

Helene Update 10/2

(Please see previous updates for additional important information)

PODS

We are also lifting the prohibition of having PODS at your property. You may have them as long as it is completely on your property as they cannot be in the street. This exception is being implemented for 3 months and will be reviewed and extended as necessary along with the RV allowance.

Building Permits

It is very important that you get a building permit before making any repairs to your structure. Our building department has instituted “over the counter” permitting to speed up processing.

For permitting:

Safebuilt

17895 Gulf Blvd, Suite 201

Redington Shores, FL

727-202-6825

redington@safebuilt.com

Debris

We are still anticipating our first debris removal run to occur this Monday, October 7th. However, if you want to remove debris prior to this date or if you are a property that is not covered by the FEMA debris contract, debris can be dropped at:

- The Pinellas County Solid Waste cannot accept storm-related debris from residents or private haulers. The facility is not an approved site for storm debris disposal.
- Residential debris can be dropped off at this location: 13600 Icot Boulevard, Clearwater, from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Disaster Recovery Center

Pinellas Update: FEMA Disaster Recovery Center to open at Largo Public Library

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will open a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) at Largo Public Library, 120 Central Park Drive, Largo, to assist residents affected by Hurricane Helene on Wednesday, Oct. 2.

The DRC will be open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Wednesday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday.

DRCs serve as centralized locations where people can access various services and information related to disaster recovery, including:

- **Information and Guidance:** DRCs provide information on available disaster assistance programs and resources.

- **Application Assistance:** You can receive help with applying for federal disaster assistance programs, such as FEMA grants and low-interest loans from the Small Business Administration. DRC staff can assist you in completing the necessary paperwork and explaining the application process.
- **Translation and Accessibility Services:** The DRC offers translation services for individuals with limited English proficiency. They also provide accommodations for people with disabilities to ensure equal access to assistance.
- **Status Updates:** If you have already applied for assistance, you can check the status of your application at a DRC.
- **Access to Disaster-related Resources:** The DRC will have informational materials, pamphlets, and brochures that can help you better understand the recovery process and available resources. DRC staff can refer you to other local, state, and federal agencies or organizations providing additional assistance, such as housing, legal services, and counseling.
- **Access to Computers and Phones:** The DRC offers computer access and phone services, allowing you to complete online applications.

When visiting a DRC, it's a good idea to bring identification, proof of residence, insurance information, and any documentation related to your disaster-related losses to facilitate the application process and ensure you receive the appropriate assistance.

Residents can register for FEMA assistance online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov, via the FEMA app or by calling 1-800-621-FEMA (3362).

Beaches

Red Tide has been detected off our coastline. You may experience respiratory issues associated with a bloom. For updates you can check the following sites.

FWC: <https://myfwc.com/research/redtide/statewide/>

County: <https://pinellas.gov/red-tide/>

Unemployment Assistance

Florida Commerce announced that Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) is available to businesses and residents whose employment or self-employment was lost or interrupted as a direct result of Hurricane Helene and are not eligible for regular state or federal Reemployment Assistance benefits. Eligible Floridians whose employment or self-employment was lost or interrupted as a direct result of Hurricane Helene are encouraged to submit a claim at FloridaJobs.org.

Report Fraudulent Contractors

Make sure contractors you hire are licensed – unlicensed or fraudulent contractors often target desperate homeowners in the aftermath of hurricanes. Learn more at

pinellas.gov/choosing-a-contractor. Verify contractors are licensed at contractorsearch.pcclb.com.

If you suspect unlicensed construction activity is taking place and the work is actively in progress, submit your report by completing this [form](#) or call the Pinellas County Tipline at (727) 582-6767.

Supplies

The National Guard has set up a distribution center at the Pinellas County park in Redington Shores. They have water, food and cleaning kits available for residents.

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.

If you're looking for hotel accommodations in non-evacuation zones, [use the Hotel Evacuation Zone Look-Up Tool](#).

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/>