

Videos Tell the Florida Hurricane Irma Story

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ATTENTION EDITORS: This story contains links to several videos illustrating Hurricane Irma response and recovery efforts. The videos are available for use by media. Broadcast-quality versions of the videos may be downloaded. FEMA's video website also offers code for web editors to embed any of the videos on news media or local government websites.

Volunteers

As soon as the skies cleared and the roads opened after Hurricane Irma, thousands of people began helping survivors put their lives back together. The [Florida Baptist Kitchen](#) prepared 30,000 meals per day that volunteers distributed to survivors. The [Red Cross Meal Delivery](#) project offered food to hundreds of survivors in hard-hit Immokalee, Florida.

The [Florida Baptist Supply Distribution](#) program worked with local and out-of-state partners to provide food, water and emergency supplies to survivors in Naples.

Over a seven day period, [AmeriCorps Volunteers](#) cleared enough debris to fill 200 dump trucks.

Even as Monroe County began to recover from Hurricane Irma, debris still clogged many waterways. A group of friends decided to make marine debris removal their mission. A few months later, the 1,000 members of the [Conch Republic Marine Army](#) has collected 90 tons of debris.

[St. Columba Episcopal Church Providing Housing:](#)

Eighteen days after Hurricane Irma's landfall, St. Columba's Episcopal Church brought in travel trailers to house survivors who had lost everything. The church later acquired 17 more trailers and is currently rehabbing an apartment complex to help provide affordable housing for Keys residents.



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Mitigation

[The Evolution of Mitigation:](#)

Seeing is believing. Prompted by the devastation of Hurricane Andrew, Florida adopted some of the most stringent building codes in the country. Homes built before Hurricane Andrew in 1992 sustained extreme damage when Irma roared into the Keys, destroying most of them. Houses built after the stronger codes were enacted came through the Category 4 hurricane with minimal damage.

[Building Back Stronger:](#)

St. Peter Church in Marathon, Florida offers another example of the effectiveness of Florida's building codes. The church, rectory and office were all severely damaged by Hurricane Irma. But, the ministry center—built after the stronger building codes were enacted and designed to withstand Category 4 hurricane winds—survived intact.

[The Turtle Hospital Was Ready For Hurricane Irma:](#)

In 2005, Hurricane Wilma's five-foot storm surge flooded the sea turtle enclosure, pushing turtles out of their pools. To avoid that happening again, the Turtle Hospital built new, elevated tanks and developed a preparedness plan. As Irma closed in, the turtles were evacuated and medical equipment was moved to protect it from the hurricane's wind, rain and storm surge. The church will be rebuilt to comply with the stronger codes and elevated five feet to reduce the potential of future flooding.

Recovery

[ESF-10 in the Florida Keys:](#)

Hurricane Irma displaced hundreds of boats, creating the potential for navigation hazards and discharge of oil and other pollutants into Florida's waters. FEMA mission-assigned the U.S. Coast Guard which worked with the Florida Department of Fish and Wildlife to recover and safely remove vessels.

[Open to Care for You](#)



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When Fishermen's Hospital was closed due to damage from Hurricane Irma, a field hospital was established to provide health care to Keys residents. Although services are limited, the hospital is able to offer medical services to people in need.

Preserving Florida's Culture and History

Cummer Museum of Art & Gardens

Flooding caused by Hurricane Irma swamped gardens at the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens in Jacksonville. Staff from FEMA's Public Assistance and Environmental and Historic Preservation departments toured the facility to assess the storm's impact and explain how FEMA can help restore the historic gardens.

Marathon Community Theatre:

Hurricane Irma tore the roof off the nonprofit theater and scattered it across the neighborhood. The next day, staff began cleaning up, contacting the theater's insurance company and filing for assistance from the SBA and FEMA. One month later, the theater reopened.

Vizcaya Museum and Gardens in Miami:

The museum and gardens, a National Historic Landmark listed on the National Register of Historic Places built a large glass canopy to protect art displayed in an outside courtyard. After Florida's new building codes were enacted, the museum received more than \$1.8 million from FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to replace it with a hurricane-resistant canopy.

Want to learn more of the Hurricane Irma response and recovery? Check out our one year video roundup: <https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/videos/168673>



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