

# Floridians Must Listen to Local Authorities as Hurricane Milton Makes Landfall; FEMA Administrator Traveling to Florida Tonight Ahead of Landfall

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*Hurricane Milton will be catastrophic; FEMA is working in close coordination with state and local officials*

WASHINGTON – Ahead of Hurricane Milton’s landfall, FEMA Administrator Criswell will travel to Florida tonight to work alongside state and local officials as they prepare for the impacts of this catastrophic storm. Floridians in the storm’s path must continue following the instructions of local officials, as the storm is expected to bring destructive storm surge along portions of Florida’s west coast as well as devastating hurricane-force winds, heavy rainfall and life-threatening flooding across the Florida Peninsula.

Floridians in Milton’s path in vulnerable parts of the state have been ordered to evacuate. Those who have stayed behind are urged to go immediately. Many residents outside of mandatory evacuation zones will experience significant rain and hurricane force winds.

**FEMA has over 1,000 responders on the ground** in Florida supporting Milton and previous disasters. There are **over 1,400 search and rescue personnel pre-staged** to support Milton response efforts.

FEMA and its federal partners are leaning forward and already pre-positioned resources to support local and state response efforts ahead of Hurricane Milton. FEMA pre-staged **seven FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams, eight federal Urban Search & Rescue and swift water rescue teams, three U.S. Coast Guard Swift Water Rescue teams, 10 HealthCare System Assessment Teams, two U.S Army Corps of Engineers temporary power teams**, debris experts, Environmental Protection Agency wastewater experts,



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**over 400 ambulances, 20 helicopters** prepared to support medical requirements following landfall, and **60 High Water Vehicles with ladders** from the Department of Defense.

Additionally, FEMA has **five incident staging bases** with commodities including food and water. Right now, FEMA has **20 million meals** and **40 million liters of water** ready to deploy to address ongoing Helene and Milton response efforts with capacity to expand as needed.

President Biden granted emergency declarations for the state of Florida and the Seminole Tribe of Florida for Hurricane Milton, enabling FEMA to provide direct assistance to the state, local and tribal response, preposition supplies and response assets and mobilize hundreds of personnel in the state, many of whom were already in place supporting the Hurricane Helene response.

## Stay Safe in the Storm

Those in the path of Hurricane Milton should take every precaution as the storm passes through.

- **Move to higher ground:** Free shuttles are operating this morning in Manatee, Pinellas, Pasco, Hillsborough and Sarasota counties. To locate shuttle locations, visit [www.FloridaDisaster.org/updates](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org/updates). Residents may also use Uber code MILTONRELIEF to receive free Uber ride to a shelter.
- **Shelter in place:** Do not attempt to travel during the storm. Hurricane winds are expected to impact a significant portion of the state, far away from the eye of the storm. Flash flooding, tornadoes, high-velocity debris, fallen trees and power lines will pose a significant danger.
- **If you do not feel safe in your home:** A list of emergency shelters, including those that can accommodate people who need assistance and those who have pets can be found at [Shelter Status | Florida Disaster](#). If you plan to go to a shelter, do so before the storm arrives.
- **Stay out of floodwater:** Walking or driving through flood waters is extremely dangerous. Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines or contain hazards such as wild or stray animals, human and livestock waste, and chemicals that can lead to illness.
- **Be prepared for service outages:**



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- Fill and freeze empty water bottles to help keep food cool in the event of a power outage. Fill your bathtub so you have a clean water supply in the event of water service disruption.
- Charge all electronic devices, then put them in low power or battery saver mode. While cell service and power may be disrupted during the storm, your phone is a lifeline to family, friends, emergency assistance and alerts. Preserve your batteries so your devices are ready if you need them. Text messages or social network sites may be the best way to get in touch with family and friends as Hurricane Milton moves through the state.
- Use only flashlights or battery-powered lanterns for emergency lighting. Never use candles during a blackout or power outage due to extreme risk of fire.
- When using generators, always use them outdoors and at least 20 feet from windows, doors and attached garages. Make sure to keep the generator dry and protected from rain or flooding.



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