

Biden-Harris Administration Urges Those in Hurricane Idalia's Path to Complete Preparation Immediately, Continues Hawaii Response

Release Date: Oct 29, 2023

WASHINGTON -- As the Biden-Harris Administration continues response and recovery actions in Hawaii, the federal government is mobilizing ahead of Hurricane Idalia and encouraging residents in the storm's path to prepare and follow the guidance of local officials.

FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell spoke with Florida Sen. Rick Scott yesterday and encouraged the state to share information about areas of concern so FEMA can set up response and recovery operations in the appropriate areas as quickly as possible.

Many counties in Florida have issued [evacuation orders](#) ahead of Hurricane Idalia. Anyone in the forecast path of the storm should monitor their local news for updates, follow directions provided by their local officials and heed evacuation orders.

Those living in Hurricane Idalia's path should rush to complete preparedness actions, as this storm is expected to intensify rapidly into a dangerous major hurricane before landfall Tuesday night. There is a danger of life-threatening storm surge along portions of the Florida Gulf Coast, from Tampa Bay to the Big Bend region.

FEMA is prepositioned to support any needs that may arise as Idalia makes landfall. FEMA's National Response Coordination Center is activated to support any requests for federal assistance. FEMA deployed 640 personnel, including six Incident Management Assistance Teams, nine Urban Search and Rescue teams and three Disaster Survivor Assistance Strike Teams, all prepared to respond if requested to do so.



FEMA has fully stocked distribution warehouses with response commodities and teams ready to move those assets at the request of the state once the storm passes. The American Red Cross and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deployed teams and resources anticipating the need to provide shelter, food and emergency power support.

FEMA is also closely coordinating with Georgia and South Carolina and stands ready to provide support as needed.

FEMA encourages everyone to visit www.Ready.gov or www.Listo.gov to learn more about how to be prepared and how to protect yourself and your loved ones during emergencies.

Stay Safe During Hurricane Idalia

Residents and visitors in potentially affected areas should have a family emergency communications plan, charge their devices and batteries, ensure they are receiving emergency alerts and check on your neighbors, especially those who are older adults or may need additional assistance preparing or evacuating.

People with disabilities, older adults and their families may need to take additional steps to plan for their individual circumstances to effectively prepare for disasters. People who live in Florida with disabilities and others with access and functional needs who require help during a disaster should register with the Florida Department of Health Registry. More emergency information is available on [Florida's disaster updates](#) page.

- **Get Emergency Alerts.** Make sure to sign up to receive weather [alerts in your community](#) and to stay updated on the latest weather news from the National Weather Service.
- **Do not focus on the exact track of the hurricane.** Hurricanes are immense systems, and changes in size, intensity speed and direction can change quickly. Additionally, areas far from the storm's center can experience effects such as flooding and heavy winds.
- **[Storm surge](#) is often the greatest threat to life and property from a hurricane.** It poses a significant threat for drowning and can occur before, during or after the center of a storm passes through an area. Storm surge can



sometimes cut off evacuation routes, so leave immediately if an evacuation is ordered for your area.

- **Don't drive through flood waters.** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low lying areas at bridges and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- **Personal Safety.** Listen to officials and stay off the roads if told to do so. Evacuate if told to do so. **If you did not evacuate, find a safe location to ride out the storm. Avoid enclosed areas, such as an attic, where you may become trapped by storm surge and flooding.**
- **Evacuating.** If you are in potentially affected areas, you should be familiar with evacuation routes, have a family emergency communications plan, keep a battery-powered radio handy and have plans for your family members and pets. If you are a person with disabilities, you may need to take additional steps to plan for both your needs and your service animal.
- Your National Flood Insurance Program policy will [cover and reimburse certain actions](#) you take to minimize damage to your home and belongings before a flood.

Continued Support for Hawaii

More than 830 federal personnel are on the ground on Maui assisting residents in their greatest time of need. FEMA's Disaster Survivor Assistance teams are going to survivors' homes to help people register for assistance. To date, the Biden-Harris Administration has approved \$16.2 million in assistance to more than 4,200 households.

