We are already one month in to this years hurricane season. The time of year when we all start preparing for the worst and hoping for the best. As much as we do not want to think about it, the Florida Keys is an extremely vulnerable location when it comes to hurricanes. As we learned with Irma in 2017, you can never be too prepared. Here are some lists and helpful information to get you ready for the possibility of a storm.

**SUPPLIES**

If you haven’t already, now is great time to dig out your hurricane supply kit and review its contents. If you don’t have a hurricane supply kit it’s the perfect time to create one! A basic hurricane supply kit should include the following items:

- Water (one gallon per person per day)
- Non-perishable food in cans or sealed containers
- Manual can opener and other cooking supplies
- Plates, utensils and other feeding supplies
- First-Aid kit and instructions
- Prescription medicines (have a 2-week supply)
- Copies of important documents and cell numbers
- Emergency cash in small denominations
- Bug spray and sunscreen
- Ax
- Fire Extinguisher
- Personal hygiene items
- Plastic sheeting, duct tape, utility knife
- Tools & heavy duty plastic bags
- Blanket or sleeping bag
- Battery operated radio
- Pet supplies
- Generator and gas
- Cellphone & portable charger
- Tent

**DIGITAL TOOLS**

Here are some great apps to download to help you better prepare for the season.

**Forecast Apps:** Max Mayfield Hurricane Tracker, American Red Cross-Hurricane, Weather Underground

**Evacuation Apps:** FEMA, Expedia, AirBnB, Hotels.com, Harmony

**Travel Apps:** GasBuddy, Waze

**People/Pet Care Apps:** Teledoc, Zello, Nextdoor, WhatsApp

**Communication Apps:** FireChat, Zello, Nextdoor, WhatsApp

**Document Storage Apps:** DropBox, Google Drive

**Getting Help App:** Crowdsource Rescue

Your smartphone is a helpful preparation tool, just make sure its always charged!
Shelly recently accomplished the following activities:

- Shelly presented and moderated at the Association of Natural Resource Extension Professionals conference in Kalamazoo, Michigan entitled “Sargassum management master plans: University of Florida IFAS Extension agents create partnerships to turn mountains of trash into cash.” There is a need to find economical methods for sargassum removal and reuse. A bi-coastal team of 6 University of Florida IFAS Extension faculty developed a pilot study in cooperation with 3 city governments, 4 county governments, parks and recreation departments, a nuclear power plant, and a botanical garden to evaluate the viability of composting sargassum for use as a landscape soil amendment. More than 30 master gardeners, students, and citizens volunteered >135 hours to assist with the 5-month replicated study in Sarasota, Monroe, Martin, and St. Lucie counties, Florida. The ability to utilize sargassum for landscaping valorizes a product that is currently sent to landfills, and could save local governments hundreds of thousands of dollars per year. We have received the raw data from the UF labs and are working to complete the statistical analyses.

- Shelly taught the staff at I.CARE, a new coral restoration nonprofit group in Islamorada, how to identify stony corals and trained them to report stony coral tissue loss disease to the FDEP SEAFAN.net reporting too.

- Shelly taught 40 students at Horace O’Bryant Middle School about water quality and trained them how to collect dissolved oxygen for Florida Keys Water Watch.

Michelle recently accomplished the following activities:

- Over 800 people attended the 2022 Tropical Fruit Fiesta in Big Pine Key. This was the first year since 2008 that it was organized by Monroe County Extension Services. 30 Master Gardener and community volunteers worked over 200 hours to support this successful event. The festival provides an opportunity for residents to learn about what tropical fruit and vegetables can be grown in the Keys, how to sustainably grow them, and opportunities to purchase tropical fruit, trees, and plants.

- Over 100 residents attended educational programs offered during the Tropical Fruit Fiesta. Topics included: Why Won’t My Tree Fruit, How to Prune Fruit Trees, and Summer Veggies for the Keys. 33 residents also were given free Keys Bucket Gardens purchased through a grant from Community Foundation of the Florida Keys to support backyard edible food production. 25 residents also attended cooking demonstrations that showcased how to use breadfruit and thai vegetables in recipes.

Be sure to “Like” us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter and Instagram!
Alicia recently accomplished the following activities:

- Alicia presented “Using Community Forums to Increase Public Engagement that Promotes Equity and Social Justice” at the Twenty-second International Conference on Diversity in Organizations, Communities & Nations, at the University of Curaçao. Conference participants included industry HR managers, professional diversity specialists, and community program leaders.

- Alicia was invited to join a new regional committee to look at coordination and funding for electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure. The committee is comprised of county and city leaders, state and regional agencies, and industry professionals.

- Alicia worked with the Southeast Florida Climate Compacts partners to develop a grant proposal that, if funded, would help develop fundable climate action plans for up to 5 under-resourced communities in the region.

- Alicia met with 16 residents to educate them about “Stretching the Dollar” and local programs that can assist residents in need. She also spoke on the radio about the top scams to watch out for in 2022.

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**PETS**

Your pets need your help getting them ready for a storm and possible evacuation. Here is a list of things to gather while preparing your fur baby:

- 2 week supply of pet meds & vet/vaccine records
- 7+ days supply of water for each pet
- 2 week supply of food (non-perishable) & extra bowls
- Pet collars & leashes with ID tags
- Extra litter, litter pans & indoor potty pads
- Hard kennel for transportation & extra blankets
- Comfort items such as beds, toys & treats
- Photos of your pets
- List of pet friendly shelters & hotels on your evacuation route
- Consider microchipping your pet

**LANDSCAPE**

Here are some landscape hazards you should address now, before the season starts becoming active:

- Remove dead or broken branches, they can become projectiles
- Leaning trees should be braced or removed
- Thin out any dense canopy
- Hire a professional when pruning large, mature trees
- Do not remove green fronds from the crown of the palm tree, it can make it more susceptible to damage during a storm
- If you have mangroves that need trimming or dead mangroves that need to be removed you will need to get a permit from DEP
- Clean out your gutters

**Resource Links**

Monroe County Hurricane Information Page:
[Preparedness | Monroe County, FL - Official Website (monroecounty-fl.gov)](http://blogs.ifas.ufl.edu/monroeco/2020/05/20/get-a-digital-hurricane-kit/)

Get A Digital Hurricane Kit Blog:

Pet Hurricane Evacuation:
- [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ei5bKSHWvC67ZT3TMkptrMzviD8/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ei5bKSHWvC67ZT3TMkptrMzviD8/view)
- [https://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/helpful-tips/prep-your-pets/](https://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/helpful-tips/prep-your-pets/)

Landscape links:
- [https://floridadep.gov/water/submerged-lands-environmental-resources-coordination/content/mangroves](https://floridadep.gov/water/submerged-lands-environmental-resources-coordination/content/mangroves)

Preparing your Boat:

Be sure to “Like” us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com) and follow us on [Twitter](https://twitter.com) and [Instagram](https://instagram.com)!
VOLUME 22  ISSUE 7

History of Diving Museum Immerse Yourself

A free presentation series featuring our Sea Grant Agent Shelly Krueger on July 20th!

Sponges and Water Quality in the Keys

https://divingmuseum.org/events-calendar/

UF/IFAS/MCES QUARTERLY CONTACTS

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