



# CITY OF PORT RICHEY

## 2024 HURRICANE NEWSLETTER



PHOTO: DAVID J. PHILLIP

City of Port Richey  
6333 Ridge Road  
Port Richey, FL 34668  
727-816-1900  
[www.cityofportrichey.com](http://www.cityofportrichey.com)



# Is your property subject to flooding?

**YES!**  
**Most of the City of Port Richey is in a flood zone.**

## Council Members

**John Eric Hoover**  
Mayor

**Linda Rodriguez**  
Vice Mayor

**Robert Hubbard**  
Councilman

**Dave Mueller**  
Councilman

**Cherokee Sampson**  
Councilwoman

**Matthew W. Coppler**  
City Manager

## Council Meetings

City Council meetings can be viewed with QR Code below or at [cityofportrichey.com](http://cityofportrichey.com)



Located on the Gulf of Mexico, the City of Port Richey faces a critical flooding risk due to its low elevation just a few feet above high tide. Most of the City falls under Evacuation Level A, the highest danger level, necessitating evacuation for residents along the Pithlachascotee River and west of U.S. 19 when evacuation orders are issued. In such instances, City Police, Fire, Building, and Public Works personnel will drive down the streets, even going door-to-door if necessary, to ensure residents are aware and advised to evacuate. The primary flood threat arises during hurricane season (Jun to November), as per the National Weather Service's designation.

[www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)



## STAY INFORMED



The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is responsible for providing information on current weather statuses. Public advisories are issued every 6 hours, unless a WATCH or WARNING has been issued, then notices and radar positions will be issued hourly. In case of a hurricane and/or flooding, stay updated with [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov) or [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)

The Pasco County Office of Emergency Management operates a comprehensive emergency warning system. This includes emergency news releases, voice cable override, government access channels, the Emergency Alert System, and the Community Notification System. This system is used for floods as well as other emergencies. Local radio stations such as these FM channels: 93.3, 94.1, 97.1, 97.9, 99.5, 100.7, 104.7, 106.3, the following AM channels: 620, 970, 1040, 1450, 1550, and 1620, and television channels such as ABC, NBC, and Bay News 9 are some that can be listened to and watched for status updated. Updates can also be found at: [www.pascoemergencymanagement.com](http://www.pascoemergencymanagement.com)



Sign up for Nixle, the City's mass notification system to stay informed during major storms or emergencies with updates from the City of Port Richey. Register for this free service by texting your zip code to 888777 or visiting [www.cityofportrichey.com](http://www.cityofportrichey.com) to register online.

Staying informed is critical during storms/hurricanes. You can also download the MyPasco app for your cellular devices.



**DURING AN EMERGENCY, YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN YOUR MOST VALUABLE PROPERTY.**

**TAKE STEPS NOW TO HELP YOUR FAMILY PREPARE FOR AN EMERGENCY!**

**THE BASICS**



**14 DAYS**

Medication: Keep updated lists of family medications and dosages along with doctor and pharmacy phone numbers. Keep a two-week (14-day) supply of prescription medications.



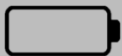
**7 DAYS**

Food: Keep enough food to feed the whole family for seven to ten days. Choose things that don't need refrigeration or cooking (canned goods, protein bars, peanut butter). Don't forget any special dietary foods or baby food and/or formula, if needed. Remember the can opener.



**7 DAYS**

Water: One gallon of water per person, per day for drinking and water for cooking/washing.



Batteries: Have a supply of extra batteries for flashlights, radios, etc., as well as a portable charger for cellular devices.

- Make your Family Disaster Plan.
- Know your evacuation zone and route to a nearby shelter.
- Pack your first aid kit.
- Pack water and non-perishable food.
- Don't forget to pack your pets foods and medicines
- Pack your portable radio, flashlights, extra batteries and non-electric can opener.
- Move valuable household possessions to a safer location or elevate (time permitting).
- Fuel your vehicle.
- Safeguard important documents such as **passports, licenses, bank and credit cards, wills, deeds, insurance policies, etc.**

Persons who live in frequently flooded areas should keep on hand materials such as **sandbags, plywood, plastic sheeting, and lumber** which can be used to protect property. Remember, sandbags should not be stacked against the outer walls of a buildings since, when wet, the bags may create added pressure on the foundation. Sandbags may be available at City Hall, 6333 Ridge Road, in the event of potential flooding. Please contact the Development Services Department at 727-816-1900 option 2 for locations.

**SHELTER INFORMATION**

- Schrader Elementary School: 11041 Little Road, New Port Richey
- Chasco Elementary School: 7906 Ridge Road, Port Richey
- Fasano Regional Hurricane Shelter (**pet friendly**) 11611 Denton Avenue, Hudson

**PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY**

- Demolish the building or relocate it out of harm's way.
- Elevate the building above flood elevation.
- Dry flood proof the building so water cannot enter and cause damage.
- Wet flood proof portions of the building so water can flow through without causing damage.
- Construct a berm or redirect drainage away from the building.
- Maintain nearby streams, ditches and storm drains so debris does not obstruct them.
- Correct sewer backup problems.
- Any assistance or advice, including a site visit, please call the Development Services Department at 727-816-1900 option 2.

**PROTECT YOUR FAMILY**

- **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!** Avoid flooded areas or those with rapid water flow.
- Get to a shelter if needed.
- Build an emergency supply kit.
- Learn and practice evacuation routes, shelter plans, and flash flood response.
- If evacuating, take your pets, including their supplies and vaccination records.
- Let friends and/or relatives know where you are going.
- Check on and assist neighbors if possible and safe.

**BEFORE THE FLOOD**

- Keep a battery powered or hand cranked radio turned to a local station for emergency instructions.
- If water starts to rise inside your home before you have evacuated retreat to the second floor, the attic, or the roof if necessary. Be prepared with a flashlight, radio, and dry clothes. Wait for help! Do not try to swim to safety.
- Shut off the main breaker in your electrical panel.

**DURING THE FLOOD**

- Do not attempt to cross a flowing stream or drive through water. It only takes six inches of fast flowing water to sweep you off your feet.
- Do not walk through flowing water. The water may be contaminated by sewage leaks.
- Do not drive through flood waters. Stay away from electrical and power lines.
- Do not allow children to play in or near high water, storm drains or ditches.
- Floods are unpredictable natural disasters. If you encounter a flood, there are actions you can take to protect losses.

**AFTER THE FLOOD**

- If your home or business has been damaged, contact the insurance company who handles your flood insurance to file a claim.
- Listen to authorities for information and instructions. Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Avoid driving except in emergencies.
- Be aware of the risk of electrocution. Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water.
- Avoid wading in flood water which can contain debris and be contaminated.
- Use a generator or other gasoline powered machinery ONLY outdoors away from windows.

**STORMWATER MANAGEMENT**

The City has a system of drainage channels and ditches for storm water management purposes. They are maintained on a regular basis by the Public Works Department. These ditches are of vital importance since the water flowing through them not only drains our City streets, but also the inland area. Keep debris and trash out of our natural floodplain by keeping these ditches clean. During business hours, please report any violations to Public Works at 727-816-1900 #1 or after hours to the Police Department 727-816-1919.

**IMPORTANT NUMBERS**

City of Port Richey	727-816-1900	Port Richey PD	727-816-1919
Pasco County	727-847-2411	Port Richey FD	727-819-1929
Animal Services NPR	727-834-3246	Port Richey Utilities/PW	727-816-1902
Duke Energy	800-700-8744	Florida Consumer Fraud	866-966-7226
FEMA Helpline	800-321-3362	Disaster Distress Hotline	800-850-7935
Special Needs Shelter	727-847-8137	Withlacoochee Electric	352-567-5133

**CITY OF PORT RICHEY**

6333 Ridge Road  
Port Richey, FL 34668

Phone: 727-816-1900

Fax: 727-816-1916

[www.cityofportrichey.com](http://www.cityofportrichey.com)

**HOURS OF OPERATION**

Monday – Friday  
8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

**Utility billing drop box available 24 hours**



**DEPARTMENT CONTACT INFORMATION**

Administration: 727-816-1912

Development: 727-835-1099

Code

Compliance: 727-271-3822

Finance: 727-835-0969

Fire: 727-816-1910

Operations/HR: 727-816-1907

Police Dispatch: 727-816-1919

Public Works: 727-835-1240

Utilities: 727-835-1241

Utility Billing: 727-816-1902

# KNOW YOUR HAZARDS: FLOODING

## COASTAL FLOODING

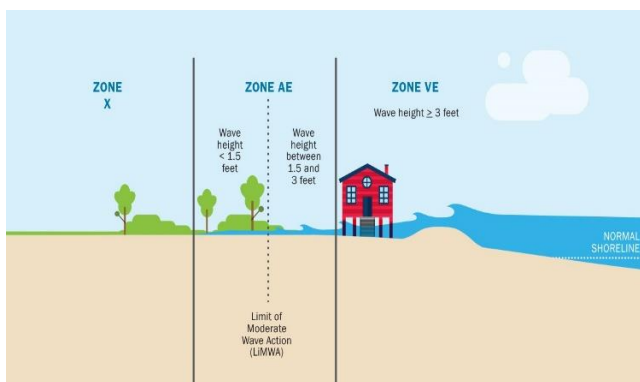
The flooding of land areas along the coast caused by higher-than-average high tide and worsened by heavy rain and onshore winds. Lower elevation increases the effects of coastal flooding.

## STORM SURGE

An abnormal rise in water levels near coastal areas, over and above the regular astronomical tide. The surge is caused by forces generated from a severe storm through wind, waves, and low atmospheric pressure. The effects of a storm surge are more severe when they coincide with normal high tide. The storm surge historically causes 9 out of 10 hurricane-related deaths.

## STORM SURGE vs STORM TIDE

**Storm surge** is an abnormal rise of water generated by a storm, over and above the predicted astronomical tides. Storm surge should not be confused with **storm tide**, which is defined as the water level rise due to the combination of storm surge and the astronomical tide. This rise in water level can cause extreme flooding in coastal areas, particularly when storm surge coincides with normal high tide, resulting in storm tides reaching up to 20 feet or more in some cases.



## RIVER FLOODING

Water levels rise over the tops of riverbanks due to excessive rainfall. This can occur slowly over several days or rapidly in short period of time.

## FLASH FLOODING

Heavy rainfall in a short period of time, typically less than 6 hours, can cause raging torrents that rush down river beds and urban streets. The danger lies in the speed at which the water is flowing. Six inches of fast-moving water is enough to knock a person off their feet and as little as one foot of moving water can move most cars off of the road.

# KNOW YOUR HAZARDS: HURRICANE

## HURRICANES

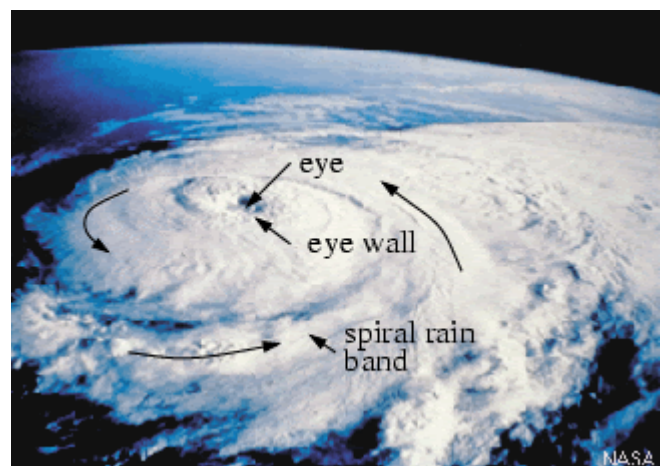
A **tropical depression** becomes a tropical storm when wind speeds exceed 39 mph. At this point, a tropical storm is given a name. The names are given alphabetically on a yearly basis. The names are reused after 6 years unless it is declared a major hurricane or there are catastrophic damages, in which case, the name is retired and cannot be used again.

A **tropical storm** becomes a hurricane when wind speeds exceed 74 mph. A hurricane is a severe tropical storm that forms in the Southern Atlantic Ocean, the Caribbean Sea, or the Gulf of Mexico. They typically develop in warm, tropical waters and produce violent winds, incredible waves, and torrential rains and flooding.

## THE EYE OF THE STORM

The center of the hurricane is called the eye. This part of the storm, however brief, is usually calm and quiet. The eyewall is the middle of a ring of clouds (similar to a tornado) caused by high winds with heavy rainfall.

The eye wall is often the most destructive, having highest winds, largest clouds, and most collective rainfall. The northeast side of the storm tends to have the highest probability of causing damage as a result of tornadoes, higher rainfall, and greater storm surge.



While a hurricane can often be tracked and/or predicted, the exact path of a hurricane is determined by weather patterns that may alter from the predicted paths. There can be potential errors in the forecasted track from the National Hurricane Center. Hurricanes are one natural disaster that can include all hazards covered in this guide.

# KNOW YOUR RISK OF FLOODING

Protect your property from flood hazards. Flooding can happen anywhere, even if you live in an “X” flood zone, an area with the least probability of flooding. Homeowners, renters and business owners are eligible to purchase flood insurance. There is a **30-day waiting period so act now** and call your insurance agent. Take advantages of a low-cost preferred risk policy. The City of Port Richey residents and business owners are eligible for a **15% discount** because of the City’s participation in the Community Rating System. Find out if your property is in the regulated floodplain by calling City Hall, (727)-816-1900 Option 2.

Most standard Homeowners’ policies do not cover flooding from rising water. All property owners can purchase flood insurance for structures and contents within City of Port Richey. Renters can purchase insurance for their belongings too. Most flood insurance policies have 30 days from the time they are entered until they are affective.

Some flood insurance policies are transferable when buying and selling a home, saving you money in a home purchase and sales transactions. To learn more about flood insurance, speak to an insurance professional to understand your flood insurance needs and determine if you are fully insured. This is especially important if you are in a condominium association. A master policy does **NOT** usually cover the inside of the unit or its contents. More information is available at [floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov).



# BUILDING REponsibly

If you are planning substantial improvement to your home- that is, repairs are equal to or greater than 50% of your home’s market value-you must meet current Florida Building Code standards and comply with the City of Port Richey floodplain ordinance.

Ensure you get a permit before you build, and work with a licensed contractor who knows the codes. An Elevation Certificate may be on file on the [cityofportrichey.com](http://cityofportrichey.com) or within the Development Services Department.

Keep Natural Areas Undisturbed Wetlands, open space, and the Coastal Barrier Resources System Areas are essential for many reasons, including stormwater storage. It is everyone’s responsibility to protect these areas.

## Here’s what you can do to keep natural areas clean and healthy:

- Do not dump lawn trash or anything in storm drains.
- Keep creeks, streams and ditches clean and free of debris
- Scoop pet waste and keep it from entering waterways.
- Use a car wash instead of your driveway.
- Adhere to City of Port Richey Fertilizer Ordinance. Limit the use of fertilizer and pesticides, and do not apply fertilizers closer than 15’ to a water body.
- Report illegal dumping or clearing.



# PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR PROPERTY

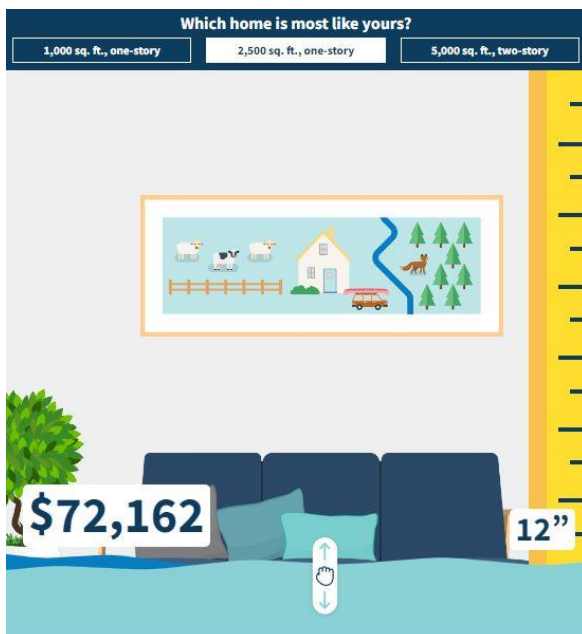
Flooding causes more property damage in the United States than in any other natural disaster. While recent construction regulations have reduced the risk of flooding, many older structures remain susceptible. There is a growing interest by property owners to develop practical and cost-effective methods for reducing the likelihood of flooding.

## Several effective techniques include:

- Redirect downspouts away from your home.
- Grade your yard, so water drains to a catchment area.
- Use a rain barrel and use the water for landscaping, which also saves on the cost of potable water.

For flood protection advice, including a potential site visit from staff, and possible financial assistance, contact the Development Services Department at (727)-816-1900 option 2.

The cost of flood insurance is a drop in the bucket compared to the cost of flood damage. Just a few inches of water can cause tens of thousands of dollars in damage. To see projections of costs associated with flooding, visit the Flood Calculator at [floodsmart.gov/cost-flooding](https://floodsmart.gov/cost-flooding).



City of Port Richey Website

# HURRICANE SEASON

## JUNE 1 – NOVEMBER 30

### PRECIOUS COMMODITIES BEFORE AND AFTER A STORM

#### CHARGERS

Keep chargers for cell phones and other mobile devices somewhere safe. Consider solar powered alternatives.

#### CASH

With no power, banks may be closed; checks and credit cards may not be accepted, and ATM's may not be operational. Charcoal, matches, propane and grill.

#### DO NOT USE INDOORS!

#### ICE

If the power goes out, ice can help preserve food in the freezer or cooler. It can also be used for water.

#### CORDED PHONE

An old-fashioned corded telephone (not a cordless or cell phone) does not require electricity to work.

#### GAS

For the days leading up to a disaster, try to keep your gas tank on full in your vehicle.



### IMPORATANT PHONE NUMBERS

<b>EMERGENCY.....</b>	<b>9 1 1</b>
211 Referral Line.....	2 1 1
American Red Cross.....	727-848-8354
Catholic Charities.....	352-686-9897
Disaster Distress Hotline.....	800-985-5990
Duke Energy.....	800-228-8485
FEMA Helpline.....	800-621-3362
NOAA Weather Radio FIPS.....	Code 012101
Pasco County Animal Services.....	813-929-1212
Pasco County Public Transportation.....	727-834-3322
Port Richey Fire.....	727-816-1910
Port Richey Police.....	727-816-1919
Salvation Army.....	727-815-8539
Special Needs Registration.....	727-847-8137
TECO.....	888-223-0800
United Way.....	727-845-3030
Withlacoochee River Electric.....	727-868-9465

#### STORM FACTS

##### SAFFIR-SIMPSON HURRICANE

##### WIND SCALE

Tropical Depression	<38 mph
Tropical Storm	39-73 mph
Cat. 1 Hurricane	74-95 mph
Cat. 2 Hurricane	96-110 mph
Cat. 3 Hurricane	111-129 mph
Cat. 4 Hurricane	130-156 mph
Cat. 5 Hurricane	156+ mph

#### HURRICANE WATCH

Predictions have determined that your location is in a possible path of the storm within the next 48 hours. Have a plan in place if the **WATCH** becomes a **WARNING**.

#### HURRICANE WARNING

You are in the projected path of the hurricane. A **WARNING** will be issued to the affected areas 36 hours in advance. All hurricane watches and warnings are issued by the National Hurricane Center.

#### ONLINE RESOURCES

[cdc.gov](http://cdc.gov)  
[dhs.gov](http://dhs.gov)  
[disastersafety.org](http://disastersafety.org)  
[cityofportrichey.com](http://cityofportrichey.com)  
[facebook.com/portrichey/](https://facebook.com/portrichey/)  
[fema.gov](http://fema.gov)  
[lost.petcolove.org](http://lost.petcolove.org)  
[flash.org](http://flash.org)  
[floodsmart.gov](http://floodsmart.gov)  
[floridadisaster.org](http://floridadisaster.org)  
[highwindsaferooms.org](http://highwindsaferooms.org)  
[iii.org](http://iii.org)  
[mysafeflorida.org](http://mysafeflorida.org)  
[MyPasco.net](http://MyPasco.net)  
[pascosheriff.com](http://pascosheriff.com)  
[petswelcome.com](http://petswelcome.com)  
[ready.gov](http://ready.gov)  
[redcross.org](http://redcross.org)  
[salvationarmyusa.org](http://salvationarmyusa.org)  
[stopthebleed.org](http://stopthebleed.org)  
[tampabayprepares.org](http://tampabayprepares.org)  
[usda.gov](http://usda.gov)  
[voa.org](http://voa.org)  
[weather.gov](http://weather.gov)