

HELENE/MILTON UPDATE 10/15

(Please see previous updates for additional important information)

All updates available on townofnrb.com

Town Hall

Unfortunately, our internet and phone luck has run out and we are currently without both. We continue to function on a starlink system but this mean no guest wifi until our regular service is restored. As we have no phones, you are welcome to email or come into town hall with any questions or needs.

Debris

Our contractors began work on Saturday and it's good to see the debris being removed. They will be working from sun up to sun down, 7 days a week completing the first push through town. We have been told that once the first trip through town is complete, there will be a 1-2 week pause before the second run allowing further debris to collect as work on residences proceed.

To help with a smooth removal, please see the information below:

- Remove all cars from in front of, or near, debris piles. This includes any non operating vehicles – have them towed. If there are cars in the vicinity, the pile will not be picked up.
- To prevent the loss of power, internet or cable, move debris from around any utility boxes so they do not get damaged.
- Push all debris to the curb. Any debris closer to houses and not within reach of the trucks, will not be removed.

As a reminder: please keep the gutters in front of your house clear of debris and if you live near a storm drain and see anything on the grate, please help us out by removing it. Our public works staff is working diligently to keep everything clear to prevent street flooding, but if everyone chips in, it benefits the entire town.

There has been some questions regarding the type of equipment being used. As there was such devastation from Helene throughout the south, most heavy machinery such as claw trucks, was already in use in those areas. We are very lucky to get crews and equipment as quickly as we did.

Mail

We have spoken with the local post office and have been advised they are currently sorting and delivering mail. The Madeira office had to relocate to Crossroads as their building was completely flooded. They have asked for patience as there is a large backlog of mail to sort and get delivered, but they are doing their very best.

Businesses Reopening

Some of our businesses are reopening along Gulf Boulevard. Please remember them when you are looking for a bite to eat, a haircut or whatever you need that they may provide. Let's help get them going again.

(Items below are repeated from previous updates)

Beach

Please stay off the beach. It is not safe as there is debris buried in the sand and all beach accesses are closed.

Trailers

We are going to suspend the prohibition on trailers (as we have done on the RV's and PODS) for the next 90 day. At that time, the need will be reassessed and extended if warranted.

Water/Sewer

While we do have water (there are no boil warnings for our area at this time, only the southern barrier islands have this restriction), Pinellas County is

asking everyone to conserve water usage to prevent overloading our sewer systems during this time of recovery.

If you see a water break at any property, please report it to Town Hall at 391-4848.

Storm Damage Repairs and Permitting From our Randy Spears, our Building Official:

The Building Dept is prepared to expedite storm damage permits. If you have water damage, you can proceed to remove the necessary drywall (only what was damaged) insulation and flooring to set fans to dry out the area. Once dried, then you can proceed with a permit. If you need to remove more drywall, cabinets, any electrical it is REQUIRED you have a permit. Please keep in mind that all repairs and materials are subject to the FEMA 50% limitation on improvements and repairs. It is important to note that failure to obtain permits will affect the town's CRS rating & ultimately impact your flood insurance rates. If you received extensive water damage, please contact Randy Spears at (727) 589-7688 or via email at rspears@safebuilt.com to go over the FEMA restrictions.

Housing Help for Displaced Families

Pinellas County residents displaced by Hurricane Helene have several options for seeking short- and long-term housing.

FEMA Displacement Assistance

FEMA Displacement Assistance helps survivors who can't return to their home following a disaster by giving them up-front money to help with immediate housing needs. The amount of money is based on 14 days of hotel costs based on a rate chosen by the state impacted by the disaster. The assistance is a one-time payment. FEMA may provide up to two weeks of funds for temporary lodging at a hotel, motel, or the home of friends or family, for displaced applicants who apply during the registration period.

Displaced residents can apply for this and other help by calling 1- 800-621-3362, visiting DisasterAssistance.gov, or going in-person to the Disaster Recovery Center, at Largo Public Library, 120 Central Park Drive, Largo. For more info, see FEMA Displacement Assistance Fact Sheet.

FEMA Serious Needs Assistance is also available to pay for emergency supplies like water, food, first aid, breast-feeding supplies, infant formula, diapers, personal hygiene items, or fuel for transportation. You could qualify for both forms of assistance by applying to FEMA by phone or online.

Pinellas Housing Options Website

Pinellas County has posted a list of resources to help displaced people find short- and long-term housing options, including online search tools, real estate company information, short-term rental companies, and apartment listings. Realtors and property managers are responsible for updating their available listings on their websites, but the listings and resources allow residents to more easily locate potential housing options. See [Pinellas.gov/hurricane housing](http://Pinellas.gov/hurricane%20housing).

Local Emergency Shelters

The County continues to provide emergency shelters for people who need a temporary safe place to stay while looking for a longer-term home. Call the County Information Center at (727) 464-4333 for more information on emergency sheltering, including locations that accept pets and have support for people with special medical needs. County staff is actively helping individuals and families who are at shelters find other housing options.

Resources Available

Anyone needing assistance with clean up can contact Volunteer Crisis Cleanup at 844-965-1386 to be paired with volunteers.

If you suspect price gouging, report it to the Florida Attorney General's Office by visiting MyFloridaLegal.com or calling 1(866) 9NO-SCAM.

Updates will be posted on disaster.pinellas.gov, sent out via Alert Pinellas and Ready Pinellas, and on Facebook @PinellasGov and X @PinellasGov.

For more important information, please visit Pinellas County's Emergency Management website for a full list of resources at:

<https://pinellas.gov/emergency-information/>