

# Return

If you suspect a gas leak, leave immediately and notify the gas company;

If possible, listen to the radio or contact authorities to find out if sewage lines are intact before turning on the water or using the toilet;

Report utility damage to the proper authorities;

Continue to monitor your radio or television for up-to-date emergency information.

## Inspecting the Damage

Upon returning to dwellings evacuated before the hurricane's arrival, be aware of possible structural, electrical, or gas-leak hazards. Electrical power and natural gas or propane tanks should be shut off to avoid fire, electrocution, or explosions. Try to return to your home during the daytime so that you do not have to use any lights. Use battery-powered flashlights and lanterns, rather than candles, gas lanterns, or torches.

## Gas Leaks

If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open all windows, and leave the house immediately. Notify the gas company, the police, fire departments, or State Fire Marshal's office, and do not turn on the lights, light matches, smoke, or do anything that could cause a spark. Do not return to the house until you are told it is safe to do so.

## Electrical Damage

Your electrical system may have been damaged. If you see frayed wiring or sparks when you restore power, or if there is an odor of something burning but no visible fire, you should immediately shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker.

You should consult your utility

company about using electrical equipment, including power generators. Be aware that it is against the law and a violation of electrical codes to connect generators to your home's electrical circuits without the approved, automatic-interrupt devices. If a generator is on line when electrical service is restored, it can become a major fire hazard. In addition, the improper connection of a generator to your home's electrical circuits may endanger line workers helping to restore power in your area.

All electrical equipment and appliances must be completely dry before returning them to service. It is advisable to have a certified electrician check these items if there is any question.

Please Note: Several deaths following past hurricanes have occurred due to fires. In many cases, fires were caused by the careless use of candles to light homes without electrical power. Use battery-powered lanterns, if possible, rather than candles. If you use candles, make sure they are in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood, or other flammable items. Never leave a candle burning when you are out of the room.

## Other Injury-Prevention Measures

To avoid other hurricane-related injuries, you should:

Learn proper safety procedures and operating instructions before operating any gas-powered or electric chain saw;

With an electric chainsaw, use extreme caution to avoid electrical shock;

When using any power equipment, always wear a safety face shield or eyeglasses, and gloves;

Avoid all power lines, particu-

larly those in water;

Avoid wading in water. Broken glass, metal fragments, and other debris may be present in the water; and

Be careful of nails and broken glass when removing boards covering the windows.

Contact your state or local health department or utility company if you need additional safety information.

## Cleanup

Once you have established that no structural, electrical, or gas-related hazards exist in your home, dry and disinfect all materials inside the house to prevent the growth of mold and mildew.

Walls, hard-surfaced floors, and many other household surfaces should be cleaned with soap and water and disinfected with a solution of one cup of bleach to five gallons of water. Be particularly careful to thoroughly disinfect surfaces that may come in contact with food, such as counter tops, pantry shelves, refrigerators, etc. Areas where small children play should also be carefully cleaned. Wash all linens and clothing in hot water, or dry clean them. For items that cannot be washed or dry cleaned, such as mattresses and upholstered furniture, air dry them in the sun and then spray them thoroughly with a disinfectant. Steam clean all carpeting. If there has been a backflow of sewage into the house, wear rubber boots and waterproof gloves during cleanup. Remove and discard contaminated household materials that cannot be disinfected such as wall coverings, cloth, rugs, and drywall.

## Other Hazards

Downed Powerlines

If powerlines are lying on the

ground or dangling near the ground, do not touch the lines. Notify your utility company as soon as possible that the lines have been damaged, or that the powerlines are down. Do not attempt to move or repair the powerlines.

Do not drive through standing water if downed powerlines are in the water. If a powerline falls across your car while you are

driving, continue to drive away from the line. If the engine stalls, do not turn off the ignition. Stay in your car and wait for emergency personnel. Do not allow anyone other than emergency personnel to approach your vehicle.

## Animals

Wild or stray domestic animals can pose a danger during or after See RETURN on page 13



## + Medical Checklist

Residents and visitors with medical conditions are especially vulnerable to the threat of hurricanes and those on medications, or who require ongoing professional health care, should make preparations with medical facilities in areas not affected by tropical storms.

**Minimum two-week supply of medicine**  
(one month is ideal)

**First Aid kits for the home and car**

**Waterproof containers**

**Medical records**  
(history, medications, doctors' names and phone numbers)

**Ice, water**  
(minimum of one gallon of water per person, per day)

**Pet medications**

\* In the event of an evacuation, please take these items with you since shelters provide no medical attention.

Before hurricane season in the Florida Keys begins, residents should prepare a hurricane survival kit that covers the basics and fulfills your medical needs.

**Diabetic Patients:** preserve insulin with a plan to provide refrigeration for at least two weeks. (extra ice and coolers, a refrigerated cooler powered by your car. Keep insulin away from direct contact with ice by wrapping it in a towel)

**Dialysis Patients:** contact medical facilities outside of hurricane-prone areas.

**Oxygen Patients:** generator in the event of a power failure and portable oxygen in case of an evacuation.

Evacuations are always the safest bet for residents requiring constant medical attention or medication. In the aftermath of a storm, supply lines and emergency/medical personal may be disrupted for prolonged periods of time.



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## Return

Remember, most animals are disoriented and displaced, too. Do not corner an animal. If an animal must be removed, contact your local animal control authorities.

If you are bitten by any animal, seek immediate medical attention. If you are bitten by a snake, first try to accurately identify the type of snake so that, if poisonous: the correct anti-venom can be administered. Do not cut the wound or attempt to suck the venom out.

Certain animals may carry rabies. Although the virus is rare, care should be taken to avoid contact with stray animals and rodents. Health departments can provide information on the types of animals that carry rabies in your area.

Rats may also be a problem during and after a hurricane. Take care to secure all food supplies, and remove any animal carcasses in the vicinity by contacting your local animal control authorities.

### Drowning

Although hurricane winds can cause an enormous amount of damage, wind is not the biggest killer in such a storm. Nine of every ten hurricane fatalities are drownings associated with swiftly moving waters. People who enter moving water with their cars, or who get on boats on lakes or bays when a hurricane strikes the area are at grave risk of drowning, regardless of their ability to swim. Even very shallow water that is moving swiftly can be deadly.

Cars or other vehicles do not provide adequate protection. Cars can be swept away or may break down in moving water. Be alert and follow hazard warnings on roadways or those broadcast by the media. Police and public works departments should be contacted for up-to-date information regarding safe roadways.

### Chemical Hazards

Be aware of potential chemical hazards you may encounter when returning to your home, especially if the hurricane is accompanied by flooding. Floodwaters and high winds may have moved or buried hazardous chemical containers of solvents or other industrial chemicals. Contact your local fire department about inspecting and removing hazardous chemical containers. Avoid inhaling chemical fumes.

If any propane tanks (whether 20-lb. tanks from a gas grill or household propane tanks) are discovered, do not attempt to move them yourself. These represent a very real danger of fire or explosion, and if any are found, the fire department, police, or your State Fire Marshal's office should be contacted immediately.

Car batteries, while flooded, may still contain an electrical charge and should be removed with extreme caution by using insulated gloves. Avoid coming in contact with any acid that may have spilled from a damaged car battery.

## Remember your decals for re-entry

In light of the current hurricane season, the Monroe County Sheriff's Office wants to remind everyone about Hurricane Re-entry issues in the event of an evacuation order in the Florida Keys.

Hurricane Re-entry decals, color coded for different areas of the Keys, are currently available at all Sheriff's Office substations and the Sheriff's Office Headquarters building on Stock Island. They are also available from all tag offices in the Keys, Key West City Hall, Islamorada City Hall and the Ocean Reef Public Safety Communications Center. The decals will be used to identify Monroe County residents at the re-entry point in Florida City after a storm has passed. The city of Key West is issuing its own decal, which will also be honored at the re-entry point in

Florida City. A re-entry decal is meant to speed up the re-entry process, but is not mandatory to re-enter the Keys. If a person does not have a decal, he or she may also present a driver's license with a Keys address, or some other proof of residency or proof of home or property ownership.

"I want to make it perfectly clear that these stickers are meant to assist law enforcement with identifying county residents so the re-entry process will work more smoothly and efficiently. Having one does not mean you can re-enter the county at any time you wish after a storm," said Sheriff Rick Roth. "The appropriate time for re-entry will be determined by the Sheriff's Office, depending upon the circumstances at the time."

Some of the factors considered in the re-entry process will be

whether or not emergency personnel, supplies and equipment have been brought in and set up, whether rescue crews have had enough time to assist any trapped or injured people in the hurricane affected area and, most importantly, whether it is judged to be safe for residents to re-enter a particular area.

The new hurricane re-entry stickers are orange in color for lower Keys residents (from Key West to the south end of the Seven Mile Bridge), blue for middle Keys residents (from the north end of the Seven Mile Bridge to the south end of the Long Key Bridge) and yellow for the upper Keys (from the north end of the Long Key Bridge to the county line, including Ocean Reef).

In the event a storm devastates a particular area of the Keys, as happened during Georges, the color coded re-entry stickers will allow law enforcement to separate those residents who are traveling to relatively safe areas from those who are returning to the more badly damaged areas of the county. Depending on the circumstances, the people returning to relatively intact areas may be allowed to re-enter sooner than the others.

**Re-entry procedure if an evacuation order is issued**

The Monroe County Sheriff's Office would like to remind people about the procedure for re-entering the county if an evacuation order is given during a See DECAL page 14

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# Understand the weatherman's lingo

## Advisory:

Official information issued by tropical cyclone warning centers describing all tropical cyclone watches and warnings in effect along with details concerning tropical cyclone locations, intensity and movement, and precautions that should be taken. Advisories are also issued to describe: (a) tropical cyclones prior to issuance of watches and warnings and (b) subtropical cyclones.

## Best Track:

A subjectively-smoothed representation of a tropical cyclone's location and intensity over its lifetime. The best track contains the cyclone's latitude, longitude, maximum sustained surface winds, and minimum sea-level pressure at 6-hourly intervals. Best track positions and intensi-

ties, which are based on a post-storm assessment of all available data, may differ from values contained in storm advisories. They also generally will not reflect the erratic motion implied by connecting individual center fix positions.

## Center:

Generally speaking, the vertical axis of a tropical cyclone, usually defined by the location of minimum wind or minimum pressure. The cyclone center position can vary with altitude. In advisory products, refers to the center position at the surface.

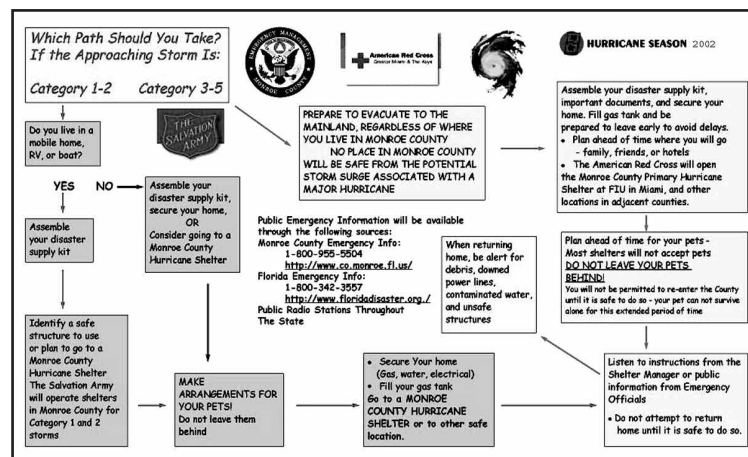
## Cyclone:

An atmospheric closed circulation rotating counter-clockwise in the Northern Hemisphere and clockwise in the Southern Hemisphere.

## Direct Hit:

A close approach of a tropical cyclone to a particular location. For locations on the left-hand side of a tropical cyclone's track (looking in the direction of motion), a direct hit occurs when the cyclone passes to within a distance equal to the cyclone's radius of maximum wind. For locations on the right-hand side of the track, a direct hit occurs

See LINGO page 15



## Decal

First and foremost, no one should attempt to re-enter the county in the aftermath of a storm until officials from Monroe County issue an announcement that it is safe to do so. Many issues must be considered before residents are allowed back into the Keys. Before allowing residents to re-enter, officials must consider the safety of the areas affected by the storm, and the safety of the highway into and out of the Florida Keys. The next priority is getting emergency crews into the Keys in order to begin clearing roadways, assisting any people who might be injured, and begin clearing downed power lines and restoring crucial services like phones, electricity and water. Trucks and other vehicles carrying food, water and ice must be allowed to enter as soon as possible as well, along with groups offering emergency assistance like the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army.

After these people and vehicles are allowed into the county, and are set up to help those returning to hurricane damaged areas, then officials can begin considering how to allow residents to return to their homes in a safe and orderly fashion. Who is allowed in, and in what order depends on where damage has occurred, what the condition of the roadway is and how safe it is for people to travel in the Keys.

The Sheriff's Office highly recommends that everyone who does evacuate stay put in the aftermath of the storm until an announcement is made that they may return. Many people who attempted to return to the county directly following Hurricane Georges in 1998 ended up stuck in a long line of traffic in Florida City, with no where to go and nothing to do for a long period of time.

Remember: no one will be allowed to re-enter the Keys until it is determined to be safe. Law Enforcement Officers will be stationed at all entry points to turn people around who try to return early.

Once an announcement is made that it is safe to return, everyone should proceed south on the Florida Turnpike to Exit One in Florida City. Once off the turnpike, at the exit point, law enforcement officers will check for Hurricane Re-entry decals and direct people to the designated staging area for their particular decal. Decals are issued depending on where a person lives in the Keys. There are separate stickers for the upper, middle and lower Keys and for the city of Key West. Those people who do not have a decal will be pulled to the side and identification and proof of residency will be checked. A decal will then be issued to those who do not have them, and they also will be directed to the appropriate staging areas. No one will be allowed to enter the Keys until they have been checked and cleared for entry.

Once a particular area of the Keys is cleared for re-entry, those people in the designated staging area for that location will be escorted into the county and allowed to return home.

It is important that people not try to re-enter the county before it is determined to be safe. Everyone trying to enter prior to that time will be stopped and turned back. Remember, there aren't many facilities available at the designated staging areas, and they will not be comfortable areas to stay in for very long. Law enforcement officers in the Florida City area will not allow anyone to park on the highway, or on the highway right-of-way for any extended period of time.

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# Lingo

when the cyclone passes to within a distance equal to twice the radius of maximum wind. Compare indirect hit, strike.

## Eye:

The roughly circular area of comparatively light winds that encompasses the center of a severe tropical cyclone. The eye is either completely or partially surrounded by the eyewall cloud.

## Eyewall / Wall Cloud:

An organized band or ring of cumulonimbus clouds that surround the eye, or light-wind center of a tropical cyclone. Eyewall and wall cloud are used synonymously.

## Extratropical:

A term used in advisories and tropical summaries to indicate that a cyclone has lost its "tropical" characteristics. The term implies both poleward displacement of the cyclone and the conversion of the cyclone's primary energy source from the release of latent heat of condensation to baroclinic (the temperature contrast between warm and cold air masses) processes. It is important to note that cyclones can become

extratropical and still retain winds of hurricane or tropical storm force.

## Gale Warning:

A warning of 1-minute sustained surface winds in the range 34 kt (39 mph or 63 km/hr) to 47 kt (54 mph or 87 km/hr) inclusive, either predicted or occurring and not directly associated with tropical cyclones.

## High Wind Warning:

A high wind warning is defined as 1-minute average surface winds of 35 kt (40 mph or 64 km/hr) or greater lasting for 1 hour or longer, or winds gusting to 50 kt (58 mph or 93 km/hr) or greater regardless of duration that are either expected or observed over land.

## Hurricane:

A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind (using the U.S. 1-minute average) is 64 kt (74 mph or 119 km/hr) or more. The term hurricane is used for Northern Hemisphere tropical cyclones east of the International Dateline to the Greenwich Meridian. The term typhoon is used for Pacific tropical cyclones

north of the Equator west of the International Dateline.

## Hurricane Warning:

A warning that sustained winds 64 kt (74 mph or 119 km/hr) or higher associated with a hurricane are expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less. A hurricane warning can remain in effect when dangerously high water or a combination of dangerously high waves continue, even though winds may be less than hurricane force.

## Hurricane Watch:

An announcement for specific coastal areas that hurricane conditions are possible within 36 hours.

## Indirect Hit:

Generally refers to locations that do not experience a direct hit from a tropical cyclone, but do experience hurricane force winds (either sustained or gusts) or tides of at least 4 feet above normal.

## Landfall:

The intersection of the surface center of a tropical cyclone with a coastline. Because the strongest winds in a tropical cyclone are

not located precisely at the center, it is possible for a cyclone's strongest winds to be experienced over land even if landfall does not occur. Similarly, it is possible for a tropical cyclone to make landfall and have its strongest winds remain over the water. Compare direct hit, indirect hit, and strike.

## Present Movement:

The best estimate of the movement of the center of a tropical cyclone at a given time and given position. This estimate does not reflect the short-period, small scale oscillations of the cyclone center.

## Probability of Tropical Cyclone Conditions:

The probability, in percent, that the cyclone center will pass within 50 miles to the right or 75 miles to the left of the listed location within the indicated time period when looking at the coast in the direction of the cyclone's movement.

## Radius of Maximum Winds:

The distance from the center of a tropical cyclone to the location of the cyclone's maximum winds. In well-developed hurricanes, the radius of maximum winds is generally found at the inner edge of the eyewall.

## Storm Tide:

The actual level of sea water resulting from the astronomic tide combined with the storm surge.

## Storm Warning:

A warning of 1-minute sustained surface winds of 48 kt (55 mph or 88 km/hr) or greater, either predicted or occurring, not

directly associated with tropical cyclones.

## 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 Disturbance:

A discrete tropical weather system of apparently organized convection -- generally 100 to 300 nmi in diameter -- originating in the tropics or subtropics, having a nonfrontal migratory character, and maintaining its identity for 24 hours or more. It may or may not be associated with a detectable perturbation of the wind field.

## 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 Warning:

A warning that sustained winds within the range of 34 to 63 kt (39 to 73 mph or 63 to 118 km/hr) associated with a tropical cyclone are expected in a specified coastal area within 24 hours or less.

## Tropical Storm Watch:

An announcement for specific coastal areas that tropical storm conditions are possible within 36 hours.

## Tropical Wave:

A trough or cyclonic curvature maximum in the trade-wind easterlies. The wave may reach maximum amplitude in the lower middle troposphere.

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## During a Hurricane Watch

Listen to local radio or television stations for hurricane progress reports and emergency orders.

Check emergency supplies.

If you have not already done so, fuel your car.

If you have not already done so, stock up on water, non-perishable food, water and ice.

Bring in outdoor objects such as lawn furniture, toys, and garden tools and anchor objects that cannot be brought inside.

Secure buildings by closing shutters and/or boarding up windows. Remove outside antennas.



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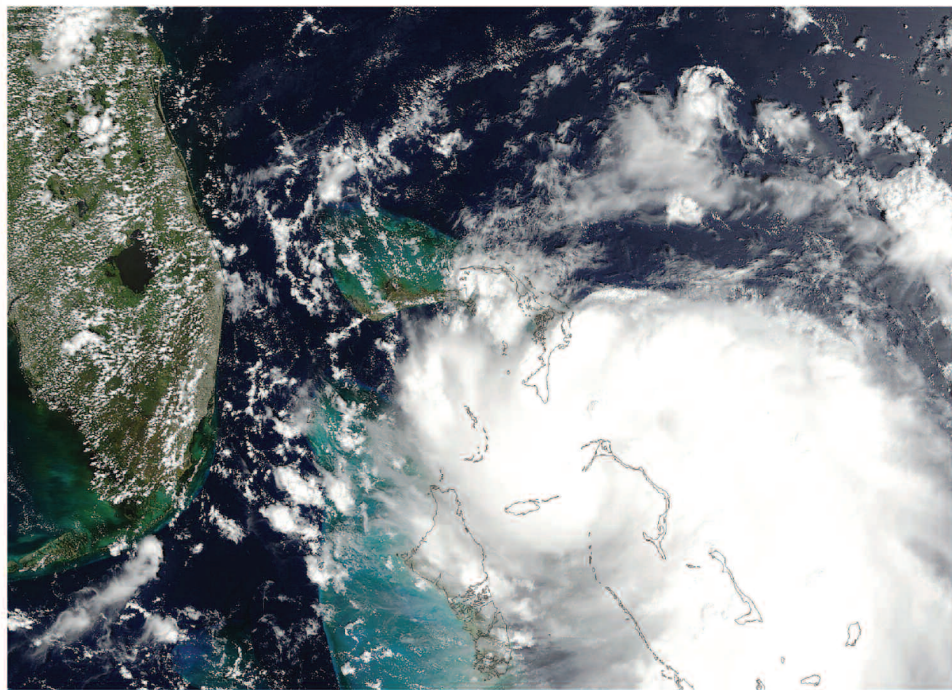


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We're working to keep us all safe!

Hurricane season is upon us again, and there is something important you can do to get ready. **Keeping trees trimmed away from electrical lines helps Keys Energy Services (KEYS) provide reliable electricity** before and after a storm. If any tree limbs are intruding on electrical lines, **do not attempt to trim them yourself.** Instead, **call KEYS so a trained tree trimmer can safely trim the limbs away from the electrical lines.** With your help, we can lessen the damage a storm may cause. **Call KEYS at (305) 295-1010** to submit a tree trimming request today!



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