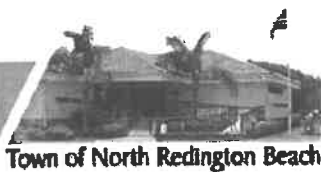




190 - 173rd Avenue
North Redington Beach, Florida 33708
Office 727-391-4846



Town of North Redington Beach

Mayor's Message

Special Hurricane Information

We all realize how very fortunate we are as a town and beach community that we have been spared severe damage from hurricanes for many years. Our hearts go out to our neighbors across the state when tragedy strikes.

It's very easy to get complacent when we continue to avoid being impacted and these misses can create a false sense of security. Hurricane Ian 2022 and Hurricane Idalia 2023 should be a reminder of the actual danger associated in taking storms too lightly. Each of us need to view the damage and think about the consequences of being in our house with a 15' storm surge. Many of our homes would be completely submerged and those that are elevated could suffer structural damage from the movement of the water. Take this opportunity to increase your preparedness for next time...and there will be a next time. Research information on hurricanes, understand the difference in categories, be aware of the damage that wind and storm surge can do to our community. As we see from the devastation caused by Ian, roads and bridges can be washed out, water systems damaged, sewer lines & lift stations broken and complete loss of power can occur. Repairs to these systems can take months to reestablish functionality.

Every person living on the beaches should have an evacuation plan. The Pinellas County Hurricane Guide, produced prior to storm season, is an excellent, comprehensive tool to help you plan for hurricane preparedness and an evacuation. These are available at libraries, county buildings and Town Hall beginning June 1st (while supplies last) and it is always available online at <https://pinellas.gov/department/emergency-management/>. A link is available on our website as well.

Get your Emergency Access Permit now. As the storm's path changes and it becomes a threat to our area, people inundate Town Hall to get their Emergency Access Permit. This surge of requests causes the Sheriff's Office computer system to crash, creating extended waits. The permits are available year-round and do not expire. Once you have it, put it in a safe place with your other important papers in your hurricane kit or a fire/waterproof safe.

Alert Pinellas is a way to receive alerts about emergencies and other important communications from Pinellas County. It is the emergency notification service for Pinellas County, local Municipalities, and the Sheriff's Office. This service is FREE to all residents. It allows you to sign up to receive urgent messages on a variety of situations, such as severe weather, boil water notices, missing persons, or evacuations. Visit <https://www.pinellascounty.org/alertpinellas/> to sign up.

Things can and DO change. When an evacuation is ordered by Pinellas County, timing and instructions may change as updated storm information becomes available. Changes will be announced via local news and the Pinellas County website. At the beginning of the evacuation time, when everyone must be off the island, NO ONE will be allowed back on the beaches until the order is lifted. Once the storm passes, the Sheriff's Office will assess the extent of damages and will determine when the bridges will be open for returning traffic. This would be announced thru the news.

Evacuate early. If you evacuate well before the storm (days) there should be gas and less traffic. Run from water and hide from wind. Storm surge is the most destructive and deadly part of a storm. Evacuate to high ground with friends, family or a hotel. In the event of a destructive storm, we may lose power, water and sewer for days or months. Roads could be impassible and help may not be available. Mandatory evacuations are called to keep you safe and you should leave when ordered. Don't be lulled into a false sense of security.

After the storm, recovery takes time. Communication during a storm is very sporadic and challenging. Be aware that cell phones may not work and hard lines may be down. Restoring power to essential facilities (hospitals, health care facilities) and equipment (lift stations) is a priority. Duke Energy does their best to restore homes and businesses in a timely manner, but they have a long list of outages to deal with. Removing debris and restoring the roadways is also a priority as clean-up is essential to restoring normalcy to the town. Please be patient, remember all our neighboring towns have the same situation and it takes time to get necessary equipment and crew to make things look perfect again.

The sun comes out again. While a storm brings about chaos, it also brings out the good in many people. Neighbors come together to help one another, volunteers work in the heat to speed recovery and multiple governmental entities work together as one for the good of all.

Hurricane Myths

- **They (the government) will raise all the bridges so you can't leave.** FALSE – Bridges will be left down to prevent damage and the Pinellas County Sheriff's Deputies will stop traffic coming onto the beach, however access off the island will never be closed.
- **Duke Energy will turn off the power.** POSSIBLE – Although Duke Energy did cut power during Hurricane Charley in 2004, they did not turn off the power during Hurricane Irma. Although this could happen if there was widespread damage.
- **Town Hall is staffed during an evacuation.** FALSE – Staff is evacuated the same as residents and will return to town hall to answer phones and return calls once the order is lifted. Our staff also live in the storm path and have to ensure the safety of their homes and families.
- **The Town has the ability to turn the power off to certain sections of the town.** FALSE – The Town has no control over the power grid at all.
- **The Town would know if my home has power.** FALSE – The power could be on at your neighbor's house and off at yours. The Town has no way of knowing or determining the location of outages.
- **The Pinellas County Sheriff's Emergency Access Permits are required to return to the town.** FALSE – The Emergency Access Permits only expedites re-entry. You can re-enter with valid photo ID and proof of residency.
- **Emergency Access Permit will allow you to return before the evacuation is lifted.** FALSE – The passes are used to expedite entry when access is restricted prior to the storm's arrival. NO ONE will be allowed back after a storm until Pinellas County/Sheriff's Department lifts the order and opens the bridges.
- **You will be arrested if you do not evacuate.** FALSE - A person will not be arrested for staying after an evacuation order has been issued without mitigating circumstances. However, the evacuation is for your safety and the order should be followed.
- **Sand bags are the best solution to prevent water intrusion** – FALSE – While sand bags, used together with appropriate water barriers such as tarps, can help prevent seepage into your home, there are more efficient solutions. Online research will help you find options so you will be prepared for future events.