

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Lee County offers residents updates on Hurricane Milton recovery efforts

Fort Myers, FL, Oct. 11, 2024 – Lee County continues to work with partners throughout the community to restore services to its residents, including electrical power, fuel supply and transportation infrastructure.

Power restoration remains a high priority and the service providers, LCEC and FPL, have substantial resources deployed in Lee County.

As of 1 p.m. Friday:

- 69,990 LCEC customers were without power.
- 65,860 FPL customers were without power.

Residents who are using generators to supply power are reminded to never operate a generator inside a home or garage and keep it well away from the home when it is running. Follow all operating instructions carefully.

Fuel is being delivered to Lee County sites and Public Safety is in constant communication with the Florida Division of Emergency Management's Fuel Desk. To make fuel readily accessible, power must be restored, and internet connectivity is needed for point-of-sale systems.

The Lee County Department of Transportation asks that motorists limit travel as much as possible to allow the power companies to work.

Crews are working to help island residents return home:

- Captiva – Blind Pass Bridge with access to Captiva Drive is open to residents only. Lee County Sheriff's Office and Sanibel Police assisting with traffic control.
- Fort Myers Beach and Bonita Beach – crews continue clearing over-wash sand.
- Boca Grande – Lee County Public Safety and DOT are coordinating with the bridge authority and Charlotte County Sheriff's Office to get the bridge open soon to residents.
 - DOT clearing bicycle/golf cart path for use by emergency vehicles.
 - DOT restoring multiple washed out intersections.
 - Some side streets remain unpassable. Working to establish limited access.
 - The measures for drainage that Lee DOT put in place last month during Hurricane Helene have proved effective.

Community Coordination Teams

- County is mobilizing Community Coordination Teams to work directly with the communities in impacted areas and address any issues or needs that arise.
- Teams will all be deployed by Saturday; some are already in place.
- Locations:
 - Boca Grande
 - Pine Island
 - Captiva and Sanibel
 - Outer Islands - Useppa, Upper Captiva
 - Fort Myers Beach

DOT also continues to assess and bring traffic signals throughout the county.

- 70% of system assessed.
- Some signals are running on generators.
- Law enforcement continues to assist.
- Treat non-working signals as a four-way stop

Additional updates

Southwest Florida International Airport reopened today.

- First flight left at 9 a.m.
- Check with your airline for updates.

Shelters

- 111 shelter residents as of 11:30 a.m.
- Shelter consolidation:
 - Lee County is continuing to consolidate its shelter operations.
 - This afternoon the county will close Dunbar High School and Island Coast High School.
 - Working to move from schools so the district can continue its assessments as it works toward preparing schools for students.
 - The Estero Recreation Center is the only remaining shelter today and is anticipated to close Saturday.
- The county is coordinating with partners to provide support and services to shelter evacuees impacted by Hurricane Milton.

LeeTran

- LeeTran will assist with the shelter consolidation operations today and anticipating normal bus service on Saturday.
- Paratransit services are operating to assist with emergency response.
- ULTRA Mobility On Demand services in Bonita Springs and Lehigh Acres are still temporarily suspended.
- Buses can be tracked in real time through the transit app or LeeFare app while emergency services are completed, and regular fixed routes are not running on their normal published schedules.

Solid Waste

- Storm debris pickup will begin at sunrise Monday.
- The most important task is to put Hurricane Milton debris to the curb for collection crews.
- Keep separate piles for yard debris, construction and demolition debris including furniture, appliances and electronics. Visit www.leegov.com/storm for a diagram of proper set out procedures.
- Do not use black plastic bags for Hurricane Milton debris. This is a strict FEMA regulation. Following it will ensure the county can be reimbursed for debris removal, which saves local taxpayer dollars.
- Gated communities must have a current Right of Entry form on file. These must be provided annually. Call 239-533-8000 with any questions.
- Be patient. The county will conduct multiple passes until all debris is collected.
- The county's debris-management sites are being cleared of Helene debris and mobilized for Milton.

Parks and Recreation

- Staff continues to evaluate sites.
- All sites remain closed today, including recreation centers, sports complexes, beach sites and boat ramps.
- Monitor the website – some sites will reopen this weekend. Visit www.leeparks.org and www.leegov.com/storm.
- The start of the popular Fall Festival at Lakes Park has been delayed. This includes the Halloween Express, Pumpkin Patch and Scarecrows in the Park. Monitor the parks website for updates on when it will begin.

Community Development.

- Get a permit for hurricane repairs.
- Especially unincorporated residents in coastal areas and areas that typically flood.
- Residents or businesses within the Special Flood Hazard Area with any damage to their homes or businesses, including water intrusion.
- You must obtain a permit for all repairs.
- Email FIRMinfo@leegov.com or call 239 533-8948
- If you're in a municipality, contact the appropriate entity for permit assistance.
- County staff will be in neighborhoods this weekend.

For a video of today's update from the Emergency Operations Center, go to:

https://youtu.be/NBtX3_WD9ko

Check www.leegov.com/storm for Hurricane Milton updates. Follow Lee County Government on Facebook, www.facebook.com/leecountyflbocc.