

**Commissioner Suzanne Gunzburger**  
***Broward County Commission, District 6***

While the economy, gas prices and the presidential election have been dominating the headlines, we constantly need to remind ourselves that we are in our annual hurricane season.

The hurricane season officially began June 1<sup>st</sup> and will run until the end of November. Historically, August, September and October have been the most dangerous months for South Florida. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Climate Prediction Center (CPC) are predicting that the season will be normal to above normal for hurricane activity, with six to nine hurricanes – and two to five will develop into major hurricanes. There is a 50 percent chance that a hurricane will strike some area of Florida or the east coast of the United States.

By now, you should have received a copy of Broward County's 2008 *Hurricane Preparedness Guide* in the mail. The guide contains complete information on what to do before, during and after a hurricane—with contact and telephone numbers. If you have not received the guide, contact my office at 954-357-7006 and I will mail you a copy.

If you have access to a computer, it's a good idea to subscribe to Broward County's free *Hurricane Update E-mail System*. The system provides you with important information from the Broward County Emergency Operations Center. E-mail notifications will be sent to subscribers with news about hurricane watches and warnings, evacuation orders, recommended protective actions and related public safety issues. To subscribe, visit [www.broward.org/hurricane](http://www.broward.org/hurricane) and click on the *Hurricane Update E-mail System* box.

If a storm is headed to our area, Broward County's Call Center will begin operations as a Hurricane Hotline. The phone number is 954-831-4000. You can also reach the Hurricane Hotline by dialing 3-1-1.

If you, a relative, or a neighbor are disabled, frail or have health issues, I recommend that you register in advance with the *Vulnerable Population Registry*. The registry enables municipalities in Broward County to plan a better response to vulnerable residents in a recovery effort following a hurricane or other emergency. Each municipality may use the registry list in a different way, based on the city's recovery effort. For additional information, visit [www.broward.org/hurricane](http://www.broward.org/hurricane) or call 954-831-4000.

*Don't wait until the last minute!* Be prepared. Now is the time to buy and store bottled water, canned goods and batteries. Make sure you have at least a month's supply of prescription and non-prescription medicine on hand. If a hurricane watch is issued, set your refrigerator and freezer to the coldest setting and keep from opening unnecessarily.

We all need to have a plan to protect our lives and property. *Where should you go if a hurricane is heading our way?* Plan to stay in South Florida – you might want to stay with friends or family who live outside an evacuation area. If you have means, consider staying at a secure inland hotel or motel. Don't attempt to evacuate by driving north on I-95—you could get stuck in traffic. Don't count on driving to the airport and flying out—flights could be cancelled. Consider an American Red Cross Shelter *as a last resort*.

As always, feel free to contact me or share your concerns and priorities – you can email me at [sgunzburger@broward.org](mailto:sgunzburger@broward.org), or, if you wish, contact my office at 954-357-7006.

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