

## Hurricane Season – Get a Head Start and Be Prepared

by County Vice Mayor Hal Valeche

As we head into Hurricane Season 2016, rest assured that Palm Beach County is constantly preparing for the needs of our residents. Even though it's been a while since a hurricane has come our way, it's always best to be ready and have a plan.

Your emergency supply kit should include certain basic supplies, and you will find that it's more economical if you can accumulate these items over time, when you can take advantage of buy one-get one sales and similar promotions. At a minimum, these supplies should include:

- One gallon of water per person per day for a supply of at least 5 days, for drinking, cooking and bathing
- Nonperishable food; freeze sandwich bread until it is needed
- First aid supplies, shampoo, soap and mosquito repellent
- Zip lock bags, plastic containers, and heavy-duty garbage bags to preserve food and important documents
- Cleaning supplies, rubber gloves, toilet paper, paper towels, paper plates and plastic utensils
- Medications, pet food and water, baby food and diapers
- Flashlights, radio, and batteries
- Spare glasses and contact lenses

The Division of Emergency Management encourages all residents to “Know Your Zone” and be aware of whether you live in a storm surge evacuation area, are located in a flood zone, where shelters are located, and know which grocery and building supply stores have emergency generators, and which gas stations have transfer switches to emergency power. This information is readily available by downloading the PBC DART application on your Smartphone and entering your home address.

I encourage you to adhere to the “Know Your Zone” steps in order to stay prepared: 1) make a plan; 2) build a kit; 3) get involved; and 4) be informed.

The division's website [www.pbcgov.com/dem/hurricane](http://www.pbcgov.com/dem/hurricane) has a wealth of information and guides that you can access to further assist you, including the Hurricane Survival Guide, which is a comprehensive go-to resource which provides tips on preparing your property, shelter locations and evacuation zones, supply checklists, important phone numbers, frequently asked questions, instructions on staying safe and a storm tracking map.

Don't wait until a hurricane is bearing down to make these important decisions and preparations. Do it now to ensure your family's safety. Together we can make it a safer and less worrisome hurricane season for everyone.

If you have questions or you do not have access to a computer or a Smartphone and would like more information, please contact me at (561) 355-2201 and I will assist you with your needs. You can also contact Palm Beach County Emergency Management directly at (561) 712-6400.

Let's get a head start and stay prepared this hurricane season!