

THE BULLETIN

The Official Newsletter of the FDEM Mitigation Bureau



HMGP Project Submittal Process

Thank you to everyone who submitted a Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) application this year. DR-4828 and DR-4834 are finalizing intake; DR-4806 and DR-4794 have completed intake and moved into review. Intake confirms an application is complete and ready for review. Once intake is complete, federal and state compliance reviews begin. Per the NOFA, Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects are reviewed first; Tier 3 projects are reviewed only if funds remain. Visit the FDEM HMGP webpage for details.

Planning (~1-4 Weeks)



Confirms the project is in your Local Mitigation Strategy (LMS) and meets planning requirements.

Programmatic (~1-4 Weeks)



Checks that your application is complete, eligible, and supported by the necessary documentation.

Engineering Technical Feasibility (~1-3 Months)



Evaluates the effectiveness and feasibility of your project and ensures sufficient detail for the Benefit-Cost Analysis.

Benefit-Cost Analysis (~1-3 Months)



Reviews your budget for accuracy and reasonableness. The State completes the BCA to determine cost-effectiveness.

Environmental and Historic Preservation (~4-12 Months)



Ensures compliance with NEPA and NHPA and identifies any impacts requiring FEMA consultation.

What's Next?

- Requests for Information (RFIs) can be issued during any review and can come from multiple reviewers.
 - If you receive an RFI, respond by the deadline provided—extensions are only granted for extenuating circumstances, so ask questions early if you need help.
 - No news is good news—if you don't hear from us, there are likely no issues.
- Your PM will coordinate all reviews and remain your main point of contact throughout the entire process.

This Issue:

HMGP Project Submittal Process

PAGE 01

SFWMD Flood Observations

PAGE 02

The Big Bend Project

PAGE 03

Florida legislators expand and strengthen flood disclosure

PAGE 04

Wall of Wind Exhibit Teaching Mitigation in Flagler County

PAGE 05

A Storm-Ready Port Begins with Strategic Partnerships

PAGE 06

Evacuation in 4:28 – A Resident's Mitigation Mindset

PAGE 07-08

New Floodplain Guidance

PAGE 08

RV Mitigation

PAGE 09

Mitigation Success Story

PAGE 10

New Employee Spotlight

PAGE 11

Game & Contact Info

PAGE 12

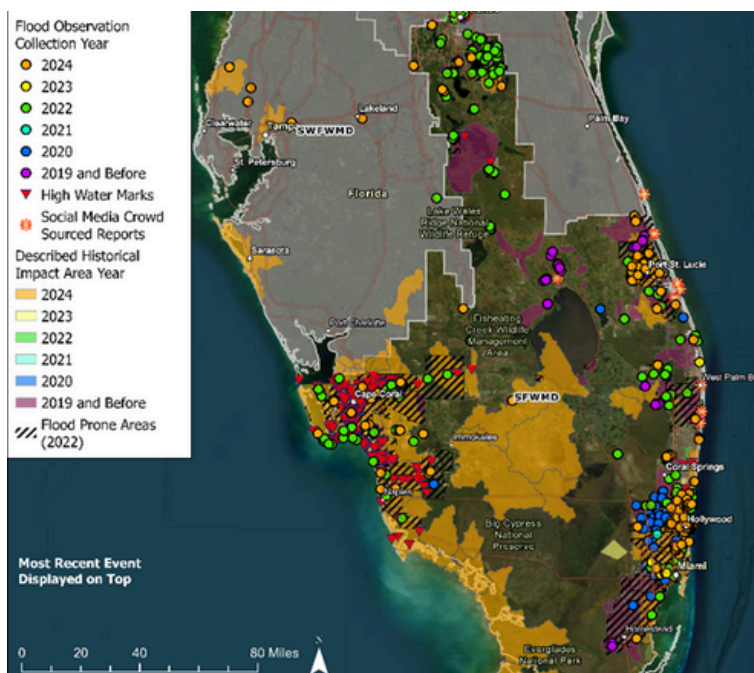


Flood Observations Support Emergency Preparedness and Regional Resiliency

By: SFWMD Office of District Resiliency

To better understand flood risk in South Florida, the SFWMD is collecting and assessing flood occurrences as part of its Water and Climate Resilience Metrics program, which monitors long-term trends in observed conditions. Expanding the understanding of flood patterns and the regional water management systems' responses to changing hydrological conditions supports real-time operations, emergency preparedness, resiliency adaptation planning, and effective response to flood events, as well as calibration and validation of advanced hydrologic and hydraulic models.

The SFWMD is collecting flood observations, including reports, photos, and high-water marks. These data sources are combined with continuous water level monitoring and remote sensing imagery to enhance the spatial coverage of known flooding. This information is relayed to water managers during extreme rainfall and later to be compared against continuous water level monitoring and weather conditions. The collection of this data supports the development of historical impact areas and repeated flooded areas using on the ground records and aerial imagery. This initiative advances a robust long-term record to enhance management of water resources.



The map shows flood observations and high-water marks collected during past events. These records, along with monitoring data and remote sensing imagery, support the establishment of historical impact areas and flood prone areas.

SFWMD's flood observation survey, accessible at sfwmd.gov/FloodingApp, allows resiliency partners and the public to report local flooding and early flooding concerns, upload photos, and flood impact information. The South Florida Flood Information Resource database (sfwmd.gov/FloodResource) consolidates and centralizes flood observation data and historical event information and makes it accessible to local governments, providing access to real-time and historical flood information, high-water marks, as well as ICEYE's imagery to resiliency partners with an ArcGIS account.

A total of **more than 600 flood observations have been recorded**, including over 200 during Hurricane Ian in 2022. Over the past year, around 150 flood observations and high-water marks were received during the June Rainfall, Hurricane Helene and Hurricane Milton.

Building on these efforts, the SFWMD provided flood observations and high-water mark training this past April to District field staff and interested local government partners across the region, in preparation for the 2025 Wet Season. On Wednesday, May 28, the [Resiliency Coordination Forum](#) featured informative presentations on Wet Season Readiness.

To further strengthen local coordination, the SFWMD is implementing a "Local Contact Notification System" to alert local flood control partners in South Florida. The system will notify County, City, and Local Drainage District contacts via email when flooding is reported in their jurisdiction.

Together, these efforts significantly support the resilience of the Central and Southern Florida water management system. By safeguarding communities, infrastructure, and natural ecosystems, the SFWMD helps ensure a safer, more prepared future for South Florida.

Visit www.sfwmd.gov/resiliency to learn more about SFWMD's ongoing flood resiliency initiatives.

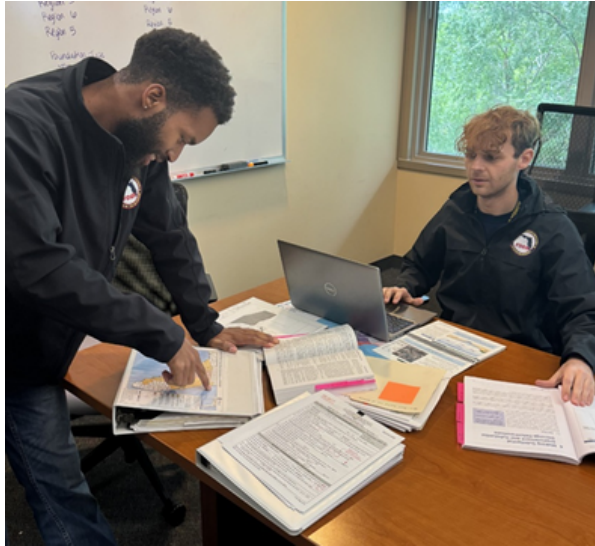
The Big Bend Project: Building Regional Resilience Through Partnership

By: Preston Joseph, FDEM Floodplain Ordinance Specialist

Communities across Florida’s Big Bend region are working together to reduce risk, strengthen floodplain management, and build long-term resilience. This collaborative effort is being led under the supervision of Jillian Kraynak and Michael Burchette through the Big Bend Project, a regional initiative of the Office of Floodplain Management. The project is managed by Preston Joseph, Floodplain Ordinance Specialist, in partnership with Floodplain Management Specialist Joshua Lacey, and in close coordination with FEMA. Their work is focused on helping rural and coastal communities build local capacity and better prepare for natural hazards.

The region faces distinct challenges: frequent flooding, aging infrastructure, and limited local staffing make it difficult for many communities to keep pace with evolving risks. The Big Bend Project was launched in direct response to these issues, providing one-on-one support, technical guidance, and a structured, community-driven approach to mitigation planning.

Under Preston Joseph’s leadership, the project works closely with local officials and FEMA to assess flood vulnerabilities, update mitigation strategies, and align community needs with broader regional goals. Joshua Lacey plays a vital role by offering on-the-ground support, helping jurisdictions identify their most pressing priorities, and ensuring they have the tools and information needed to make meaningful progress.



Joshua Lacey (left) and Preston Joseph (right) discussing goals for the Big Bend region efforts.

“We are here to support communities in a real and tangible way.”

What sets the Big Bend Project apart is its regional focus. Rather than addressing issues one community at a time, the project promotes **cross-county coordination**. This approach has strengthened local partnerships, encouraged shared learning, and fostered a more consistent strategy for managing flood risk across the Big Bend.

Throughout 2025, the project team has been deeply engaged across the region, hosting planning sessions, conducting site visits, and facilitating conversations among floodplain administrators, planners, and emergency managers. In many areas, these efforts have jump-started delayed projects, sparked new collaborations, and increased local engagement in mitigation efforts.

At its core, the project focuses on providing practical, day-to-day support to local staff. This includes guidance on ordinance reviews, floodplain management practices, and data collection, as well as mapping tools and outreach materials to raise public awareness. The aim is not just to help communities meet minimum requirements, but to support them in **building internal capacity and planning for long-term resilience**. “Our goal is to make the complex process of mitigation and floodplain management more manageable, and to help local governments take meaningful action,” said Preston Joseph.

By listening to local voices and adapting to the unique needs of each jurisdiction, the Big Bend Project helps build a stronger network of leadership throughout the region. With FEMA’s support, Preston Joseph and Joshua Lacey have helped foster trust and momentum in communities that are often underserved but deeply committed to protecting their residents and resources.

While the work continues, the early results are clear: more coordinated planning, stronger local partnerships, and a shared vision for a safer, more resilient Big Bend.

A win for mitigation: Florida legislators expand and strengthen flood disclosure

By: Eve Cooke and Rachel Rhode, Environmental Defense Fund



After years of advocacy for greater transparency around flood risk, Florida has passed a landmark disclosure law. On June 20th 2025, Governor DeSantis, signed into law the bipartisan bill, Senate Bill 948, which was introduced by Senator Jennifer Bradley and Representative Christine Hunschofsky. This bill significantly expands the state's flood disclosure requirements by building on policy championed by groups such as the Environmental Defense Fund, the Florida Realtors Association, and the American Flood Coalition.

When this law takes effect on October 1st, 2025, landlords, property sellers, condo developers, and mobile home park owners will be required to disclose:

- **Any known flood damage** to the property during their ownership, and
- **Any history** of disaster assistance or insurance claims related to flood damage on the property.

Previously, Florida had no specific state law requiring sellers or landlords to disclose a property's flood history or past flood-related insurance or disaster claims. This left both buyers and renters without consistent access to information that could impact their safety and financial risk.

Why strengthening flood disclosure requirements is a critical step toward protecting public safety and advancing long-term community resilience:

- **Empowering vulnerable communities**, including older and low-income Floridians, to make informed decisions about flood risk. Even minor floods can harm low-income and elderly Floridians by cutting off access to essentials like food, medicine, and emergency care. These floods can also lead to power outages, loss of heating or air conditioning, and deplete limited savings. Disclosure can empower residents to mitigate risk by leasing on higher floors, buying flood insurance, or choosing less vulnerable areas.
- **Saving residents money** during disaster response and recovery through insurance adoption. Standard renters' and homeowners' insurance excludes flood damage, leaving residents on the hook for property destroyed or damaged in a flood event. Without disclosure, many residents are unaware of their vulnerability. Economic studies show that insurance coverage enables faster recovery by providing immediate financial relief. Requiring disclosure can lead more people to secure flood insurance before disaster strikes.
- **Informing new residents about local hazards**. Florida is projected to continue welcoming over 800 new residents daily through 2028, many of whom may bring expectations of disclosure from other states or be unfamiliar with Florida's environmental risks. This new requirement will ensure renters and homebuyers are informed about flood risk from the start.
- **Improving community awareness of risks**. Flood disclosure can play a powerful role in promoting community resilience by educating residents about flood risks and encouraging the adoption of resilient practices. It contributes to a broader understanding of flood-prone areas and helps build a culture of preparedness and mitigation.



Enacting statewide flood disclosure requirements for buyers and renters continues the legacy of Florida legislators working to ensure the prosperity of their constituents. **By increasing transparency, this legislation helps Floridians make informed decisions about one of the most significant financial investments they will ever make: choosing a home.**

Wall of Wind Exhibit Teaching Mitigation in Flagler County

By: Erik Salna, FIU International Hurricane Research Center



Miramar High School standing in front of the Wall of Wind

Flagler County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in Bunnell is now home to the Wall of Wind interactive exhibit, serving as a hands-on educational platform for visitors of all ages. This exhibit brings hurricane wind mitigation to life, demonstrating the critical importance of resilient construction techniques and community preparedness.

Developed by the FIU International Hurricane Research Center, the Wall of Wind exhibit showcases the effects of hurricane-strength winds on various roof shapes and structural designs. It also emphasizes the role of mitigation strategies, such as metal roof tie-down systems and proper shutter installations, in protecting homes from severe wind damage. Accompanying posters illustrate roof designs (flat, gable, and hip) and shutter types (panels, accordion, and rolling), and highlight the importance of attic strapping attached to the roof, while dispelling common myths, like the ineffectiveness of taping windows for window protection.

"We look forward to using the Wall of Wind Exhibit to help educate the Flagler community of all ages on the impact of wind (and water) from hurricanes," said Ryan Simpson, Manager of Flagler County Emergency Management.

The exhibit is **more than a display; it's a community asset**. Flagler County Emergency Management plans to use it as a springboard for outreach with local schools, civic groups, and organizations, enhancing disaster resilience education across the region. This initiative aligns with Flagler's ongoing commitment to community preparedness and mitigation awareness.

Originally created for the Designing for Disaster Exhibition at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., the exhibit toured the Museum of Discovery and Science in Fort Lauderdale from 2016 to 2023 before finding a permanent home in Flagler County in 2024.



Wall of Wind exhibit at the Flagler County EOC

"The exhibit was created as an educational outreach tool to bring the Wall of Wind research at FIU into the community. I am very happy the exhibit lives on, and its legacy continues in Flagler County, teaching the importance of wind mitigation," said Erik Salna, Associate Director of Education and Outreach, FIU International Hurricane Research Center.

The Wall of Wind is part of FIU's NHERI Wall of Wind Experimental Facility, the largest university-based research center capable of simulating Category 5 hurricane winds. Supported by the Florida Division of Emergency Management and the National Science Foundation, its research has directly influenced updates to the Florida Building Code, ensuring stronger, more resilient communities statewide.

A Storm-Ready Port Begins with Strategic Partnerships

By: Port Tampa Bay

As part of its ongoing storm resiliency efforts, Port Tampa Bay recently constructed a hardened heavy-weather protection facility to safeguard essential assets and support continuity of operations in the event of high magnitude natural disasters.

Since 2023, the port's command vehicle, trucks, and survey boats have been staged inside the facility during severe weather to ensure a rapid response in the event of heavy weather conditions, hurricanes, and other hazardous events. Beginning this year, Port Tampa Bay has extended use of the facility to key partners, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Coast Guard, and Fuel Terminal Operators, allowing them the opportunity to store mission-critical equipment onsite ahead of storms.

To strengthen coordination, Port Tampa Bay also hosted a pre-hurricane season huddle with fuel terminal operators, port staff, and Tampa Electric Company (TECO). The group discussed hurricane season predictions and offered assistance and resources to port tenants who are vital to the region's storm recovery efforts.

Designed to withstand winds up to 189 mph (Category 5 strength) and built above the 500-year storm surge elevation, the facility demonstrates an investment in long-term mitigation and recovery capabilities. The project was made possible through a combination of Port Capital Improvement Funds, FEMA Port Security Grant Program funds, and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Security Grant funds.



Port Tampa Bay heavy-weather building

"As Florida's most diverse port, it's essential we ensure our region's mission-critical operations even in times of disaster. By protecting these assets, we help our community have peace of mind that our essential services, like fuel, will remain available in times of need. With this added security, we improve our capacity for a prompt response and recovery following a devastating storm or hurricane," explained Paul Anderson, Port Tampa Bay President and CEO.

Among the protected equipment is the port's advanced survey boat, outfitted with 3D scanning technology that detects navigational blockages following a storm, an essential tool in post-disaster recovery and reopening efforts.



Staged vehicles ready for rapid response

The new heavy-weather building is another example of the port's commitment to safety and resiliency. Each year, Port Tampa Bay executes a Hurricane Preparedness Tabletop Exercise in partnership with the National Weather Service. The exercise brings together and educates several vital stakeholders, including the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and local emergency management offices.

Port Tampa Bay prides itself on being resilient, safe, and secure year-round, partnering with terminal operators and agencies to accelerate the return to operations and strengthen the region's ability to respond and recover from severe weather.



Evacuation in 4:28 – A Resident’s Mitigation Mindset

By: Howard Lavine

Mitigation begins with understanding what we’re up against. Once we identify the risks, we can prepare, test, and adapt.

Living in Florida means being prepared for hurricanes, flooding, tornadoes, wildfires, chemical spills—and home fires, especially during frequent lightning storms. One moment everything is calm; the next, you may be forced to evacuate with only minutes to respond.

This reality drove me to develop a personal evacuation system. My goal was simple: to be out of the house with my family and supplies in under five minutes. I organized the process into a four-week structure—not because it must take that long, but to make it easier to tackle in manageable steps. It can certainly be done faster if needed.

Week 1: Mobile Readiness

Your phone can become your emergency hub.

- **Emergency SOS:** Activate this feature so your phone can contact 911 and alert your emergency contacts.
- **Medical ID:** Include medications, allergies, medical conditions, doctors, emergency contacts—even pet info. Be aware that some details may be visible even if the phone is locked.
- **County Alerts:** Sign up for your county’s emergency alert system. The importance of this can’t be overstated—we all need as much notice as possible to stay informed.
- **Power Company Notifications:** These provide updates about outages and repair timelines.
- **Offline Maps:** Download maps in advance so you can navigate even without cell service.

Week 2: Critical Documents & Emergency Cash

Being able to access important information during a crisis is essential.

- **Important Documents:** Make copies of insurance policies, medical information, identification, and key contacts. Store them in a resealable pouch in your go-bag or in a password-protected note app with cloud backup.
- **Cash:** Set aside around \$250 in small bills (ones, fives, tens, and twenties). Keep it with your documents in a secure, accessible location.

Packing Tips: Store items in backpacks or bins weighing no more than 25 pounds and keep them in a spot that’s easy to reach quickly.

Week 3: Emergency Supplies

Focus on mobility. These aren’t long-term hurricane supplies, but quick-access essentials.

- **Food & Water:** Pre-filled insulated water bottles are easier to grab than gallon jugs. Pack lightweight, non-perishable food bars—avoid chocolate, which melts easily.
- **Medications:** Use clearly labeled 7-day pill organizers for each person and pet. Refill them regularly so they’re always ready.
- **Other Essentials:** Use the Florida Division of Emergency Management’s checklist as a reference: floridadisaster.org/planprepare.

Week 4: Pets and Family Roles

Involve the entire household in the plan.

- **Assignments:** Designate one adult for each small child or person with mobility needs. Split tasks according to ability.
- **Pets:** Crate-train your dog in advance, and keep ID tags on collars. Consider adding an AirTag as a backup.
- **Meeting Place:** Choose a location everyone can easily reach—we use the garage. Plan multiple evacuation routes using Google Maps and share them with family and friends.
- **Task Cards:** Give each person a card with simple, specific instructions. Store them in an easy-to-access location.

Practice Your Plan

Choose a day and time window to test your plan. Let everyone know when the drill begins. Once the alert is given, start the timer and let each person follow the instructions on their card.

During our drill, my wife, our dog, and I were in the car with all our gear in 4 minutes and 28 seconds. I did realize I wouldn’t have had time to grab my laptop or iPad, and I packed too much food—one bag ended up bulky and hard to manage.

(Cont’d to next page)

Evacuation in 4:28 – A Resident’s Mitigation Mindset (cont’d)

By: Howard Lavine

What’s Next?

We’re now planning a two-minute evacuation drill to simulate a house fire scenario—because sometimes, that’s all the time you get.

Final Thoughts

This isn’t official guidance. It’s simply what worked for my family. It took time to plan, added a little stress, and made us think critically. But more than anything, it gave us peace of mind.

Creating and testing your evacuation plan is an investment in safety. It may take effort and reveal areas for improvement—but it’s worth it. Real mitigation isn’t just about what might happen. It’s about what you do now to make sure you’re ready when it does.



Essential items before they are packed

New Floodplain Guidance

The Office of Floodplain Management has released updated guidance on several topics to support local officials in maintaining National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) compliance and improving floodplain management practices. Read the full guidance [here](#).

Repealing the Cumulative Substantial Damage Improvement (CSI)



Provides communities with direction to amend local floodplain ordinances and Florida Building Code references to remove previously adopted CSI provisions and revert to the standard Substantial Improvement requirements, aligning local practice with NFIP and state law. Find it on FDEM’s Floodplain Community Resources page.

Temporary Barriers



Inflatable dams or modular walls provide short-term flood protection but must not obstruct flows, increase risk, or conflict with NFIP rules. Guidance covers acceptable uses, permitting, and documentation.

Section 1316 Process



Communities may deny NFIP flood insurance to properties violating local floodplain ordinances. Guidance details required notices, procedural steps, and FEMA coordination.

Temporary Shelters



Guidance covers site selection, accessibility, permitting, and NFIP/ADA compliance to ensure safe operation in flood-prone areas.

Flood Damaged Equipment



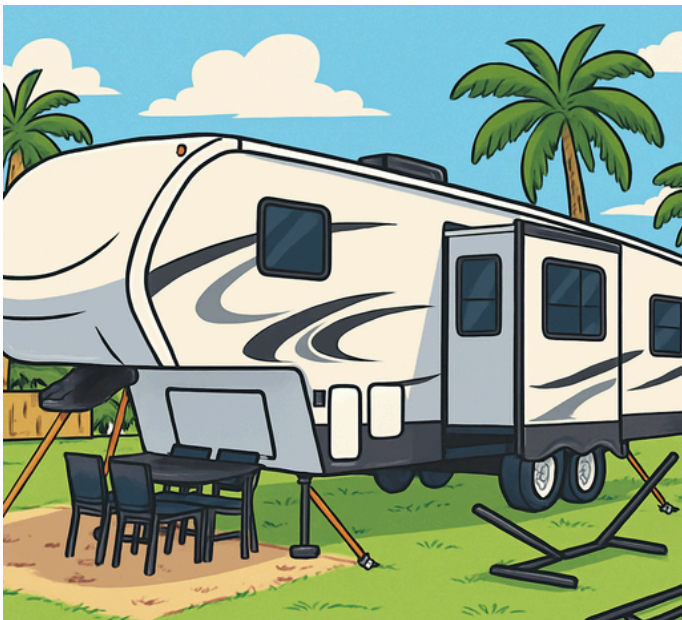
Clarifies when exterior equipment/appliances replaced after flood damage must be fully elevated to code, and how to document cases where full elevation isn’t practicable. Emphasizes elevating to the maximum feasible height while maintaining safe operation and avoiding new hazards (e.g., excessive wind loads).

Questions? Contact the Office of Floodplain Management at floods@em.myflorida.com.

RV Mitigation

By: Chris Fankhauser

I have a confession to make: I work in Emergency Management in Florida, and I live in an RV. So many people say how crazy I am for doing that. What am I doing living in an RV when we live in an area likely to get hit by a hurricane? The answer: I can hitch my house up and move it to my son's house on the East Coast and then come back to work. It's usually at that time I hear the words "brilliant" or "that's genius." To be honest, I didn't have that plan when I first moved my RV into a park in Southwest Florida. It's the answer I came up with after being asked multiple times why.



Strapped down RV

It does bring up a good point, however, how do you mitigate damage when living in an RV or travel trailer—a home that is not at all safe during storms? Aside from moving my home, there are other ways one can mitigate damage from storms. I have my RV strapped down with ratchet straps, rated at 1,000 pounds each. I have one on the front part of the frame and one on the back, secured to four 2.5' posts that are screwed into the ground. I don't know how much power the wind has, but the first time I went through a storm (Idalia in 2023), I didn't even feel my house moving.

Another mitigation strategy is to take care of the outside items so they don't become projectiles. Whether you have a cute plant sitting outside, a yard swing, an umbrella, or an awning for shade, these items can be launched by strong winds and cause damage not only to your home but neighbors' homes as well. It is important to bring things inside that you can, and if you can't, find someplace where they can be stored securely and safely. For my home, I have a patio table and chairs that I turn upside down and wedge under the back end of my home. I also have a hammock on a frame, that I take the fabric off and bring it inside, then I turn the frame on its side and again wedge that under the edge of my RV. When

Milton came through, I had absolutely no damage to my RV save for one small piece of paint that was rubbed off where my hammock frame was rubbing against my home.

One very important thing to note with an RV that doesn't apply to "normal" homes is to bring in your slides. The wind can catch the slides, and even if it doesn't flip your RV on its side, it can cause damage to the frame or even cause blowing water intrusion into your home. Another recommendation is to unplug from the power source and store the cord inside and shut off, and disconnect the water. While you should always have a surge protector on the power source to your RV, you want to unplug it because surge protectors are not fail-safe. If you are away from your home for an extended period of time, you don't know what you don't know, and if the cord is in danger of failing, you won't be there to catch it before it becomes a real issue.

When it comes down to it, if you live in an area prone to flooding, the best course of action is to relocate your house. Fortunately, my park doesn't see much flooding. Even during Ian, this park was not inundated. I chose this park based on the "Know Your Zone" website from my local Emergency Management Department. Speaking with the park manager to learn about the history of damage in your specific park from prior storms, if you haven't experienced a storm before, is also a great idea.

Overall, there is no need to panic just because you live (or vacation) in an RV in Florida during hurricane season. Just be smart, be prepared, and be ready to go if the need arises.



Cottdale Enhances Infrastructure Resilience with New Generator Installation at Sprayfield Pump Station

By: The City of Cottdale

The City of Cottdale, a rural community in Jackson County, Florida, has reached a significant milestone in its ongoing efforts to strengthen local infrastructure and enhance community resilience. With funding from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) under Hurricane Michael (DR-4399), the City successfully installed a permanent backup generator at the Sprayfield Pump Station—a critical component of the City's wastewater management system.



City of Cottdale holding pond.

The pump station helps protect public health and the environment by safely moving treated wastewater from the City's treatment plant into a holding pond maintained at safe levels. The holding pond stores the treated wastewater before it is sprayed onto fields for agricultural purposes. More than just a utility, the pump station provides multiple environmental benefits to the community. Instead of discharging treated wastewater into surface waters, the system releases the treated wastewater to the land, where it is naturally filtered through the soil. This process not only protects water quality but also enriches the soil with nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus, supporting the growth of grasses that are harvested as hay. As a result, the need for synthetic fertilizers is reduced or eliminated, and the process helps recharge groundwater aquifers—increasing water availability for other uses. This saves the City money, provides a sustainable solution for agriculture, and supports the revenue-generating sale of hay for City expenditures.

Hurricane Michael had a devastating impact on the City when it struck on October 10, 2018. Cottdale experienced widespread structural damage, including homes with roofs torn off and fallen trees. Many residents were left without power and other essential services. The storm's aftermath prompted long-term recovery initiatives across Jackson County to rebuild infrastructure and restore community resilience—including this project. Prior to the generator installation, power outages posed a significant risk to the Sprayfield Pump Station's functionality, potentially leading to service disruptions and environmental hazards from sanitary sewer overflows. The City can now ensure the **continuous operation** of this essential wastewater infrastructure during future power outages and extreme weather events.

"Safeguarding the 873 residents served by the pump station and its surrounding natural resources."



FDEM Engineer, Colton Chinnors, conducting final walkthrough.

Designed with long-term resilience in mind, the generator is strategically located outside the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) and elevated on a concrete slab to withstand a **500-year flood event**. Additionally, it is housed in a protective enclosure that shields it from extreme wind events, ensuring reliable performance even during severe storms.

In May, the City—alongside its engineering partner, Melvin Engineering, and grant management consultants from ICF—successfully completed the final site inspection walkthrough with the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Passing this inspection marked a significant achievement and a testament to the City's commitment to proactive planning and infrastructure investment. The project is now in the financial closeout phase, concluding a successful initiative that will benefit the Cottdale community for years to come.

New Employee Spotlight

The sunshine isn't the only thing bringing the heat—our Mitigation team is on fire with activity! If you see a new face in the hall, stop and share a friendly welcome.



Ashanti Ford
Financial Specialist



Gopi Vardhan Gunta
Data Analyst



Brian Contino
Contract Manager



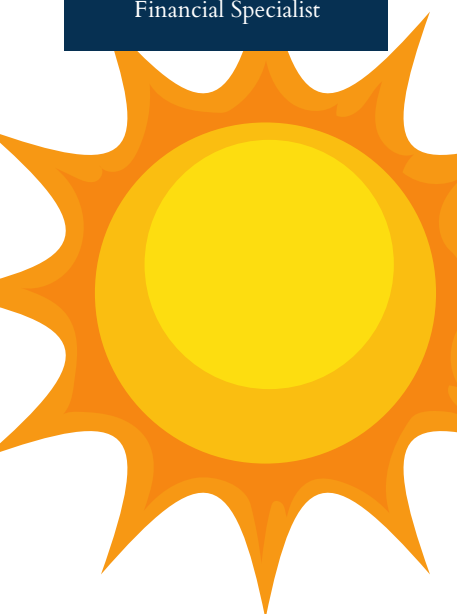
Sharima Brown
Budget Analyst



Jackson Olmstead
HMGP Program
Specialist



Shaun Frison
Non-Disaster Grant
Manager





Which Mitigation Effort Are You?

Are you the hero of your house or the champion of your block?

Hero of my home,
everything else later.



What's your ultimate
hurricane flex?



I batten down
like a boss.

I am above
the stress.



**You're a Wind
Retrofit Project!**

Think of yourself as
the strong, silent type.
You're all about
reinforcing roofs,
adding hurricane
straps, upgrading
windows, and sealing
the deal against those
gusty tantrums from
Mother Nature.



**You're an
Elevation Project!**

You're the high-flyer
of the group —
literally. By raising
homes above base
flood levels, you keep
living spaces high and
dry while making
floodwaters look like
they're trying way too
hard.



**You're a Flood
Control Project!**

You're the behind-
the-scenes hero —
pumps, culverts,
floodwalls... you do
the hard work so the
streets don't turn into
rivers. You may not
be flashy, but you
save the day more
than anyone realizes.

Champion of the block,
we weather it together.



Which storm-season hobby
are you obsessed with?



Rallying the
neighbors.

Stocking up on all the
essentials.



**You're a Safe
Room Project!**

You're the ultimate
"host with the most"
during disasters —
keeping the lights on,
the doors open, and
the Wi-Fi running at
shelters and critical
facilities when
everyone else is
scrambling.

Need More Information?

Mitigation Planning Team Contact
MitigationPlanning@em.myflorida.com

The Bureau of Mitigation

Mitigation is an integral part of the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM). Mitigation actions reduce or eliminate the loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Due to Florida's weather, geography, and miles of coastline, the state is highly vulnerable to disasters. Disasters can be very costly to both the citizens and government.

Under the direction of FDEM Executive Director Kevin Guthrie and State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Laura Dhuwe, the Bureau of Mitigation administers several federal mitigation grant programs including the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, the Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities Program, and the Flood Mitigation Assistance Program. The Bureau also administers a state funded mitigation program called the Hurricane Loss Mitigation Program.

If you would like to know more about mitigation in Florida, visit www.floridadisaster.org/mitigation.

