

## Hurricane Safety Tips

As Florida prepares for the 2017 hurricane season, the City of Bushnell reminds you to stay safe and be ready. **If a storm does hit our area, stay away from downed power lines – don't touch them.** Electric crews will be working diligently to restore power as quickly as possible.

The City of Bushnell has developed 12 often overlooked safety tips that electric customers should follow to protect themselves and their home. These safety tips remind our customers of things that people did not know or forgot during previous hurricanes, tropical storms and weather-related events.

1. Unplug appliances and electronics during power outages to prevent surges when electricity is restored. Power surges can damage equipment and start electrical fires.
2. Operate portable generators in an open and ventilated area, never in the home or garage. Also, do not directly connect generators into your home's main electrical system. This could create a back feed to the power grid and injure people working to restore electricity.
3. If your home has water leaks or floods, shut off the power to your home until the electrical wiring can be inspected by a licensed electrician.
4. If you smell natural gas, evacuate immediately and call the gas company's emergency number.
5. Carry proper identification in the event you need to enter identification check points to access your home or neighborhood.
6. Inspect your home's weatherhead for damage after a storm. The weatherhead is located above the electric meter where the electrical wires exit the conduit. The weatherhead is the homeowner's responsibility, and utility workers cannot reconnect service if it is damaged. Contact a licensed electrician for repairs.
7. Utility companies typically cannot respond to customers with special needs during or immediately after a storm. Have an evacuation plan and know the locations of special needs shelters. If you or someone you know has special electrical medical equipment, contact the City of Bushnell or the Sumter County Emergency Management before the storm's arrival.
8. To determine a hurricane evacuation route, visit [www.FloridaDisaster.org](http://www.FloridaDisaster.org).
9. Collect water in your water heater by turning off power to the unit and closing the water valve. If water pressure is lost, approximately 40 gallons of fresh water will be stored in the tank. Fill bathtubs and the washing machine with water to clean with and to operate toilets.
10. Clear patios and yards of lawn furniture, toys, potted plants and other items that could blow away and cause damage or injury.
11. Locate gas water shut-off valves and the main electricity switch in the event they need to be turned off.
12. Create a hurricane survival kit that includes: first aid supplies; drinking water (at least one gallon per person, per day); batteries; flashlights; battery powered radio; manual can opener; prescriptions; baby food and diapers; pet food; canned foods; cash; tarps; rope; bleach; trash bags; charcoal or gas grill with plenty of fuel; wooden kitchen matches; and a portable cooler. Consider using a hard-wired, corded phone as cordless phones will not work during a power outage.

The hurricane season begins June 1<sup>st</sup> and ends Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>. For more information call City Hall at 352-793-2591.