

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Lee County Government update on Hurricane Milton**

Fort Myers, FL, Oct. 9, 2024 – Lee County’s daily noon update on Hurricane Milton is available for viewing on the county’s YouTube channel, [www.youtube.com/@LeeCountyFLBOC](https://www.youtube.com/@LeeCountyFLBOC). You can view it by clicking [here](#).

Below are highlights from the noon Facebook Live update:

Milton is a powerful Category 4 Major Hurricane. Residents need to be aware that the forecast from the National Hurricane Center (NHC) and Florida Division of Emergency Management includes:

- Sustained tropical storm force winds are coming ashore now.
- Sustained tropical storm-force winds, and sustained hurricane force winds at the peak of our impacts.
- Since last night, the NHC has held our storm surge forecast at 8 to 12 feet.

Everyone needs to be at their shelter-in-place location now. The storm impacts will reach far beyond the cone. It is not safe to be out, or to return to your home if you have evacuated.

As the tropical storm force winds are arriving, the time to shelter in place is now. Do not be on the roads.

A mandatory evacuation order remains in place for Zones A and B in Lee County. The county is monitoring traffic data, reports from municipalities and first responders and is encouraged at the number of people who appear to have evacuated in the last 36 hours. Lee County asks that residents who have evacuated to notify family and friends now of their location in case they lose cellular or internet connectivity.

There are more than 6,800 people in 13 shelters in Lee County – the full list can be found at [www.leegov.com/storm](http://www.leegov.com/storm).

The shelters are:

- Alico Arena
- Dunbar High School
- East Lee County High School
- Estero Recreation Center, approaching capacity; please use another shelter, including Hertz Arena off Ben Hill Griffin Parkway.
- Gateway High School
- Harns Marsh Elementary School
- Harns Marsh Middle School
- Hertz Arena
- Island Coast High School
- Oak Hammock Middle School
- Tortuga Preserve Elementary School
- Treeline Elementary School
- Varsity Lakes Middle School
- Special medical needs shelter, operated with the Florida Department of Health
- Estero Recreation Center, one of the first shelters to open, is approaching capacity. Please use another shelter, including Hertz Arena off Ben Hill Griffin Parkway.

Shelters offer basic life-sustaining necessities, such as protection from the weather; water and basic food; and sanitary services. All shelters are pet friendly. Pets need to be on a leash or in a crate. Owners are responsible for feeding, exercising and cleaning up after their pets.

- County Updates
  - Preparations are being made for damage assessment and immediate recovery actions with our teams and stakeholders
  - 1,285 calls were received by the United Way 211 Emergency Information Hotline before 7 a.m. today and continues to accept questions from the community. You can reach them by dialing 211, or 239 433-3900.
  - All county drawbridges were locked down at 8 a.m.
  - LeeTran operations have been suspended.
  - County office closure has been extended through Friday.
  - The county website had more than 75 million hits in the last 24 hours. Follow Lee County website at [leegov.com/storm](http://leegov.com/storm) and Lee County Government on Facebook
  
- Reminders from the County:
  - First responders will be prevented from responding as sustained windspeeds increase. Law enforcement, fire, and EMS representatives in the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will coordinate on a plan to halt emergency responses until the weather conditions improve.
    - When fire or EMS calls are queued, 911 callers are re-contacted by phone to continue to assess their situation throughout the storm.
    - Hospitals may also lock down, preventing access for transporting ambulances

Lee County will not physically close bridges. Law enforcement may be staged as a precaution to warn travelers of flooded roads or other hazards. No one should be on the roads when winds reach 40 mph.

If you require additional assistance, you can call the Emergency Information Hotline at 211, or 239 433-3900.

To receive updates from Lee County Government, sign up for the newsletter here: [www.leegov.com/resources/newsletters](http://www.leegov.com/resources/newsletters). Follow Lee County Government on Facebook, [www.facebook.com/leecountyflbocc](http://www.facebook.com/leecountyflbocc).