most of the buildings on campus will maintain their core structural integrity through any storm. In other words, we do not expect to experience any building collapses or roof losses. The greatest weakness of any building to wind damage is its glass, in windows and doors. Glass can be easily broken in extreme winds, especially if hit by flying debris. Most of the glass windows and doors on campus are not impact-resistant or protected by shutters. This is why we warn people to "seek shelter, away from doors and windows" for all severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, tropical storms and hurricanes. The best advice is to place as many walls between you and the outside as possible by going into interior hallways, corridors, rooms, closets, or stairwells during high-wind conditions. This will shield you from any flying glass or debris if a window breaks.

**Are any buildings on the Florida State University Main Campus in Tallahassee hardened against high winds?**

Yes. The following buildings on Main Campus are currently fully-hardened against high wind and debris, through the installation of hurricane shutters and/or impact-resistant glass: 1.) Tanner Hall - Police Department, 2.) Student Services Building (SSB), 3.) HCB Classroom Building, 4.) Westside Diner (Fresh Food Company). During the summer of 2015, the Turnbull Conference Center will also have window protection installed.

**Is Florida State University Panama City Campus vulnerable to high winds?**

Most of the Florida State University campus in Panama City, Florida was built in 1985 or after. Since it is located directly on West Bay, higher wind provisions of the building code were applied. The new Holley Academic Center, built in 2006, is fully-hardened with impact-resistant glass as per the requirements of the Florida Building Code.

**Are other Florida State University campuses vulnerable to high winds?**

The FSU Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, is a historical area that includes a number of very old structures built as far back as 1924. These older structures are highly susceptible to significant structural damage from a hurricane. Many of the newer buildings, built since 2000, were built to modern Florida Building Code standards which include high-wind and hurricane provisions. The FSU Marine Lab (Alligator Point and Turkey Point) in Franklin County, Florida are located directly on the Gulf of Mexico coast. Many of the buildings were built in 1968 and are highly susceptible to high-wind damage. The Main Lab Building has recently had hurricane shutters installed to protect that building. Several newer structures built from 2002 through 2007 were built to modern Florida Building Code standards which include high-wind and hurricane provisions.

**Is Florida State University susceptible to tornadoes from tropical cyclones?**

Imagine a tropical cyclone, regardless if it is a tropical storm or a hurricane, as a car driving down the road. The area in the right-front quadrant (front-passenger corner) of that car is where the most tornadoes are spawned during a landfalling storm. Therefore, anytime a storm makes landfall heading north or northeast
at a point to the west of Tallahassee along the Gulf Coast, we have the greatest risk of seeing tornadoes. The tornado threat may exist for hundreds of miles away from the center of the storm. Examples include Hurricanes Dennis 2005, Ivan 2004, and Opal 1995. For more information about tornadoes on the Main Campus of Florida State University and throughout the Tallahassee community, visit the [tornado hazard page](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/tropical/details).
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: History at FSU

History of Tropical Storms & Hurricanes at FSU
What is the history of tropical cyclones affecting Florida State University Main Campus in Tallahassee?
The most recent hurricane (not including tropical storms) to directly impact the Tallahassee area was Hurricane Kate in 1985. However, the region has been hit by many hurricanes over the last 170+ years, including three major (Category 3 or stronger) hurricanes. Even hurricanes that make landfall in places such as Pensacola, 175 miles from Tallahassee, can be felt here (e.g. Dennis '05, Ivan '04. Opal '95).

Statistically, hurricanes directly impact Tallahassee on average once every eight years (21 hurricanes in the last 171 years). However, we know from historical hurricane climatology that the frequency of storms comes in multi-decadal cycles where there will be long stretches between active periods of numerous storms. Needless to say, we are statistically well overdue for a direct hurricane strike on the Tallahassee area.

Tropical storms conditions are much more common than hurricanes conditions for our part of the state. Tropical storms strike on average once every 3.5 years (50 tropical storms in 171 years). The last tropical storm to directly impact Florida State University was Tropical Storm Debby in 2012.

The table below summarizes the tropical cyclone activity to have been felt on the Main Campus of Florida State University since Hurricane Kate in 1985, plus a few extra historical hurricanes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Storm</th>
<th>Max Sustained Wind</th>
<th>Max Wind Gust</th>
<th>Max Rain</th>
<th>Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Debby</td>
<td>27.6 mph</td>
<td>36.8 mph</td>
<td>5.5 inches on campus. 15-25 inches in Leon/Wakulla counties</td>
<td>Sever flooding in Wakulla County. No impacts on campus.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Claudette</td>
<td>25.3 mph</td>
<td>39.1 mph</td>
<td>2.1 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>Tropical Storm</td>
<td>26.5 mph</td>
<td>26.5 mph</td>
<td>15.62 in</td>
<td>$95,562 on campus damage. Widespread community flooding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Storm Name</td>
<td>Wind Speed</td>
<td>Maximum Speed</td>
<td>Rainfall</td>
<td>Notes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Alberto</td>
<td>34.6 mph</td>
<td>38 mph</td>
<td>3.25 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>Hurricane Dennis</td>
<td>38 mph</td>
<td>50.6 mph</td>
<td>6.64 in</td>
<td>FSU Marine Lab damaged by storm surge.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Jeanne</td>
<td>33.4 mph</td>
<td>48.3 mph</td>
<td>1.21 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Hurricane Ivan</td>
<td>38 mph</td>
<td>54.1 mph</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Frances</td>
<td>47.2 mph</td>
<td>59.8 mph</td>
<td>2.48 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Allison</td>
<td>10.13 in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1 fatality and 1 injury on campus due to flash flooding. Flash flooding throughout Tallahassee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Georges</td>
<td>27.6 mph</td>
<td>33.4 mph</td>
<td>6.42 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Earl</td>
<td>33.4 mph</td>
<td>48.3 mph</td>
<td>5.41 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Josephine</td>
<td>28.8 mph</td>
<td>39.1 mph</td>
<td>7.79 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Hurricane Opal</td>
<td>32.2 mph</td>
<td>63.3 mph</td>
<td>1.25 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Tropical Storm Erin</td>
<td>31.1 mph</td>
<td>39.1 mph</td>
<td>0.80 in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Storm Name</td>
<td>Max Wind</td>
<td>Wind Speed</td>
<td>Damage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Hurricane Kate</td>
<td>53 mph</td>
<td>87 mph</td>
<td>Many trees fell, landing on cars, houses, and power lines. Most people were without power for 5 days, and others were without it for up to 3 weeks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Hurricane Agnes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Hurricane Alma</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Hurricane Dora</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Hurricane Florence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>Not Named</td>
<td>(Cat. 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>Not Named</td>
<td>(Cat. 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>Not Named</td>
<td>(Cat. 3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Completey defoliatted the city and caused significant damage to most structures. Estimated $1.5 M in 2008 US Dollars</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What was life like after Hurricane Kate hit Tallahassee and FSU in 1985?

As can be seen by the table above, Hurricane Kate in 1985 was the most significant tropical cyclone hit for Tallahassee and Florida State University in recent history. It was barely a hurricane when it passed through the capital city, with sustained winds of 53 miles per hour and hurricane wind gusts to 87 miles per hour. That is only a Category 1 on the Saffir-Simpson scale. However, according to a government report on the storm, "Sporadic heavy wind damage throughout Gadsden and Leon County provided evidence of widespread microbursts or downbursts of localized higher wind gusts which may have reached 100 mph." Regardless, the impacts of Kate were widespread in Tallahassee.

While Category 1 hurricane winds did not cause major direct structural damage, the storm tore through the city's popular tree canopy. Simply put, Tallahassee has a lot of trees. Many of those trees, particularly tall pines, came crashing down everywhere. When they fell, they landed on homes, cars, roadways, and power lines. For a few days, it was nearly impossible to drive around anywhere with so many large trees blocking the roads.
The damage to the electrical infrastructure was equally widespread. Most people were without power for about 5 days, and there were others who did not see their service returned for 2-3 weeks.

The Florida State University campus received only minor damage to a few buildings. Oddly, the campus never lost power. The trees on campus at that time were not that large and did not impact the power lines. Yet, with the damage to the community around us, classes and events were cancelled and a 7 p.m. to dawn curfew was put into effect. Hurricane Kate made landfall on Thursday, November 21, 1985, just one week before Thanksgiving. Kate holds the record for the latest date in an Atlantic hurricane season for a hurricane to form and for a hurricane to make landfall in the U.S.
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: Threat Analysis

Risk Assessment
What is the historical probability of occurrence for a tropical storm at FSU? Likely. Tropical storm conditions occur more frequently in Tallahassee than do hurricane. FSU will experience tropical storm conditions on average once every 3 to 4 years. 51 tropical storms have occurred here over the last 172 years. The last tropical storm to affect FSU was Tropical Storm Debby in 2012.

What is the historical probability of occurrence for a hurricane at FSU? Occasionally. Statistically, hurricanes directly impact Tallahassee on average once every eight years (21 hurricanes in the last 171 years). However, we know from historical hurricane climatology that the frequency of storms comes in multi-decadal cycles where there will be long stretches between active periods of numerous storms. Needless to say, we are statistically well overdue for a direct hurricane strike on the Tallahassee area since the most recent hurricane to affect this region was Hurricane Kate in 1985. What is the historical probability of occurrence for a major (category 3+) hurricane at FSU?
Very Seldom. Only three major (category 3) hurricanes have impacted this region in 1851, 1877, and 1894. No category 4 or 5 hurricanes have ever been documented in this area. That is not to say that it cannot happen.

Are there enhanced environmental conditions that enhance to the risk?
Yes - Seasonal and Climatic. Tropical storms and hurricanes are most likely to occur during a period of the year referred to as hurricane season, which runs from June 1 through November 30. During this time period, there is an enhanced risk of occurrence. Likewise, research has shown that there are long periods in time, called multi-decadal cycles, that result in greater or fewer storms on an annual basis. We are currently in an overall period of average to above-average tropical activity.

Are there any mitigating factors in place that reduce the risk?
No - Unmitigated. Occasionally, we will observe certain meteorological patterns, such as El Nino, which could have a "calming" effect on a particular hurricane season. This pattern does not currently exist. However, keep in mind that even if there are fewer storms in a given year, it only takes one to ruin your day. 1992 was an El Nino year and it was the first "A" storm of the year that has reshaped Florida history forever: Andrew.

Consequence Analysis
What is the threat to public health?
None to Death. Tropical Storms and Hurricanes pose a high risk to the health of the public, including the FSU campus community. Injuries can include: none, aggravation of pre-existing conditions, minor injury, major injury, long-term or permanent injury or even death.

What is the threat to responder health?
None to Death. First responders, designated university employees, contractors and other people
responding to the impacts of a tropical storm or hurricane on campus face many risks to their health and life safety. Injuries can include: none, aggravation of pre-existing conditions, minor injury, major injury, long-term or permanent injury or even death.

**What is the threat for structural damage?**
None to Major. Depending on the strength of a tropical storm or hurricane, structural damage to buildings on campus may occur. A weak tropical storm may cause no damage whatsoever. The most likely impact from a category 1 or greater hurricane is the loss of glass windows and doors by high winds and debris. Loss of roof coverings, partial wall collapses, and other damages requiring significant repairs are possible in a major (category 3 to 5) hurricane. The level of damage is commensurate with the strength of the storm, as explained by the [Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutwind.shtml).

**What is the threat for property (grounds) damage?**
None to Major. Depending on the strength of a tropical storm or hurricane, damage to the campus grounds may occur. A weak tropical storm may cause no damage whatsoever. The most likely impact from a category 1 or greater hurricane is damage to trees, landscaping, and some erosion. Severe loss of foliage and damage to trees is likely in a major (category 3 to 5) hurricane. The level of damage is commensurate with the strength of the storm, as explained by the [Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale](https://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutwind.shtml).

**What is the threat for infrastructure damage?**
None to Major. Most of the University's infrastructure on campus is located below ground and moderately protected from hurricane force winds. However, some of University's utility infrastructure is dependent upon off-campus resources which may be more vulnerable. Loss of electric power, potable water, telecommunications, wastewater and other critical utilities is very possible during a hurricane, especially major (category 3+) storms. Some of this damage can be so severe that it may take days to weeks to restore.

**What is the threat for service delivery impacts?**
None to Major. As a result of potential structural, grounds, and infrastructure damages, it is a distinct possibility that the University will be unable to resume the delivery of some critical services for an extended period of time. This may result in the inability to resume core missions and functions such as academics and research.

**What is the threat for environmental impacts?**
None to Major. While tropical storms and hurricanes are unlikely to cause direct environmental impacts, it is possible for indirect cascading incidents to occur. For example, high winds and debris may result in damage to an above-ground fuel tank, resulting in a significant petrochemical spill.

**What is the threat for economic / financial impacts?**
None to Major. The University has historically been able to recover well financially after past disasters through a combination of State of Florida self-insurance and FEMA disaster aid. However, in 2004 and
2005, other state universities in Florida sustained over $20 Million in unrecovered losses which they needed to absorb from normal operating budgets. The threat of a major financial impact due to a devastating hurricane is very real and could result in significant programmatic budget cuts, furloughs, layoffs, or program elimination.

**What is the threat for impacts upon regulatory / contractual obligations?**
None to Major. A devastating hurricane impact to the University could result in the inability for the institution to meet certain regulatory and contractual obligations. For example, significant damages to residence halls could result in the termination of leases.

**What is the threat for an impact upon the reputation of the institution or public confidence?**
None to Moderate. Should the University fail to properly prepare for, respond to or recover from a hurricane, public confidence in the institution could suffer. This can be especially true if there is any perceived coverup, unethical or illegal activities.
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: What to do Before

"Don't become a Gator. Get prepared for hurricane season."

(Video provided courtesy of the University of Miami Office of Emergency Management)

Prepare Yourself & Your Family
Know Your Zone: Do you stay or do you go?
Do you live in an evacuation zone due to coastal storm surge? Do you live in an inland flood zone? Do you live in a manufactured or mobile home? Do you live in a wood-frame or unreinforced masonry building built before 1973? If you answered yes to any of these questions, then you live in a danger zone for tropical storms and hurricanes. You should develop a plan to evacuate your home when instructed by local officials. If you don't know if you live in a surge of flood zone, look below for more information.

Do I live in an evacuation zone due to coastal storm surge?
Most of Tallahassee and Leon County are not located within an evacuation zone for coastal storm surge. However, parts of southern and southeastern Leon County, generally south of Capital Circle and Tram Roads, are located with the Zone D evacuation zone for major hurricanes. Coastal counties in our region (Jefferson, Wakulla, Franklin, and others) have additional, more widespread evacuation zones. Know your zone: look up it in the Hurricane Survival Guide for the Capital Area.

Do I live in an inland flood zone?
Many areas in Tallahassee, Leon County, and neighboring counties are designated flood zones by FEMA. Keep in mind that just because you're not in a FEMA designated flood zone, that your home can't flood. To
check your Leon County residence for flood threats, visit: Tallahassee Leon County GIS and Click I-Maps Base Map. Zoom in on or use the search tool to find your address. If you are in a blue or red hatched area, you are in a flood zone. Even if your house is not in a hatched area, look around to see if any roads in or out are; you could become isolated by floodwaters.

If ordered to evacuate, where will I go?
There are a variety of options available to you should you be ordered to evacuate; some are better than others. The key is to plan now and make your decision to leave early. If you have enough time, you should plan on evacuating to an area outside of the danger zone. Ideally, this would be to family or friends, but a hotel or motel will do too. Just make sure that you are not headed into the path of the storm and that you don’t get stuck riding out the storm on the road. If a road trip is not an option for you, find family or friends in a safer location nearby. A public shelter should be your last resort if you run out of time or simply have no other options. Here’s some things to remember when evacuating: Federal Alliance for Safe Homes.

Build a survival kit before a storm threatens.
You should plan on being self-sufficient for 3 to 7 days without government or outside assistance. To make that happen, you need to build a survival kit and stock up on essential supplies, including but not limited to: 2 week supply of non-perishable food, drinking water (2 gallons per person, per day, for 2 weeks), flashlights, battery-operated radio, cash, prescription medications, first aid kit, cell phone and car charger, insect repellent, gasoline for your vehicle and more. Here are a few excellent sources for checklists: Hurricane Survival Guide for the Capital Area, Get A Plan! - FloridaDisaster.org, Ready.gov, American Red Cross, Federal Alliance for Safe Homes.

Put your plan together now.
The more you think about and prepare for a storm now, the easier and faster you be able to react when the time comes. Put your plan into writing and share it with your family. Your plan should include: Where will I go? How will I get there? What things will I need? How will I communicate with my family? Do I have a designated meeting location? How will I protect my property? What will I do with my pets? Here are some excellent resources to help you develop your plan: Federal Alliance for Safe Homes.

Don’t forget the pets!
Being a pet owner brings with it some additional responsibilities when it comes to emergencies. Make sure that your plans into taking your pets with you. DO NOT leave your pets behind! Pets most likely cannot survive on their own, and if by some chance they do, you may not be able to find them when you return. A pet survival kit includes: collars, leashes, rabies tags, carrier, food, water, bowls, and more. Learn More>>

Prepare Your Home or ApartmentDo you have insurance? Even if you're a renter, there are things you should know.
If you are a homeowner, make sure that your homeowner’s policy has adequate coverage for tropical
storms and hurricanes. Hurricane coverage typically has higher deductibles when making claims. If you are a renter, do you know that your landlord’s insurance policy does not cover any of your personal belongings? You need to get a separate renter’s insurance policy, which is a lot more affordable than you may think. Lastly, note that neither homeowner’s nor renter’s insurance policies cover damage caused by floods, even if during a hurricane. You need to get a separate flood insurance policy. Lastly, take the time to inventory and photography your property and possessions to help make the claims process smoother.

Renters should plan ahead to protect their personal belongings.
As a renter, there’s not much you can do to protect the property itself, but there are things you can do to help minimize an potential damage to your personal possessions. Have a plan to bring indoors anything that can become windborne debris (grills, patio chairs, umbrellas, etc). Prepare to raise up electronics and other expensive items up off the floor. If the windows break or the roof leaks, you don’t want your computer, TV, or other things swimming in a puddle on the floor. Have a box of trash bags ready to bag up or cover your possessions against getting wet. Don’t leave any small valuables behind, if you can take them with you. Have all your important papers in a box ready to grab. "Go Tapeless!" Don’t bother taping up windows. It just doesn’t work and leaves a sticky mess to clean up later.

Homeowners can do a lot to minimize the potential damage to their homes.
There are many small, cost-effective things that a homeowner can do to reduce the amount of damage that can occur to their properties. If done right, you could possibly even receive a discount on your homeowner’s insurance premiums. Visit the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes for more information.

Prepare Your On-Campus Office, Classroom, Lab, or Other Facility
Develop a business plan.
Each College, Division, Department or other entity on campus has a responsibility to develop its own localized emergency preparedness plan. At a minimum, these plans should answer the following questions: Do we have everyone’s emergency contact information? What critical data, files, or equipment need to be protected? Do we back up electronic data on a regular basis? Do we have supplies on hand ready to protect property? Who will complete all the preparedness tasks?

Back up electronic data regularly.
One of the most vulnerable assets of this university is the wealth of electronic data we possess. Take the time now to evaluate what electronic data you can’t stand to possibly lose. Now, are you backing that data up to a safe location on a regular basis? If you had to restart your office in a new location, with a new computer, do you have the electronic data you need to resume business quickly? If you need assistance with backing up and protecting your data, contact Information Technology Services today.

Prepare to protect electronics and other sensitive equipment and files.
Have a plan now to protect electronics and other sensitive equipment and files. This first thing to consider is raising everything up off the floor at least two inches. Refrain from placing computers or other equipment directly on the floor if possible. The next step is to keep a supply of plastic sheeting, garbage bags, tarps and other similar items ready to cover up items. Should a window break, roof leak, or other
flood occur, all your critical items will not get wet. Have a plan to safely power down all electronics, if possible. Keep in mind that some things, like network servers, don't like abrupt power outages. Unplug electronics, power strips, and anything else that can become a fire hazard if it becomes wet.

**Do you need extra insurance coverage for critical assets?**
Keep in mind that the university is self-insured by the State of Florida, through the Division of Financial Services. Coverage for property and contents may be rather limited. If you have an extra-ordinary piece of equipment, artwork, or other rare or valuable object, you may want to talk to the Department of Environmental Health & Safety for guidance on obtaining additional insurance coverage.
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: What to do During

When a WATCH is Issued

What is a Tropical Storm or Hurricane Watch? An announcement from the National Hurricane Center that sustained winds of tropical storm or hurricane force are possible within the specified area within 48 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Get the latest forecast and projected impacts for your community.

By now, the storm will be dominating local and national headlines. Just remember, that Florida State University makes all its decisions based on official forecasts from the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service - Tallahassee. Some other private meteorologists or media may have differing opinions.

Get the latest information and instructions from local officials.

Consult the FSU Alerts Page and Keep FSU Safe on Facebook and Twitter for campus-specific information, operating conditions, cancellation or closure announcements, or other instructions. Also check the Leon County Emergency Information Page and the City of Tallahassee website for community-wide information and instructions.

Finalize your plans.

Hopefully by now, you have adequately planned ahead and prepared for this moment. Now it is time to finalize those plans. Are you going to evacuate? Are you going to stay? Do you have your survival kit ready? Have you contacted your family and told them your plans? Do you know what your are going to do with your kids or pets? If you haven't adequately prepared before now, be prepared to encounter the last-minute rush, crowds, and shortage of supplies at area stores. Now is your last chance to prepare. Tomorrow will be crunch day.

If you need to evacuate, start packing now.

If you determined during preparedness that you need to evacuate due to storm surge, inland flood zone, or inadequate housing, then now is the time to pack up. Collect and load your essential belongings and survival kit into your car. Top off the fuel tank in your vehicle. Plan your route. Leave early enough to avoid traffic and getting stuck on the road. Communicate your plan and movements regularly with family or friends. If you're ready to go, there's no harm in leaving early to beat the rush. If you need to miss a class or work, discuss it with your instructor or supervisor first.

If you are going to stay, stock up now.

If you determined during preparedness that you are going to stay, then now is the time to stock up and get ready. Collect up essential belongings and your survival kit. Don't forget to refill your prescription medications. Get cash; banks may not open, ATMs and credit card machines might not work after the storm. Identify the location within your house that you will ride out the storm, such as an interior room, closet, hallway or bathroom on the lowest floor. Try to put as many walls between you and the outside as
possible, and by all means avoid any unprotected glass doors or windows.

**Take steps to protect property and possessions.**
Now is the time to bring in outdoor items, get electronics up off the floor, wrap valuables in plastic bags or sheeting. If you own your property, install or deploy your hurricane shutters. Clear or report any blocked stormwater drains or ditches.

*When a WARNING is IssuedWhat is a Tropical Storm or Hurricane Warning?* An announcement from the National Hurricane Center that sustained winds of tropical storm or hurricane force are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Get the latest forecast and projected impacts for your community.
Surely you've read all the headlines by now. Just remember, that Florida State University makes all its decisions based on official forecasts from the National Hurricane Center and National Weather Service - Tallahassee. Some other private meteorologists or media may have differing opinions.

*Get the latest information and instructions from local officials.*
Consult the FSU Alerts Page and Keep FSU Safe on Facebook and Twitter for campus-specific information, operating conditions, cancellation or closure announcements, or other instructions. Also check the Leon County Emergency Information Page and the City of Tallahassee website for community-wide information and instructions.

**Put your plans into action.**
The time to prepare has come to an end. Now is the time to act. If you're going to evacuate, leave now. If you're going to stay, get settled in. It's time to put your full focus on the storm and its potential impacts.
Tune in to updates from forecasters and media. While some national outlets may be more appealing, we encourage you to include local sources of information as well. Local media will have the most current information pertinent to you. Be sure to check in with family and friends; update them on your final plans.

**Final property protection actions.**
Unplug or turn off any unnecessary electrical items. If you are leaving, turn off electricity at the main breaker. Put valuable items in your empty appliances such as washer, dryer, oven or microwave. Lock windows and doors. Put the final charge on cell phones, laptops, tablets, and other rechargeable devices.
Clean and fill your bath tub with water. Do your last load of laundry.

**Riding Out the StormWhen is it time to "hunker down"?**
"Hunker down" is a popular term in the South. It refers to the point in time before a hurricane that you get to your final safe place and begin to ride out the storm. Most emergency officials use the onset of sustained tropical storm force winds (greater than 38mph) as the benchmark for when you should be off the roads and head indoors. The onset of sustained gale force winds (greater than 55mph) is the time to get to your interior safe place and stay there until the storm subsides.

**Get inside and stay away from unprotected glass doors and windows!**

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/tropical/during
One of the biggest threats from a tropical storm or hurricane in Tallahassee is breaking glass from high winds and debris. As tempting as it may be to peek outside to see how bad it is or record that video you plan to post on social media, this is your biggest chance for getting hurt. This is why Housing staff will move residence hall occupants into interior hallways and stairwells.

**Actively monitor the storm's progress.**
As long as you have electric power and connectivity, actively monitor the storms progress with television media and the internet. Once you lose power, turn on your battery-operated radio to local radio stations for updates. Save your cell phone battery for communicating (voice and text) with your family. Refrain from using up all your battery surfing the web or using apps. Don't trust rumors; stay tuned to local media and official sources for information.

**Reserve 911 for life-threatening emergencies only.**
A lot of bad and scary things can happen during the middle of a storm. The entire community is being impacted just like you are. Do not call 911 unless you have an *immediately life-threatening* situation (major injury, fire, etc). Keep in mind that most emergency services (police, fire, EMS) will be unable to respond during the peak of the storm. Sadly, you're on your own at that point. This is why having first aid training and a kit is so important.

**Beware the eye of the storm.**
Hurricanes, particularly strong ones, will have an "eye" at the center of the storm. The eye of a hurricane is surprisingly calm of most winds, free of rain and can quite possibly even see some sunshine. It is often very tempting for people to go outside during the eye of the storm to check things out. This is extremely dangerous! At some point, the opposite eye wall will approach. The eye wall most often contains the most intense winds. You can go from calm to catastrophic in just a matter of minutes. Stay inside in your safe place.
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: What to do After

Immediately After the Storm Stay inside until the storm has completely passed.
It is critically important that you do not attempt to go outside until the winds have calmed down significantly. Keep in mind, that unlike the start of the storm, there is now a ton of debris out there that can fly around a lot more easily. This is where keeping your battery operated radio functional is important, so you can hear from forecasters and local officials about when the threat has passed.

If you evacuated, do not return until local officials say you can.
Depending on the severity of the storm, you may be better off staying where you are for a while. There's no point in rushing back to Tallahassee. There's a good chance you won't be able to make it back anyways with all the trees and power lines down. Some areas, such as barrier islands, may have specific re-entry requirements. Be sure to have your identification and proof of residency with you.

Conduct an initial damage assessment of your immediate area.
When as safe as possible, take a look around your immediate area to make sure there are no continuing hazards such as live power lines, gas leaks, etc. If a hazardous condition exists, flee that area immediately. Seek a safer location elsewhere. Know where shut-off valves are for electricity, natural gas and water are and turn them off if needed.

Stay somewhere safe, refrain from sight-seeing.
Even after the storm passes, there are many additional hazards that can harm you. Many people are injured or killed walking or driving around after the storm. Live power lines, gas leaks, dangling tree branches, flooding, damaged roadways and dangerous wildlife (e.g. snakes, alligators) can be life-threatening. Do not go sight-seeing unnecessarily; the added traffic may prevent essential personnel for getting people who need their help.

Attempt to contact your family or friends outside the area.
As soon as possible, contact your family or friends outside the impact area to let them know your condition.

Stay tuned to local media and emergency officials.
This will be a critical time for information about ongoing threats, conditions, and sources of assistance. Continue to follow the advice of emergency officials during this time.

Do not drink or prepare food with tap water until notified.
Contamination of the water supply, particularly if you have an on-site well, is possible. Do not drink or prepare food with tap water, if functional, until notified by officials or until your well has been professionally inspected and tested. If there is low water pressure, refrain from bathing or using the water for any other purpose. Water supplies should be reserved for fire fighting.
Help your neighbors, but refrain from venturing too far.
Americans are very resilient and known for their willingness to help others after a disaster. Keep in mind that this may still be a very dangerous time. Refrain from venturing too far from your safe space until authorized by local officials. However, if you are able, check in on your neighbors and lend assistance, if possible. Be careful to not exceed your knowledge, skills and abilities. Many well-intentioned volunteers have been injured or killed conducting tasks they are not qualified to do.

**Do not grill or operate gasoline-powered machinery indoors.**
Carbon-monoxide poisoning sickens or kills many people long after the storm has passed. This is often the result of using generators, charcoal grills, or other gasoline-power equipment in poorly ventilated areas.

Stay out of flood waters.
Playing in flood waters might seem like fun. However, they are many hidden dangers present. There could be raw sewage, hazardous chemicals, bacteria, dangerous wildlife, and underwater hazards that could severely injure or kill you.

**Refrain from using candles.**
Using candles is very dangerous, for obvious reasons. Remember, the fire department may not be able to respond to put any fires out.

**Days Afterward: Be prepared for road closures and blockages.**
Although city, county and state transportation officials have plans to clear major roadways quickly, it may still take a few days to get most roads open. Secondary side streets may take a even longer.

**Be prepared for extended power outages.**
Tallahassee’s biggest weakness facing tropical storms and hurricanes is our beautiful tree canopy. Even a weak to moderate tropical storm can cause extensive trees and power lines down. Many areas of Tallahassee were without power for over a week after Hurricane Kate, which was barely a category one hurricane when it passed through. We have had about three decades of tree growth since then. The stronger the storm, the longer we are likely to be without power in our community.

**Practice food safety.**
It is important to know that perishable foods that have not been adequately refrigerator can cause severe health problems. Items in a full freezer will stay frozen for about two days with the door kept closed; in a half-full freeze for about one day. Refrigerated foods can keep for up to four hours. Discard any perishable refrigerated foods that have been above 40°F for more than two hours. Discard any food with an unusual odor, color or texture.

**Contact your insurance company.** *Take lots of pictures.*
Most major insurance companies will likely send representatives and set up special claims centers for larger events. If not, attempt to contact your insurance company to start a claim as soon as possible.
Take as many pictures of your personal damage as possible to help justify your claim.

If it's too bad to stay, leave or seek help elsewhere.
In some situations, people may find that they underestimated the impacts that a hurricane may have on their homes or lives. If it's too bad to stay, don't be afraid to leave the area for a while and come back when it's more stable. You may need to seek shelter or assistance from disaster relief agencies for a while. This is especially true if you have kids, elderly, people with special needs, or pets in your care.

If there is a federal Presidential Disaster Declaration, contact FEMA as soon as possible.
If you sustained damage and need assistance from a storm that receives a federal Presidential Disaster Declaration, you are encouraged to contact FEMA as soon as possible to request assistance. Call 1-800-621-FEMA (3362) or register online.

Use only licensed professionals for repairs. Beware of scams.
Many people will come out of the woodwork after a disaster trying to make a buck. Be sure to use only state licensed contractors. If you need help finding a contractor, try the Disaster Contractor's Network. Beware of fraudulent "up-front" loans that promise immediate cash for repairs while you await a FEMA or insurance claim. Beware of contractors going door-to-door looking for work, that offer you discounts for finding other customers, "just happen to have" materials left over from a previous job, ask to be paid up-front for a substantial or full amount, or request to be paid in cash. Obtain at least three written estimates, as required by most insurance companies.

Be safe when cleaning up and making small repairs.
Always use proper safety equipment such as heavy gloves, safety goggles, heavy boots, light-colored long-sleeve shirts and long pants when cleaning up debris or making small repairs. Tie back long hair. Wear a hat and sunscreen. Lift with your legs, not your back. If you can't tell what it is, don't touch it. Assume all downed wires are live electrical wires until proven otherwise. Use the right tools for the job and don't use anything you don't know it works. Follow manufacturer's instructions on all equipment.

Stay healthy and safe cleaning up after the storm.
The biggest thing you need to do after the storm is stay hydrated. Drink plenty of non-sugary, non-caffeinated, and non-alcoholic fluids throughout the day, but especially when working in the heat. Rest and take breaks when needed. Ask for help when the task it too big for you to handle. Beware of raw sewage, standing flood waters, insects and wildlife. Use insect repellent. Wash your hands often and use antibacterial hand sanitizer. Use caution with cleaning chemicals; never mix bleach with ammonia.

Take care of your pets and beware of stray animals.
Continue to take care of your own pets with plenty of food, water and medical attention. Beware that many animals, especially strays, may be very agitated and scared. They are more prone to attack, bite or scratch. Use extreme caution when approaching stray animals, no matter how innocent they look.

Talk to kids.
https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/tropical/after
A natural disaster is a traumatic experience, but especially for kids. Take the time from your own situation to talk to kids about their experience and listen carefully to what they have to say.

**Properly dispose of damaged or destroyed property or debris.**
Check with local officials for cleanup instructions before disposing of debris. You can help get your garbage picked up faster if you separate it into different piles: yard debris (trees, bushes, leaves, etc); building materials (shingles, plywood, glass, screens, carpets, etc); appliances and electronics; furniture; and regular bagged garbage (including food).

**Prevent mold and mildew growth.**
First step is to prevent things from getting even more wet; cover openings and prevent leaks. Eliminate puddles of standing water. Tear out any carpet and padding that was significantly saturated. If water soaked up into drywall, you may need to have a professional cut parts of it out and replace it. Get the air moving with fans. Allow as much sunlight in as possible. Turn up the air conditioning, if possible. Dry all wet clothing. Dispose of any furniture or items with "stuffing" that got wet inside or porous surfaces that cannot be completely cleaned or dried out (e.g. bean bags, couches, and mattresses). Harder materials such as glass, plastic and metal can be cleaned and disinfected. [Learn More]

**Getting Back to Business**
**How soon after a storm will Florida State University reopen and resume classes?**
It all depends on how bad the storm was, how severely campus was damaged, and how quickly the community around us is responding. Life safety is the first and foremost priority of the University. We will not reopen or resume operations on campus until all hazards and threats to life safety have been addressed. This includes having adequate infrastructure (e.g. power and water) to support occupancy. Another consideration includes the ability of the community around us to support the return of our students and employees. We will work closely with our community partners to make sure everyone is ready.

**Everything might not be clean, repaired and "normal" when we do reopen.**
Our goal is to resume campus operations as soon as it is safe to do so. This does not mean that everything will be completely cleaned up, repaired, or restored to pre-storm conditions when we reopen campus. You may encounter fenced off areas or boarded up buildings, closed or inaccessible areas, and/or limited services.

**Who do we report on-campus damages to?**
If the damage is an immediate threat to life safety, call [FSU Police](tel:(850) 644-1234) at (850) 644-1234. Unless instructed otherwise, continue to report any on-campus structural or grounds damages to [Facilities](tel:(850) 644-2424) at (850) 644-2424. Report any telecommunications issues to [Information Technology Services](tel:(850) 644-HELP) at (850) 644-HELP (4357).

**Document! Document! Document!**
Did we forget to say: Document? We cannot stress enough how documenting every minor detail, whether
written or photograph, of any on-campus storm-related damages, preparedness or response activities is. We will need to prove every little nuance when it comes to insurance and FEMA claims. Include: before and after photos, timesheets, purchase receipts, logs of how long each piece of equipment was used for, etc.

**Some priority functions and services may be restored before others.**
It is possible that some aspects of campus life may not reopen or resume at the time that people are allowed back on campus. The University will focus its response and recovery efforts on core-critical facilities and functions.

**Will the semester be extended or vacation days cancelled?**
Depending on how long the University was closed and at what point during the semester the closure occurred, rescheduling classes at non-traditional times may be required.

**Some offices, functions and services may be relocated or re-established in temporary facilities.**
Depending on the extent of damages to your office or workspace, it is possible that your function may be relocated to another space on campus or potentially re-established in a temporary structure. Part of your pre-storm planning should include a list of mission-critical resources you need to resume your job.

**Long-Term Recovery**
Who at Florida State University manages insurance and FEMA claims?
The Department of [Environmental Health & Safety, Risk Management Section](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/tropical/after), will coordinate all insurance and FEMA disaster assistance claims on behalf of the University.

**How long could it take for the University to completely recover?**
Depending on the severity of the storm, it can take the University months to years to fully and completely recover after a significant disaster. Florida State University is still managing some FEMA claims from 2004 and 2005, up to ten years later. While all the repairs have certainly been completed at this point, the financial and administrative process lingers.
Tropical Storms & Hurricanes: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About Tropical Storms & Hurricanes

Where do tropical storms and hurricanes get their names from?
The World Meteorological Organisation maintains six alphabetical lists of names which alternate between masculine and feminine and are used on a six-year cycle. Significant tropical cyclones have their names retired from the lists, with a replacement name selected. If all of the names on a list are used, storms are named after the letters of the Greek alphabet (Alpha, Beta, Gamma, etc.). Greek-letter names, unlike the names in the regular lists, cannot be retired. Learn More>>

It's just a tropical storm, what's the big deal?
Often we will hear people say, "It's just a tropical storm" or "It's just a category one hurricane." Each and every tropical storm is dangerous and poses its own hazards. Even a weak, sloppy tropical storm from a wind perspective can dump dozens of inches of rainfall and result in massive flooding. Tropical Storm Debby in 2012 did pack much of a punch in terms of winds, but caused devastating flooding just 15 miles south of the FSU campus in Wakulla County. Debby also dropped 28 tornadoes throughout Florida, even in South Florida hundreds of miles away, killing one.

About Personal Preparedness

How long should I prepare to be self-sufficient for after a hurricane?
We encourage you to be prepared to fend for yourself for at least 3 days, but ideally up to 7 days after the storm passes through in some extreme circumstances. With the heavy tree canopy in and around Tallahassee, it may take a few days before roads with emergency reinforcements and supplies can even get to us. Government priorities during the first 72 hours will be on search and rescue, addressing any ongoing life-safety hazards, and establishing security. Humanitarian assistance from government and disaster relief organizations may take a couple extra days to get established.

What does it mean to be self-sufficient?
It means that you do not need anyone else's help in satisfying your basic needs for food, water or shelter in order to survive.

Will the University pay for any storm damages to my personal property if I live in a residence hall?
No. The University is not responsible for damages to personal possessions. You are strongly encouraged to obtain renter's insurance for this purpose.

About FSU's Hurricane Plans and Procedures

Would FSU cancel classes for a tropical storm or hurricane?
The life safety of our students, faculty, staff and visitors is our number one priority. The decision to cancel classes would be made in close coordination with our community partners, weather service, and
emergency management officials. If forecast conditions for the campus and surrounding community include the threat of severe winds, flooding rains, or a widespread tornado outbreak, then classes may be cancelled. Check the Alerts Page for the current and forecasted operational status of the university.

**Will FSU give me enough time to get home before a hurricane?**
The decision to cancel classes is made with the life safety of those on campus in mind, while minimizing disruption to campus operations as much as possible. The timing of any cancellation notice may or may not allow sufficient time for you to travel safety to other unimpacted regions. Should you elect to leave early before a storm, consult with your instructors, supervisor, or Dean's office for more information about having the absence excused.

**Would FSU evacuate residence halls for a hurricane?**
The greatest threat to the safety of residence halls is breaking glass from doors and windows due to high winds and debris. Significant structural damage (foundation, walls, roof) is not expected. As such, any student that elects to stay in a residence hall during a hurricane will be relocated by Housing staff into the interior corridors, hallways, stairwells, or any other room without windows.

**Would FSU open a shelter on campus for a hurricane?**
The Florida State University has a commitment to protect the life safety of all of its students, faculty, staff and their immediate families, regardless if they live on campus or not. In agreement with Leon County Emergency Management, should there be a need, FSU will establish a shelter on campus for its constituents in order to alleviate the demand and burden on public shelters in the community. Access to an on-campus shelter will be restricted to current students, faculty, staff and their immediate families. You will be required to present your FSUCard or other identification to enter. A specific announcement will be made to the FSU community at the time that the decision to open an on-campus shelter is made. This decision is dependent upon a number of variables and will be made in close coordination with Leon County Emergency Management. The opening of an on-campus shelter is not a guarantee and should not be your first option. Shelters are a lifeboat, not a cruise ship. Do not expect them to be comfortable or offer any amenities beyond some floor space.

**How will I know it is safe enough to return to campus or that classes have resumed?**
Florida State University will continuously update the Alerts Page throughout the emergency with the latest information. An FSU Alert emergency notification message may be sent via E-mail or SMS text when any major announcements, such as campus reopening, are made.
Extreme Heat: About | FSU Emergency Management

Basic Information

When does heat become dangerous in Florida?
Florida is naturally a hot location. It is not uncommon for us to experience temperatures in the mid-to-high 90's during our summers. However, it is rare for us to exceed 100°F in Tallahassee. The actual air temperature isn't the only concern. When you add high humidity levels into the equation, we get Heat Index temperatures that make it feel like 108°F or more. That's when things get real dangerous.

How hot does it get in Tallahassee?
Tallahassee, on average, will start to break 90°F for daily high temperatures by late-May or early-June and stay there until mid-to-late September. It is quite normal to see daily high temperatures up to about 95-98 degrees. When we start to push 100°F, then we're in for a "real hot" day by local standards. The all-time record high in Tallahassee is 105°F.

How often does Tallahassee see extreme temperatures?
While Heat Advisories can occur almost every year during the summer, we average an Excessive Heat Warning about once every 3-5 years.

What does Heat Index mean? How can it feel hotter than it actually is?
As if the actual air temperature doesn't get hot enough by itself, the effect of adding humidity into the mix makes it feel a whole lot hotter on the human skin. We will often refer to this as the "feels like" or "apparent temperature." The higher humidity levels, the hotter it feels above actual air temperature.

Learn More>>

What are the hazards of excessive heat?
During extremely hot and humid weather the body's ability to cool itself is affected. When the body heats too rapidly to cool itself properly, or when too much fluid or salt is lost through dehydration or sweating, body temperature rises and heat-related illnesses, including dehydration and hyperthermia may develop.

Learn More>>

Who is most at risk for heat-related illness?
Infants and children up to four years of age; people 65 years of age or older; people who are overweight; people who overexert during work or exercise; people who are ill or on certain medications. Don't forget pets which are unacclimated to outdoor weather.

Can leaving a child or pet in a parked vehicle be deadly?
Absolutely! Each year, dozens of children and untold numbers of pets left in parked vehicles die from hyperthermia. Hyperthermia is an acute condition that occurs when the body absorbs more heat than it can handle. Hyperthermia can occur even on a mild day. Studies have shown that the temperature inside a parked vehicle can rapidly rise to a dangerous level for children, pets and even adults. Leaving the
windows slightly open does not significantly decrease the heating rate. The effects can be more severe on children because their bodies warm at a faster rate than adults. Learn More>>

Definitions & Terms

Excessive Heat Outlook
is issued when the potential exists for an excessive heat event in the next 3-7 days. An Outlook provides information to those who need considerable lead time to prepare for the event, such as public utility staff, emergency managers and public health officials. This product is issued by the Climate Prediction Center and can be found here.

Excessive Heat Watch
is issued when conditions are favorable for an excessive heat event in the next 24 to 72 hours. A Watch is used when the risk of a heat wave has increased but its occurrence and timing is still uncertain. A Watch provides enough lead time so that those who need to prepare can do so, such as cities officials who have excessive heat event mitigation plans. The National Weather Service office in Tallahassee will issue this product if the heat index might reach or exceed 113°F.

Heat Advisory
is issued when an excessive heat event is expected in the next 24 hours. This products are issued when an excessive heat event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring. An advisory is for less serious conditions that cause significant discomfort or inconvenience and, if caution is not taken, could lead to a threat to life. The National Weather Service office in Tallahassee will issue this product if the heat index might reach 108-112°F.

Excessive Heat Warning
is issued when an excessive heat event is expected in the next 24 hours. A warning is issued when an excessive heat event is occurring, is imminent, or has a very high probability of occurring. The warning is used for conditions posing a threat to life. The National Weather Service office in Tallahassee will issue this product if the heat index is expected to reach or exceed 113°F.

History

What is the record high temperature for Tallahassee?
The all-time record high in Tallahassee was set on June 15, 2011 at 105°F.

What are the highest heat index values observed in Tallahassee?
During the summer of 2010, there were several days when Tallahassee observed heat index values of 115 to 118°F.

When was the last Excessive Heat Warning issued for Tallahassee?
Friday, August 22, 2014 for anticipated temperatures of 100-103°F and heat indices of 110-114°F. Prior to that, August 1, 2010.

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/heat/about
Heat: Analysis | FSU Emergency Management

Risk Assessment
What is the historical probability of occurrence of a Heat Advisory at FSU?
Very Likely. Weather conditions that warrant the issuance of a Heat Advisory occur at least once per year during the summer, May - September.

What is the historical probability of occurrence of an Excessive Heat Warning at FSU?
Likely. Weather conditions that warrant the issuance of an Excessive Heat Warning occur on average once every 3 to 5 year in Tallahassee.

Are there enhanced environmental conditions that enhance to the risk?
Yes - Seasonal. The greatest chance of experiencing extreme heat at Florida State University occurs during the summer months of May through September.

Are there any mitigating factors in place that reduce the risk?
No - Unmitigated.

Consequence Analysis
What is the threat to public health?
None to Death. Extreme heat conditions can have significant to fatal impacts upon human health. There are a number of factors which contribute to an individual’s risk for heat-related illness including: age, obesity, illness, medication, temperature, humidity level, time spent in the heat, hydration level, exposure to direct sunlight, and others. The signs and symptoms of heat-related illness are progressively worse. If one fails to heed the signs and seek immediate medical attention, hyperthermia and death may result.

What is the threat to responder health?
None to Death. Extreme heat conditions can have significant to fatal impacts upon human health. There are a number of factors which contribute to an individual’s risk for heat-related illness including: age, obesity, illness, medication, temperature, humidity level, time spent in the heat, hydration level, exposure to direct sunlight, and others. The signs and symptoms of heat-related illness are progressively worse. If one fails to heed the signs and seek immediate medical attention, hyperthermia and death may result. First responders are at higher risk if they are physically exerting themselves or wear bulky personal protective equipment.

What is the threat for structural damage?
None to aggravation of pre-existing condition.

What is the threat for property (grounds) damage?
None to aggravation of pre-existing condition. An extended duration of excessive heat could distress landscaping.
What is the threat for infrastructure damage?
None to Minor. The greatest threat for infrastructure damage is through the loss of electrical power generating capacity. During times of excessive heat, air conditioning units work extra hard and demand a lot more electricity. Brownouts and blackouts are possible when electricity demand exceeds the utility’s ability to generate it.

What is the threat for service delivery impacts?
None to Minor. Outdoor activities, including athletic, recreation, or maintenance work, may need to be rescheduled for earlier or later in the day to avoid peak temperatures. In the event of a loss of electrical power or chilled water capacity, the lack of climate control in a building may necessitate evacuation and closure.

What is the threat for environmental impacts?
None to aggravation of pre-existing condition.

What is the threat for economic / financial impacts?
None to negligible. Increased utility costs.

What is the threat for impacts upon regulatory / contractual obligations?
None to negligible.

What is the threat for an impact upon the reputation of the institution or public confidence?
None to Minor. Should excessive heat result in mass illness or fatalities on campus, the University may be accused of failing to properly prepare for or respond to the threat; thus public confidence in the institution could suffer. This can be especially true if there is any perceived cover-up, unethical or illegal activities.
Heat: Before | FSU Emergency Management

Plan Ahead
Keep an eye on weather forecasts.
Anytime you are planning to spend time outdoors, be sure to check your local weather forecast beforehand. Look out for any advisories, watches or warnings. Pay close attention to forecast temperatures over 95°F or heat index values over 103°F.

Get in shape.
One of the biggest personal factors you can control in being prepared for hot weather is to get into shape. Obese and out-of-shape people are at a higher risk for heat-related illness. Learn more from FSU Campus Recreation on ways you can get into shape.

Schedule outdoor activities to avoid peak temperatures.
Dangerous heat conditions will most likely occur after Noon and before 8PM. Planning your outdoor activity for early mornings or late evenings is the best way to avoid the peak temperatures.

Get out of the sun. Find some shade.
In planning any outdoor activity, be sure to have ample access to shade, whether natural or man-made (e.g. pitch a tent). Direct sunlight will certainly make things a lot hotter and result in faster onset of heat-related illnesses. Otherwise, take advantage of air conditioning and stay indoors.

Make sure you have plenty of cool fluids on hand.
Staying well-hydrated is crucial to avoiding heat-related illness. Drink more water than usual; 2 to 4 cups every hour while working or exercising outside. Don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink more fluids. Avoid alcohol or drinks containing high amounts of sugar or caffeine. Remind others to drink enough water. Ice is always a nice treat.

Prepare some opportunities to get wet.
External cooling by wetting is a good way to cool off as well. If appropriate, plan for opportunities to get wet: swimming, misting fans, water guns, buckets of water, lawn sprinklers.

Dress the part.
Plan your wardrobe accordingly to include lightweight and light-colored clothing.

Don't forget the pets!
Make sure that you have a plan for pets as well. Pets who are used to being indoors and are not acclimated to the heat will be most at risk. Pets do not sweat and are unable to cool off as easily as humans.
Heat: During | FSU Emergency Management

Stay Cool Keep your body temperature cool to avoid heat-related illness

- Stay in air-conditioned buildings as much as possible. Man invented air conditioning for a reason, enjoy it! If you don't have air-conditioning or it's not working well, consider going somewhere else that does.
- Do not rely on a fan as your primary cooling device.
- Avoid direct sunlight.
- Take cool showers or baths.
- Check on those most at-risk twice a day.

Stay Hydrated Because your body loses fluids through sweat, you can become dehydrated during times of extreme heat

- Drink more water than usual
- Don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink more fluids
- Drink from two to four cups of water every hour while working or exercising outside
- Avoid alcohol or liquids containing high amounts of sugar or caffeine
- Remind others to drink enough water

Stay Informed Stay updated on local weather forecasts so you can plan activities safely when it's hot outside

- Follow Keep FSU Safe on social media
- Check current weather conditions on campus and in town
- Learn to recognize the signs and symptoms of heat-related illness
Heat: First Aid | FSU Emergency Management

Sunburn Symptoms
Skin redness and pain, possible swelling, blisters, fever, headaches.

First Aid
Take a shower, using soap, to remove oils that may block pores preventing the body from cooling naturally. If blisters occur, apply dry, sterile dressings and get medical attention.

Heat Cramps Symptoms
Painful spasms usually in leg and abdominal muscles. Heavy sweating.

First Aid
Firm pressure on cramping muscles or gentle massage to relieve spasm. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue.

Heat Exhaustion Symptoms
Heavy sweating; weakness; cold, pale and clammy skin. Fast, weak pulse. Nausea or vomiting. Fainting.

First Aid
Get victim to lie down in a cool place. Loosen clothing. Apply cool, wet cloths to as much of the body as possible. Fan the victim or place in front of an air conditioning vent. Give sips of water. If nausea occurs, discontinue. If vomiting occurs, seek immediate medical attention.

Heat Stroke Symptoms
High body temperature (103°F+). Hot, red, dry or moist skin. Rapid, strong pulse. Possible unconsciousness. Victim will likely not sweat.

First Aid
Heat stroke is a severe medical emergency. Call 9-1-1 and get the victim to a hospital immediately. Delay can be fatal. Move victim to a cooler environment. Try a cool bath or sponging to reduce body temperature. Remove clothing. Use fans and/or air conditioners. Do NOT give fluids.
Lightning | FSU Emergency Management

WHAT IS LIGHTNING?
Lightning is the atmospheric discharge of electricity. It can occur within clouds, between clouds, and even from clouds to clear air. However, the most dangerous is cloud-to-ground lightning, which can strike people, animals, trees, towers and buildings. Lightning occurs when electricity occurs between areas of opposite electrical charge. When the attraction between positive and negative charges becomes strong enough to overcome the air’s resistance, lightning flashes.

WHY IS LIGHTNING DANGEROUS?
Simply put, a person can be killed or seriously injured if lightning strikes them or an object in close contact to them. Even people indoors have been killed by lightning travelling through wires and pipes. An average of 10 people in Florida are killed by lightning strikes annually and 40 are seriously injured. Many of the survivors suffer severe lifelong disabilities.

WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF LIGHTNING STRIKES?
- Direct Strike: A bolt of lightning strikes you directly, carrying 30,000 amps, 100-million volts, and temperature potential of 50,000 degrees Fehrenheit. Needless to say, very few people survive a direct strike.
- Contact Voltage: You are touching an object which is struck by lightning. Examples include direct contact with building surfaces, towers, poles, vehicle surfaces, wiring, and plumbing.
- Side Flash: You are struck by a bolt of lightning that arcs to you from an object that was struck, creating a path of least resistance.
- Step Voltage / Ground Streamers: Lightning strikes within 100 feet of you and the voltage jumps across the ground, wet pavement, pools of water, or other electrical pathways to touch you as well.

The vast majority of lightning casualties are from the indirect effects of contact voltage, side flash, and step voltage or ground streamers; NOT direct strikes.
Photo Credit: weather.com

WHO GETS STRUCK THE MOST?

Of those killed by lightning in Florida:

- 98% were outdoors.
- 89% were male.
- 30% were age 10-19.
- 20% were age 20-29.
- 25% were standing under a tree.
- 25% occurred on or near water.

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/lightning
HOW BAD IS LIGHTNING IN FLORIDA?
Of the 50 United States, Florida is the lightning capital. While the most frequent lightning strikes occur in the Tampa Bay area, the chance of being struck by lightning in Florida is 1 in 3,000 over the course of a lifetime. Statistically, that means 20 Seminoles walking on campus today will be struck by lightning at some point in their life, if they stay in Florida. Florida accounts for 16% of the average annual fatalities in the United States.

WHAT CAN I DO TO REDUCE MY CHANCES?
Clearly, moving indoors offers the best protection from lightning. The best structure is a large, fully enclosed building that has electrical wiring and plumbing. Small, light, or open-air structures such as picnic shelters, sheds, car ports, garages, golf shelters, tents, greenhouses, and baseball dugouts are NOT considered safe buildings. Once inside, you want to avoid using any electrical device or taking a shower or bath, as lightning does travel through wiring and pipes. This includes electrical, telephone, cable, internet, and water. Stay away from doors and windows.

WHAT IF I AM STUCK OUTDOORS?
If you cannot find a structure to seek shelter in, the next best thing is a vehicle. The current from the bolt travels through the metal and jumps to the ground from the wheel, protecting the occupants. Avoid contact with the outside surfaces of the vehicle. Otherwise, this is your last resort: Avoid tall, isolated objects such as trees, lights, towers, poles. Lightning typically strikes the tallest object. Avoid metal objects such as fences, poles, umbrellas, and golf clubs. Crouch down (do not lay down or sit) in the lowest point that is not likely to flood or pond up in the rain.

HOW FAR AWAY CAN LIGHTNING REACH?
Lightning can strike as far as 10 miles, and in some extreme cases up to 20 miles, from the area where it is raining. That is about the distance you can hear thunder. If you can hear thunder, you are within striking distance. Seek shelter immediately. This also means that you can be struck by lightning even if the sky is perfectly blue and clear around you. No place outside is safe when thunderstorms are in the area!

WHEN IS LIGHTNING SEASON?
Lightning can occur year-round in Florida, but is more typical during the spring, summer, and fall. Spring and fall thunderstorms are generally associated with the passing of weather fronts. These are easily forecasted and ample warning is provided. However, summertime thunderstorms are often referred to as "popcorn" storms as they can form right on top of you with little to no warning. The first bolt of lightning from a pop-up thunderstorm could be the killer.

WHEN SHOULD WE SEEK SHELTER?
The National Weather Service promotes "When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!" and the 30-30 Rule in seeking safe shelter. The 30-30 Rule states: When you see lightning, count until you hear thunder. If this time is 30 seconds or less, go immediately to a safer place.
HOW LONG DO WE NEED TO HIDE FOR?
The second part of the 30-30 Rule states: As the storm passes, wait 30 minutes or more after hearing the last clap of thunder before leaving your shelter. Here's a helpful way to remember: "Half an hour since thunder roars, now okay to go outdoors!"

IS AN 'FSU ALERT' ISSUED FOR LIGHTNING?
No, we do not issue FSU ALERT emergency alert messages for most cases of lightning. Lightning occurs so frequently in Florida, especially during the summer, that most people would become desensitized to the repeated alerts. However, we will issue an FSU ALERT if lightning is occurring within 8 miles of campus when there is a known large congregation of people outdoors (such as athletic events, tailgating, festivals, fairs, ice cream socials, etc). FSU ALERT messages are always issued if a thunderstorm reaches severe limits: winds in excess of 60MPH or hail larger than 1-inch in diameter.

DOES FSU HAVE A LIGHTNING DETECTION SYSTEM?
Yes. FSU Emergency Management and FSU Police have access to lightning detection systems for campus. If there are any known special events with large populations (1000+), FSUEM or FSUPD will alert the event managers of lightning advisories and warnings. Also, certain departments on campus deemed to be at higher risk, such as Athletics, Campus Recreation, Don Veller Golf Course and Oglesby Union, have lightning monitoring systems. The systems alert staff who in turn will alert users of their facilities. Each facility may have different policies about warning ranges, evacuation procedures, and all-clear timing based upon their logistical needs.

NCAA REGULATIONS:
The NCAA has established Guideline 1d (HERE) for Lightning Safety. Based on these guidelines, FSU Athletics uses a lightning detection service for outdoor athletic events. If cloud-to-ground lightning is detected within a 15-mile radius of an athletic facility, a Lightning Advisory is issued. Personnel are alerted and initial preparedness activities are taken. If the system detects lightning within 8-miles of the facility, all play or practice is suspended and all persons (players, coaches, officials, and fans) are directed to seek shelter. Athletic activities are not resumed until at least 30 minutes after the last cloud-to-ground lightning is detected within the 15-mile radius.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION - STORM SPEED: The NCAA rule about 8 and 15-mile ranges is based upon traveling thunderstorms such as those associated with with frontal passages. These storms are more predictable and easier to track. Arrival time can be estimated by the forward movement of the storm. Make sure ample time is available to complete the logistical requirements for clearing the play field and spectator seating. The larger the crowd, the more time you need to evacuate.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION - SUMMERTIME 'POPCORN' THUNDERSTORMS: The NCAA rule about 8 and 15-mile ranges is based upon traveling thunderstorms such as those associated with with frontal passages. During the summertime in Florida, our thunderstorms tend to form right on top of us. As such, we have very little time to detect and warn of a lightning strike until it has already happened. We cannot
see them coming on radar as they are forming right above us. These storms tend to travel little and rain themselves out within the same area that they formed. However, use caution because a new storm may be forming nearby or in the same location a little later in the day.

LIGHTNING MAP - Courtesy ©Accuweather
Winter Weather | FSU Emergency Management

IT'S FLORIDA! HOW CAN IT BE COLD?: You're in NORTH Florida... Average temperatures in Tallahassee during the winter months range from the low 40s to the mid 60s. Temperatures routinely drop below freezing (32°F). The record lows in Tallahassee for November - March range from 20°F to an all-time low of -2°F. Panama City is only a couple degrees warmer on average than Tallahassee.

IS COLD WEATHER DANGEROUS?: YES. During the harsh winter of 1989-1990, 26 Floridians died of hypothermia. Because of normally mild temperatures, Florida homes often lack adequate heating and insulation and the Florida outdoor lifestyle leads to danger for those not prepared. In addition to the actual temperature, when the wind blows, a wind chill (the temperature that it feels like) is experienced on exposed skin. Also cold weather has been known to cause problems with electric supply. A blackout could result in near-freezing temperatures inside your house.

SNOW IN TALLAHASSEE!?: Yes! It has snowed in Florida many times. In Tallahassee, measurable snow has not fallen since 1989, so we are overdue. For more information about the history and chance of snow in Tallahassee, go HERE.

HOW WILL I KNOW OF BAD WINTER WEATHER?: When freezing temperatures, precipitation or low wind chills are expected, the National Weather Service will issue warnings or advisories.

WHAT IS WIND CHILL?: The wind chill is the cooling effect due to the combination of temperature and wind. It is expressed as the loss of body heat.

HOW IS WIND CHILL CALCULATED?: Use the following handy chart. Go across the top to the current temperature, then down to the current wind speed, to calculate the current wind chill. So, for example, a 30°F temperature, with a 20 mph wind, can feel like 17°F.

Temperature (F)

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Temperature (F)</th>
<th>Calm</th>
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<th>15</th>
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<td>-17</td>
<td>-24</td>
<td>-31</td>
<td>-37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wind

| Wind | 30 | 28 | 22 | 15 | 8  | 1  | -5 | -12| -19| -26| -33| -39 |
WHAT ARE THE 5 P's OF COLD WEATHER PREPAREDNESS?

- **People:** Prolonged exposure to cold temperatures, even in Florida, runs the risk of hypothermia. This is especially true if you are wet, including from sweating.
- **Plants:** The hard freeze temperatures predicted can easily kill outdoor plants which are not cold tolerant. Bring them indoors, if possible, or cover them up.
- **Pets:** Just like you, pets in Florida are not accustomed or equipped (thin undercoat) to these temperatures. Please bring them indoors.
- **Pipes:** Exposed pipes run the risk of freezing and bursting. This may result in tremendous water loss and extremely dangerous ice conditions on walkways and roadways. Same is true for irrigation systems; do not turn sidewalks into ice rinks.
- **Practice Fire Safety:** As tempting as it is to cozy up to a warm fire or space heater, there are specific things you must do to prevent a fire.

HOW CAN YOU PREPARE FOR COLD WEATHER?

- Stay indoors and use safe heating sources.
- Be aware of the fire danger from space heaters and candles, keep such devices away from all flammable materials such as curtains and furniture, and install recommended smoke detectors.
- Indoors, do not use charcoal or other fuel-burning devices, such as grills that produce carbon monoxide. Install at least one carbon monoxide detector per floor in your home.
- Have your fireplace chimney or wood stove inspected and cleaned regularly by a certified specialist. Clear the area around the hearth of debris, decorations, and flammable materials.
- Outdoors, stay dry and in wind protected areas.
- Wear multiple layers of loose-fitting, warm clothing.
- Drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluids and eat high-caloric foods.
- Keep a blanket in your vehicle should you get stuck on the road or your vehicle breaks down.

WHAT ABOUT FIRE SAFETY DURING COLD WEATHER?

- Many people become alarmed on campus and at home the first time heaters are turned on because
months of dust collection on the heat strips and coils burns off, emitting a burning smell and possibly even tripping fire alarms. This is a normal occurrence.

- Fireplace and wood stove users should have their chimneys inspected and cleaned if they have not done so in recent years, especially if you burn wood. Click here for more information.

- Electric or Kerosene Space heaters are NOT allowed for use on campus. For home… Buy only heaters evaluated by a nationally recognized laboratory, such as Underwriters Laboratories (UL). Check to make sure it has a thermostat control mechanism, and will switch off automatically if the heater falls over. Heaters are not dryers or tables; don’t dry clothes or store objects on top of your heater. Space heaters need space; keep combustibles at least three feet away from each heater. Always unplug your electric space heater when not in use. Click here for more information.

- Cold temperatures bring the popular use of candles. Candle use on campus requires approval from EH&S and the Fire Marshall. Click here For information about candle safety.
Thunderstorms | FSU Emergency Management

There are four main hazards associated with thunderstorms:

- Lightning
- Flooding
- Hail
- Winds

WHAT IS A THUNDERSTORM?
By its simplest definition, a thunderstorm is a rain shower that is accompanied with lightning and thunder.

HOW OFTEN DOES FSU GET THUNDERSTORMS?
The FSU Main Campus in Tallahassee averages 80 days of thunderstorms per year, primarily during the summer months of June, July, and August when thunderstorms are almost a daily occurrence. Thunderstorms also occur in the spring and fall in association with passage of weather fronts.

HOW CAN A THUNDERSTORM BE DANGEROUS?
First and foremost, the biggest threat from any thunderstorm is lightning. However, another common characteristic of a thunderstorm is torrential downpours that can obscure visibility, especially when driving at fast speeds, and result in flooding.

WHEN IS A THUNDERSTORM CONSIDERED 'SEVERE'?
By National Weather Service definition, a thunderstorm is considered "severe" when one or more of the following conditions exists:

- Winds or wind gusts in excess of 58mph.
- Hail greater than 1-inch in diameter.
- Potential for tornado development.

HOW OFTEN DOES FSU GET SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS?
The FSU Main Campus in Tallahassee averages 15 severe thunderstorm warnings per year.

WHAT KIND OF DAMAGE CAN THUNDERSTORM WINDS DO?
Winds of 58mph to 85mph associated with most severe thunderstorms can peel shingles off some roofs; damage gutters, siding or other lightweight structures like carports and sheds; break tree branches; and push over shallow-rooted trees. Falling trees and branches often cut utility lines. Extremely isolated microbursts of straight-lined winds can occasionally exceed 85mph, up to 110mph, which can severely strip roofs; overturn or destroy mobile homes; break doors and windows; and topple numerous trees.

WHAT ARE SOME RECENT EXAMPLES OF THUNDERSTORM WIND DAMAGE?

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/thunderstorms
On April 2, 2009, a straight-line thunderstorm wind gust of about 75mph toppled close to two hundred trees at the Seminole Golf Course and Alumni Village, causing over $250,000 in damage. On July 2, 2009, an estimated 70 to 85-mph thunderstorm wind gust toppled trees and tore sections of roof off of the Alltel store on South Monroe Street, Toys-R-Us store on Apalachee Parkway, and blew off some roof-top air conditioning units.

WHAT KIND OF DAMAGE CAN HAIL DO?

Hail 3/4" or greater is the size of a penny or greater. Surely, if these were to ping you in the head, it would hurt! They can also ding and dent vehicles, break windows, and damage roof shingles and tiles. Obviously, the bigger the hail stone, the greater the damage potential. Hailstones associated with Tallahassee area thunderstorms rarely exceed 1-inch, or about the size of a quarter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hail Size Comparisons</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pea</td>
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<td>Nickel</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quarter</td>
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<td>Ping-pong ball</td>
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<td>Golf ball</td>
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<td>Chicken egg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennis ball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grapefruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softball</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Flooding | FSU Emergency Management

Turn Around! Don't Drown!

Each year, more deaths occur due to flooding than from any other storm related hazard. Why? The main reason is people underestimate the force and power of water. Many of the deaths occur in automobiles as they are swept downstream. Of these drownings, many are preventable, but too many people continue to drive around the barriers that warn them that the road is flooded. Water over a roadway makes it extremely difficult to see how deep it really is and what's underneath. Many people will drive off the road into drainage ditches or retention ponds. In other places, moving water may have created erosion or sinkholes that weren't there before. It's simply not worth the risk.

Most recently, flash flooding occurred on the campus of Florida State University on January 21, 2010. Dozens of vehicles were either damaged or destroyed and one person was injured. Flash flooding does occur on campus and throughout the Tallahassee community. (Click here to see photos from the 1/21/10 event.)

In 2001, during Tropical Storm Allison, a vehicle drove into floodwaters at the intersection of Dewey Street and Virginia Street, near Degraff Hall. The vehicle floated and was swept into a nearby stormwater culvert. A female passenger managed to escape and was rescued downstream near the Leach Center. However, the driver died and his body was recovered miles downstream. Enhancements have been made to prevent a vehicle or person from being swept into the drain, but flooding in this area is likely to occur again on our campus some day.

Whether driving or walking, if you come to a flooded road, Turn Around Don't Drown. You will not know the depth of the water nor will you know the condition of the road under the water.

Types of Flooding
Flooding can take many different forms:

- **Flash Flooding** - The term "flash" means that the flooding can occur rapidly with little to no warning. In most cases, the flood zones on campus and throughout Tallahassee are prone to flash flooding. This
means that by the time we detect the water rising, it will rise so rapidly that it is too late to do anything about it. Often as quickly as the water rises, it will dissipate. Never attempt to walk or drive through flash flood waters. Just a few inches of fast moving water can wipe you off your feet or sweep you car off the road. Don't risk your life to try and save your car. It's just not worth the risk. That is what insurance is for.

- **Urban and Small Stream Flooding** - This terminology relates closely with flash flooding. Urban areas, such as FSU's campus and the city of Tallahassee, have been so highly developed that there is little opportunity for rainfall to soak into the ground. Instead, all the rainfall flows into stormwater systems, drainage ditches, canals and small streams. When those stormwater systems become overwhelmed, localized flooding can occur. There are numerous places throughout Tallahassee that are notorious for urban flooding during most heavy downpours. "Sheet Flow" can occur in places that you might think are high and dry. Areas that are not even listed in a designated flood zone, or no where near a drainage path can still have standing water simply because the water is coming down so fast, it has no where to go.

- **Areal Flooding** - "Areal" flooding is terminology used by the National Weather Service to indicate the potential for flooding in typically low-lying areas and open fields. This is very similar to urban flooding except that it typically occurs in more rural areas. The concept it the same though: there's simply too much rain for the surface to absorb or drain properly, resulting in areas of standing water.

- **Riverine Flooding** - This refers to flooding which occurs along major streams and rivers. No FSU properties reside in a riverine flood basin, however the region has many rivers including the Ochlockonee, St. Marks, Wakulla, Aucilla, and Apalachicola Rivers. In some cases, river flooding can close major roadways into Tallahassee. For example, past flooding along the Suwannee Rivers has closed Interstate 10, US-90, US-19 and other major roads blocking access to and from the Florida Peninsula.

For more information about North Florida river flooding, click [here](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/flooding).

- **Coastal Flooding** - For properties right along the Gulf of Mexico, Atlantic Ocean, and their bays, coastal flooding can occur. This includes at FSU's Panama City campus, Coastal and Marine Laboratory, and Ringling Museum of Art (Sarasota). Although typically associated with tropical storms and hurricanes, coastal flooding can occur at these locations due to other non-tropical storm systems. For more information about coastal flood zones at these FSU facilities, visit our [Tropical Storm & Hurricane page](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/flooding).

**Flood Zones on the FSU Campus**

Florida State University has a number of areas on campus that are historically prone to flooding. Numerous drainage improvement projects have been made over recent years. Tropical Storm Fay 2008 and Spring Storms of 2009 have put these new systems to the test with promising results. However,
regional storm water managers caution that the improvement projects are designed to accommodate new growth throughout the city. Eventually, we will build ourselves back into a situation where we are using the maximum capacity of the improved system. One day, under the right conditions, we are likely to once again exceed it. These new systems are not guaranteed to completely prevent flooding on campus. As such, individuals are recommended to avoid these areas when the threat of flash flooding exists. It can occur rapidly and without warning or ample time to react.

Also, keep in mind that temporary conditions, such as clogged storm drains or erosion from nearby construction sites, may cause localized flooding that is unpredictable and not indicated on any map.

Parking in any campus lot is always at the owner's own risk. Florida State University is not liable for any damages to vehicles.

MAIN CAMPUS:
UNIVERSITY CENTER - DOAK CAMPBELL STADIUM - LAKE BRADFORD RD - GAINES ST:
DEGRAFF HALL - VIRGINIA STREET - DEWEY ST:
Flood Zones Off Campus
Many areas in Tallahassee, Leon County, and neighboring counties are flood zones. To check your Leon County residence for flood threats, visit: Tallahassee Leon County GIS.

Flood Preparedness & Response

Flood Insurance
If you own your property, did you know that your homeowners insurance policy does NOT cover flooding? You need to obtain a separate flood insurance policy.

If you rent, your landlord's flood insurance policy (if he even has one) does NOT cover your personal contents. So, if you have a lot of expensive stuff, like electronics (TV, gaming system, stereo, smartphone, tablet, laptop, desktop, amplifier, etc.), then you really should consider getting a contents-only flood insurance policy. It can cost as little at 15 cents per day. Become FloodSmart, learn more about flood insurance here.

Moving Flood Water
During flooding, the greatest threat comes from moving water. The deeper the moving water, the greater
the threat. People should avoid driving in moving water, regardless of the size of their vehicle.

Pooling Flood Water
Heavy rain causes flood waters to rise and pool on streets and throughout neighborhoods. In these situations, be aware of the following:

- Road surfaces become obscured, and drivers can unknowingly steer into a deep body of water, such as a canal or pond.

- Electricity from streetlights and power poles may be conducted through standing water, causing a deadly shock to anyone coming in contact with it.

- Children playing in contaminated standing water can become sick or be bitten by snakes or floating insects.

- People coming into contact with floodwater should thoroughly rinse any exposed body parts with soap and clean water.

Contaminated Water Supply
Drinking contaminated water may cause illness. You cannot assume that the water in the hurricane-affected area is safe to drink. Listen to local announcements on safety of the water supply.

If your public water system lost pressure, a boil water notice will likely be issued for your area.

People in these areas should take precautions to avoid contaminated water, especially individuals with private wells. If your well is in a flooded area, your water may contain disease-causing organisms and may not be safe to drink.

The Florida Department of Health (DOH) recommends one of the following:

- Boil the water before drinking, holding it at a rolling boil for one minute.

- Disinfect it by adding 8 drops (about 1/8 tsp – this would form a puddle about the size of a dime) of unscented household bleach per gallon of water and then let it stand for 30 minutes. If the water is cloudy after 30 minutes, repeat the procedure.

- Use only bottled water for mixing baby formula.

After the flooding subsides:
- Disinfect your well using the procedures available from your local health department or provided on the DOH website here.

- Have your water tested by your local health department or by a laboratory certified by the state to do drinking water analyses.
Contaminated Food
Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with flood water. Discard any food without a waterproof container if there is any chance that it has come into contact with floodwater. Undamaged, commercially canned foods can be saved if you remove the labels thoroughly, wash the cans, and then disinfect them with a solution consisting of 1/4 cup of bleach per gallon of water for clean surfaces. Re-label your cans, including the expiration date, with a marker. Food containers with screw-caps, snap lids, and home canned foods should be discarded if they have come in contact with flood water because they cannot be disinfected.

Contaminated Items
Discard wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers. There is no way to safely clean them if they have come in contact with contaminated flood waters. Thoroughly wash metal pans, ceramic dishes, and utensils with soap and hot water and sanitize by boiling them in clean water or by immersing them for 15 minutes in a solution of 1/4 cup of household bleach per gallon of water.

Hygiene
Basic hygiene is very important during an emergency period. Always wash your hands with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected and cooled before eating, after toilet use, after participating in cleanup activities, and after handling articles contaminated by floodwater or sewage.

For more information, contact your local county health department or visit www.doh.state.fl.us or www.FloridaDisaster.org
Tornadoes | FSU Emergency Management

WHAT IS A TORNADO?: A tornado is a violent column of rotating air that comes down from a thunderstorm to reach the ground. Tornadoes usually last only a few minutes, but they can cause much damage as they travel along the ground. Some tornadoes can travel for many dozens of miles; other tornadoes may appear to skip above the ground for a few moments.

HOW OFTEN DOES FSU GET A THREAT OF TORNADOES? Most tornadoes in Florida occur in June, July and August. However, the strongest tornadoes in Florida usually occur in February, March and April. The Florida State University averages about 11 tornado watches and 3 tornado warnings per year.

HAS FSU EVER BEEN STRUCK BY A TORNADO? To the best of our knowledge, The Florida State University has never been directly impacted by a declared tornado. In April 2009, there was extensive damage at the Southwest Campus (Alumni Village, Golf Course, Morcomm Pool) area, but that was determined to be straight-line winds.

HOW BAD ARE THE TORNADOES AROUND HERE? When most people think about tornadoes, they imagine the large monsters that destroy pretty much everything in their path. If you think further, however, you'll remember that most of those occur in the Midwestern United States (Oklahoma, Kansas, etc.). Just like there are different categories to hurricanes, there are different sizes of tornadoes, ranked by the Enhanced-Fujita (EF) Scale. Most of the tornadoes we experience around here are EF-0 or EF-1. More rare, but possible, are EF-2 tornadoes. There have been 18 recorded tornado touchdowns (EF-0 to EF-2) in Leon County since 1945. Anything larger is extremely rare for this part of Florida, and none have occurred in Leon County.

WHAT IS THE ENHANCED-FUJITA SCALE? Originally developed in 1971 by Dr. T. Theodore Fujita at the University of Chicago and enhanced in 2007, the EF Scale is used to rate a tornado's wind speed by the amount of damage it creates. This scale should be used with caution because we still lack the technology to accurately measure tornado wind speeds. Also, the same amount of damage may occur due to different wind speeds because of other factors like how well-built a structure is, wind direction, wind duration, flying debris and other factors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>MPH</th>
<th>Typical Damage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EF-0</td>
<td>65-85</td>
<td>Gale Tornado: Some damage to chimneys. Tree branches broken off. Shallow rooted trees uprooted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF</td>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-2</td>
<td>111-135</td>
<td>Significant Tornado: Considerable damage. Roof torn off wood-frame houses. Large trees snapped or uprooted. Light-object projectiles generated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-3</td>
<td>136-165</td>
<td>Severe Tornado: Severe damage. Roofs and some walls torn off well-constructed homes. Most trees in forests uprooted. Heavy cars lifted off ground.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-4</td>
<td>166-200</td>
<td>Devastating Tornado: Well-constructed homes leveled. Structures blown off weak foundations. Cars thrown and large projectiles generated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EF-5</td>
<td>200+</td>
<td>Incredible Tornado: Strong frame houses lifted off foundations and disintegrated. Automobile-sized projectiles flying through the air in excess of 100mph. Trees debarked.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT’S THE WORST WE’D EXPECT AT FSU?**

Given the historical averages of tornadoes experienced in this area, we would consider a direct impact of an EF-2 tornado to campus our "worst case scenario." Given how well-built most of our campus is, with fully-reinforced masonry buildings, there is little threat of severe structural damage. We would not expect any total roof losses, collapsed walls, or other catastrophic damage that you might imagine. More likely is broken windows, a few loose bricks, small pieces of roofing loss, and broken tree limbs. Yes, even that much damage is certainly a dangerous situation and that is why we still take tornadoes seriously.

**HOW WILL WE KNOW A TORNADO WARNING IS ISSUED?**

The Florida State University will issue an FSU ALERT emergency notification message for ALL Tornado Warnings that include campus. This includes, but is not limited to: indoor and outdoor sirens, sms text messages, e-mails, blue lights, and more. Learn about the FSU ALERT Emergency Notification System [here](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/tornadoes).

**WHAT DO WE DO WHEN A TORNADO WARNING IS ISSUED?**

When a tornado warning is issued for campus, immediately seek shelter in the nearest well-constructed building, away from doors and windows. Try to reasonably place as many walls between you and the outside as possible. Reasonable does not necessarily mean burying yourself in a closet or under your bed. Seek more information. Go to [alerts.fsu.edu](https://alerts.fsu.edu) to obtain the details about the warning, including: estimated arrival time, direction, duration, and estimated expiration time. Once the warning has expired, and there is no evidence of damage, you may proceed with your normal course of business.

**WHAT IF A TORNADO ACTUALLY HITS CAMPUS?** If you see that damage has occurred, stay indoors until further instructions are provided. Follow-up FSU ALERT messages will be issued with more information. By all means, if there are any injuries, call 911 or FSU Police at 644-1234 immediately. Otherwise, keep these phone lines clear for real emergency calls. Report damages to Facilities by calling 644-2424.
Drought & Wildfire | FSU Emergency Management

CURRENT FLORIDA FIRES: The Florida Division of Forestry maintains the Fire Management Information System (FMIS) which is a mapping system that depicts all current fires, including prescribed burn locations.

HOW TO GAUGE DROUGHT: The U.S. Drought Monitor depicts long-term drought conditions.

HOW TO GAUGE WILDFIRE DANGER: Forestry and emergency officials use the Keetch-Byram drought index to show how susceptible the state is to short-term drought and burning. Anything yellow, orange, or red will burn readily. Purple is considered "desert-like" conditions.

SMOKE HEALTH ISSUES: Be aware that smoke from fires can cause breathing problems, especially those with pre-existing breathing impairments. Consult your physician for recommendations if you are having problems.

ROAD CLOSURES: Smoke from wildfires often impact roadways, including major interstates. When traveling, be aware of smoke conditions as visibility can reduce to nothing quickly. Be prepared for possible stopped vehicles, road closures and detours. For a current listing of road closures in Florida, go to FHP's website: here. Also try Florida’s free traffic conditions system by calling 511 or clicking here.

BURN BANS: When wildfire conditions are bad, individual counties may issue bans on outdoor burning. The Commissioner of the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services may also issue a statewide ban.

EVAPORATION: Keep in mind that an inch of rain can evaporate within 24 hours in the Florida sun and heat.

LIGHTNING: Cloud-to-ground lightning sparked by summertime thunderstorms is a major contributor to new fires.

CIGARETTES: The discarding of lit cigarettes or matches during drought conditions is dangerous, reckless, and even a crime.

PERSONAL PREPAREDNESS: There are steps FSU students and employees residing in suburban or rural settings can take to prepare for and minimize the risk of damage from wildfires at home.

For More Information:
HEALTH OFFICIALS ISSUE MOSQUITO-BORNE ILLNESSES ADVISORY

Tallahassee—The Florida Department of Health in Leon County (DOH-Leon) today advised residents there has been an increase in mosquito-borne disease activity in areas of Leon County. A human case of West Nile illness has been confirmed, and there is a heightened concern additional residents will become ill.

Several sentinel chickens have tested positive for West Nile Virus infection, which indicates the risk of transmission to humans has increased. Leon County Mosquito Control and DOH-Leon continue surveillance and prevention efforts.

DOH-Leon reminds residents and visitors to avoid being bitten by mosquitoes and to take basic precautions to help limit exposure.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, you should remember to “Drain and Cover”: DRAIN standing water to stop mosquitoes from multiplying.

- **Drain** water from garbage cans, house gutters, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rain water has collected.
- **Discard** old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren’t being used.
- **Empty and clean** birdbaths and pet’s water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- **Protect** boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don’t accumulate water.
- **Maintain** swimming pools in good condition and appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

**COVER** skin with clothing or repellent.

- **Clothing** - Wear shoes, socks and long pants and long-sleeves. This type of protection may be necessary for people who must work in areas where mosquitoes are present.
- **Repellent** - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing.
  - Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide), picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.
  - Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than 2 months old.

**Tips on Repellent Use**

- Always read label directions carefully for the approved usage before you apply a repellent. Some repellents are not suitable for children.
- Products with concentrations of up to 30 percent DEET are generally recommended. Other US
Environmental Protection Agency-approved repellents contain picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus or IR3535. These products are generally available at local pharmacies. Look for active ingredients to be listed on the product label.

- Apply insect repellent to exposed skin, or onto clothing, but not under clothing.
- In protecting children, read label instructions to be sure the repellent is age-appropriate. According to the CDC, mosquito repellents containing oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under the age of three years. DEET is not recommended on children younger than two months old.
- Avoid applying repellents to the hands of children. Adults should apply repellent first to their own hands and then transfer it to the child’s skin and clothing.
- If additional protection is necessary, apply a permethrin repellent directly to your clothing. Again, always follow the manufacturer’s directions.

**COVER doors and windows with screens to keep mosquitoes out of your house.**

- Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

For more information on what repellent is right for you, consider using the Environmental Protection Agency’s search tool to help you choose skin-applied repellent products:


The Department works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

Follow us on Twitter at @HealthyFla and on Facebook. For more information about the Florida Department of Health please visit [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov).

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

September 9, 2014
Contact: J. Page Jolly
Phone: 850-606-8190

[https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/mosquito](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/mosquito)
Ebola Virus | FSU Emergency Management

**Ebola Virus** Updated 10/28/14 2:00PM

To the Florida State University community:

The threat of Ebola has raised concerns throughout the world, including the United States and here in Florida.

At this time, there are **NO** identified cases (neither confirmed nor suspected) of Ebola in Florida. Based on a recent analysis of our university community, including students, faculty and staff, there is no reason to believe that Florida State University is at any immediate risk of Ebola.

It is important to emphasize that travel to an affected West African nation (Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia) within the last 21 days and/or direct exposure to someone who has travelled to one of these nations within the last 21 days is a key factor in determining your risk of contracting the Ebola virus. Florida State University does not operate any academic programs in the affected countries nor does Florida State currently have international students from the affected countries.

Many health conditions, including the flu, exhibit similar symptoms and can be confused with Ebola. The West African link is critical. A list of symptoms and more information can be found at our website: [emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola/about](http://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola/about).

If you suspect that you or someone you know may have been exposed to Ebola, you should contact your physician or health provider by telephone as soon as possible to assess your risk factors and receive guidance regarding further evaluation. Do not report to a medical facility without giving advance notice, if possible. In Tallahassee, both hospitals (Tallahassee Memorial Healthcare and Capital Regional Medical Center) are equipped and prepared for Ebola.

Florida State University is working in close coordination with campus and community partners to ensure we are prepared to keep FSU safe from this threat. For more information about Ebola and the university’s preparations, visit our emergency management website: [emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola](http://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola).

Florida State University strongly discourages travel to any country with a [CDC Level 3 Warning](https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/yellowbook/2018/level-3-risk-restrictions). Any official university travel to one of these countries (past 30 days, present or future) should be reported to the University’s Emergency Management Director, David Bujak (dbujak@fsu.edu, 850-644-7055) as soon as possible for guidance and monitoring. This added requirement is mandatory for any campus related or funded activities, such as study abroad, research/grant activity, and any other University-related travel.

Additionally, the Governor of Florida has issued an [Executive Order](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola) requiring all individuals arriving in Florida from Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea to be assessed, actively monitored, and/or quarantined by
the Florida Department of Health commensurate with their level of risk for 21 days. FSU requests that any university-affiliated individuals who traveled to the aforementioned countries on a personal basis and have been subjected to State monitoring or quarantine to voluntarily identify themselves to FSU Emergency Management prior to returning to campus.

The university will continue to monitor the Ebola threat and will take other appropriate actions as warranted.

Learn more:

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola
Current Status at FSU | FSU Emergency Management

Ebola and Florida State University

Updated 10/28/14 2:00PM

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The university will continue to monitor the Ebola threat and will take other appropriate actions as warranted.
Ebola 101: The Basics | FSU Emergency Management

The Basics about Ebola
What is Ebola?
Ebola, previously known as Ebola hemorrhagic fever, is a rare and deadly disease caused by infection with one of the Ebola virus strains. Ebola can cause disease in humans and nonhuman primates (monkeys, gorillas, and chimpanzees). Learn More >>

How is Ebola spread?
When an infection does occur in humans, the virus can be spread in several ways to others. Ebola is spread through direct contact (through broken skin or mucous membranes in, for example, the eyes, nose, or mouth) with blood or body fluids (including but not limited to urine, saliva, sweat, feces, vomit, breast milk, and semen) of a person who is sick with Ebola, objects (like needles and syringes) that have been contaminated with the virus, or by infected animals. Learn More >>

How is Ebola diagnosed?
Diagnosing Ebola in a person who has been infected for only a few days is difficult, because the early symptoms, such as fever, are nonspecific to Ebola infection and are seen often in patients with more commonly occurring diseases, such as malaria and typhoid fever. Learn More >>

What are the signs and symptoms of Ebola?
Fever (greater than 38.6°C or 101.5°F), severe headache, muscle pain, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, abdominal (stomach) pain, unexplained hemorrhage (bleeding or bruising)

When will symptoms appear after contracting the virus?
Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola, but the average is 8 to 10 days.

What is the risk of exposure?
All cases of human illness or death from Ebola have occurred in Africa (with the exception of several medical worker and laboratory contamination cases: one in England, one in Spain, two in the United States, and two in Russia). On 9/30/2014, CDC confirmed the first travel-associated case of Ebola to be diagnosed in the United States, who later died on 10/08/2014. On 10/23/2014, CDC confirmed the second travel-associated case of Ebola to be diagnosed in the United States, who was later declared Ebola-free on 11/01/2014. Learn More >>

Who is most at risk of exposure?
Healthcare providers caring for Ebola patients and the family and friends in close contact with Ebola patients are at the highest risk of getting sick because they may come in contact with the blood or body fluids of sick patients. People also can become sick with Ebola after coming in contact with infected wildlife. For example, in Africa, Ebola may spread as a result of handling bushmeat (wild animals hunted
for food) and contact with infected bats.

**How is Ebola treated?**

No FDA-approved vaccine or medicine (e.g., antiviral drug) is available for Ebola. Symptoms of Ebola are treated as they appear. Basic interventions, when used early, can significantly improve the chances of survival. [Learn More >>](https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola/about)

**What is the likelihood of recovery?**

Recovery from Ebola depends on good supportive clinical care and the patient's immune response. People who recover from Ebola infection develop antibodies that last for at least 10 years.
Could YOU have Ebola?

- Have you traveled within the last 21 days to Guinea, Liberia, or Sierra Leone, and/or touched a person with Ebola? Do you also have a fever?

IF SO:
- CALL your health care professional or local emergency room.
- You may be hospitalized and tested. If you test positive for Ebola, you will stay in the hospital and be kept safe in isolation for treatment.

Does SOMEONE YOU KNOW have Ebola?

- Did you touch someone with Ebola and active secretions (saliva, sweat, vomit, diarrhea or blood)?

IF SO:
- CALL your local county health department immediately.
- You may be asked to stay home and be monitored by health care professionals for a 21-day period.

Do you live in a COMMUNITY where a person is being treated for Ebola?

- Stay calm.
- People who have been exposed to the Ebola virus are at home and being monitored by health care professionals.
- Reduce your exposure to all viruses: wash your hands often with soap and water.

Do you work in a HEALTH CARE FACILITY treating a person with Ebola?

- Practice infection control guidelines.
- Follow warning signs posted outside of patient rooms.
- If caring for the patient:
  - Follow all instructions for donning and doffing personal protective equipment.
  - Wear water-impermeable protection from head to toe, to include: a gown, leg-high covers or boots, hat, face mask, face shield and double gloves.
  - No skin should be exposed.

Local county contact information can be found at FloridaHealth.gov.

If you have recently travelled, are currently travelling or plan to travel to West Africa: Updated 10/28/14 9:00AM

Florida State University requires that anyone travelling on official university-related business to a country

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola/WhatYouCanDo
with a [CDC Level 3 Travel Health Warning](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/health-warnings/level-3.html) (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea) or [CDC Level 2 Travel Health Alert for Ebola](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/health-alerts윗2.html) (Democratic Republic of Congo) must contact the FSU Emergency Management Director, David Bujak, at dbujak@fsu.edu or (850) 644-7055 for guidance and monitoring prior to departure.

Florida State University requests that anyone affiliated with the university (student, faculty, staff, visiting scholars, et al) who has travelled, is currently travelling in or plans to travel to a country with a [CDC Level 3 Travel Health Warning](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/health-warnings/level-3.html) (Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea) or [CDC Level 2 Travel Health Alert for Ebola](https://www.cdc.gov/travel/health-alerts윗2.html) (Democratic Republic of Congo) on a personal basis to contact the FSU Emergency Management Director, David Bujak, at dbujak@fsu.edu or (850) 644-7055 for guidance and monitoring prior to returning to campus.
If you have been to Sierra Leone, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, or Democratic Republic of Congo in the past month, there is a possibility that you may have been exposed to Ebola.

**What is Ebola?** Ebola is the cause of a viral hemorrhagic fever disease. Symptoms include: fever, headache, joint and muscle aches, weakness, diarrhea, vomiting, stomach pain, lack of appetite and abnormal bleeding. Symptoms may appear anywhere from 2 to 21 days after exposure to Ebola virus, though 8-10 days is most common.

**How does Ebola spread?** You can only get Ebola from contact with bodily fluids from a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola, or from exposure to contaminated objects, such as needles.

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**Are you from that area or have you traveled there in the past month?**

- **Yes, and I had contact with someone who was diagnosed with Ebola.**
  - Stay calm. Get informed. "Contact" means you were in direct contact with body fluids (blood, vomit, sweat or semen) from a person with Ebola.
  - If this defines you, immediately contact: Enter Contact Agency / logo here.

- **Yes**
  - Monitor yourself for any of the following symptoms:
    - Fever
    - Weakness
    - Headache
    - Vomiting
    - Diarrhea
    - Stomach Pain
    - Lack of Appetite
    - Abnormal
    - Bleeding
    - Joint & Muscle

  - If you experience any of the symptoms, immediately contact:

- **No**
  - Stay calm. Get informed. Share this information.

- **No, but I know someone that has been to an affected area.**
  - Stay calm. Get informed. Share this information.

  - Ebola is not spread like a cold or flu.
  - You can live with a roommate or attend class with a student who has been to an affected area without putting yourself at risk.
  - You can only get Ebola from contact with bodily fluids from a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola, or from exposure to contaminated objects, such as needles.

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Other Higher Education Travel Related Questions: Is it safe to travel to countries where the Ebola outbreaks are occurring? What should we do if we have study abroad, foreign exchange, research, or other education-related travel planned to these countries?

https://emergency.fsu.edu/hazards/ebola/WhatYouCanDo
CDC has posted Warning – Level 3 Travel Notices recommending that people avoid non-essential travel to Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone at this time. We advise that education-related travel to these countries be postponed until further notice. CDC has posted an Alert – Level 2 Travel Notice for Democratic Republic of Congo with recommendations for enhanced precautions to help travelers protect themselves and help prevent the spread of Ebola. These recommendations may change as the situation evolves. In the event that the situation worsens in Nigeria, CDC may recommend against non-essential travel to Nigeria. Colleges and universities should consider this possibility when deciding whether to proceed with education-related travel plans in Nigeria. The US Department of State takes action to protect US citizens who travel outside the US through a number of diplomatic channels. However, in the event of an outbreak, any country has the right to enact measures (such as quarantine of exposed people, isolation of sick people, and screening of people entering or exiting the country for sickness or disease exposure) to protect its citizens and to prevent the spread of an outbreak to other countries. These measures may infringe on the individual rights of those who appear to be infected with or exposed to a disease of public health concern—including visiting US citizens. The ability of the U.S. Department of State to intervene in such situations is limited. See the US Department of State’s Emergency Resources External Web Site Icon page for more information. Visit the CDC Travel Health Notices page for the most up-to-date guidance and recommendations for each country, including information about health screening of incoming and outgoing travelers and restrictions on travel within countries.

**Why is CDC recommending that U.S. residents avoid traveling to certain countries?**

CDC’s recommendations against non-essential travel, including education-related travel, are intended to help control the outbreak and prevent continued spread in two ways: to protect the health of US residents who would be traveling to the affected areas and to enable the governments of countries where Ebola outbreaks are occurring to respond most effectively to contain the outbreak. The health care systems of countries where the Ebola outbreak is occurring are being severely strained as the outbreak grows. Even if students and faculty are not planning to be in contact with people who are sick with Ebola (such as in health care settings), other safety factors related to their travel need to be considered. For example, a traveler injured in a car accident may have to visit a hospital where Ebola patients are being cared for, which could put the person at risk. Also, because the health care system is severely strained, resources may not be available to treat both routine emergency health needs among visiting US citizens.

**How long is the outbreak going to last? Will it be safe to travel in the spring semester?**

Although it is impossible to predict with complete certainty, it could take a minimum of six months to get the outbreak under control. The ministries of health in the countries where the Ebola outbreaks are happening are working in collaboration with the World Health Organization, CDC, and others to respond. However, due to the complicated nature of the outbreak, these countries face many challenges. Universities should consider the likelihood that the outbreak could continue for several months and that CDC’s recommendation to avoid non-essential travel may remain in place for as long as the outbreak lasts. This might mean not traveling to the affected area during the spring semester if the outbreak is still ongoing.
Is education-related travel to other countries in the West Africa region safe?
At this time, there is no risk of contracting Ebola in other countries in the West Africa region where Ebola cases have not been reported. However the situation could change rapidly. To stay up to date, check reliable news sources, stay in touch with your university's local contacts, and check for updated information on CDC's Traveler's Health website.