Hurricane Season Q&A

When is hurricane season?
Hurricane season runs from June 1 through November 30, although hurricanes sometimes can develop at other times of the year. Historically, September tends to be the most active month for the west coast of Florida. During this time, tropical depressions and tropical storms also can occur. For information about the types of storms, consult http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutgloss.shtml and http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/aboutsshws.php.

When is the last time the Tampa Bay area was hit by a hurricane or tropical storm?
The last named storm hit on September 26, 2001, when tropical storm Gabrielle hit with 70 mph winds. The last named hurricane to hit was Elena, which stalled over the area during the Labor Day weekend in 1985. We were affected by some of the 2004 storms and by Tropical Storm Debby in 2012, but were not hit directly.

Is Stetson University College of Law an evacuation shelter?
It is not. Gulfport Elementary School, located at 2014 52nd Street South, is a general evacuation shelter. Thurgood Marshall Middle School, located at 3901 22nd Ave. S., is also an evacuation shelter, and is one that allows pets. For a list of shelters in Pinellas County, see http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/shelters.htm. For a list of shelters in Hillsborough County, see http://www.tampabay.com/specials/2011/PDFs/2011-Hillsborough-evac-map.pdf. Additional information regarding evacuation zones and shelters for other surrounding counties can be viewed at http://www.baynews9.com/content/news/baynews9/weather/hurricane-center/evacuations.html.

In which evacuation zone is the College of Law located?
The Gulfport campus is located in the fourth evacuation zone, Zone D (131-155 mph winds; potential tide up to 22 ft.) The Tampa campus is located in the third evacuation zone, Zone C (111 to 130 mph winds; potential tide up to 18 ft.). For additional information about evacuation zones for specific addresses, visit http://gis.pinellascounty.org/knowyourzone/.

How will I be informed if the College of Law is going to close and/or if classes are going to be cancelled?
We typically have advance notice of hurricanes and tropical storms. We will carefully track these types of storms and notify the campus community regarding decisions to close the campuses and to cancel classes via the web page and e-mail. In addition, we will place an announcement on the class cancellation hot line (727-562-7816, option 2) and will communicate our decisions to local media. We urge all members of the Stetson community to review the College of Law's Emergency and School Closing Notification Procedures at

http://www.law.stetson.edu/preparedness. Unless you have a specific question, we ask that you not call the main number in Gulfport so that line can remain open to deal with emergency issues.

How will I be informed that the College is going to reopen and/or if classes are going to resume?
Unless the web site and e-mail are down, we will use those methods to announce a re-opening. In addition, we will place an announcement on the class cancellation hot line (727-562-7816, option 2) and will communicate our decision to local media. We consider BayNews 9 to be our official communication source if our Web site and e-mail go down. In addition, we will make every effort to coordinate with Pinellas County's citizen information office; this office serves as a clearinghouse for closing information. The contact information is (727) 464-4600. We urge all members of the Stetson community to review the College of Law's Emergency and School Closing Notification Procedures at http://www.law.stetson.edu/preparedness.

If classes are cancelled in Gulfport, will they also be cancelled in Tampa — and vice versa?
Yes. If classes are cancelled in one location, they will be cancelled in both locations. However, even if classes are cancelled in Tampa, the Second District Court of Appeal may choose to open.

If the campus is closed, will extracurricular activities also be cancelled?
Yes. If either campus is closed, all events on that campus are closed and all facilities are closed.

If I have an assignment due during the period the campus is closed, what should I do?
Turn in the assignment at the same time and in the same place on the first day that classes resume.

If I live in a dorm, must I evacuate?
Yes, if there is a mandatory evacuation of Level D facilities. In this situation, all faculty, staff, and students will need to evacuate. You also may be required to evacuate sooner if the campus is completely shut down. You will be notified in advance if we anticipate this type of shut down, which could occur if a Category 3 or higher storm is approaching. It is important that you have a plan for evacuating from campus; the campus is not approved as a shelter, and the campus water and electricity may be shut off as part of hurricane preparations if the conditions warrant such an action. If possible, complete the Notice of Absence from Residence Form located at http://www.law.stetson.edu/students/housing/ on the Stetson Residential Life web page before vacating your premises. If the website is not available, please stop by the Public Safety Office and fill out a form, prior to leaving campus. Time permitting, please take all valuables with you.

If you do evacuate, watch the College of Law's web page for information on when it is safe for you to return to campus.

Also, while Stetson maintains insurance for the buildings, your personal property is not covered. We strongly encourage you to consider renter's insurance to cover possible property loss. If you do not have any insurance, the Office of Residential Life maintains a list of possible sources of renter's insurance that you can consider.

If I live in other Stetson housing, when must I evacuate?

You must evacuate when a mandatory evacuation is announced for the level in which your house or apartment is located. If you do not know what flood level or evacuation level you are residing in, you can check simply by going to www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/ or contact the Office of Residential Life. If you do evacuate, please complete the Notice of Absence from Residence Form located at http://www.law.stetson.edu/students/housing/ on the Stetson Residential Life web page before vacating your premises. If the website is not available, please stop by the Public Safety Office and fill out a form, prior to leaving campus. Time permitting, be sure to take all valuables with you.

If you do evacuate, watch the College of Law's web page for information on when it is safe for you to return to campus.

Also, while Stetson maintains insurance for the buildings, your personal property is not covered. We strongly encourage you to consider renter's insurance to cover possible property loss. If you do not have any insurance, the Office of Residential Life maintains a list of possible sources of renter's insurance that you can consider.

If I live in Stetson housing, should I ever board the windows, put tape on the windows, put out sand bags, etc.?
You should not board windows above the ground floor. Also, taping is not effective and should not be done in any Stetson housing.

If you live in a single-story home or on the ground floor of a Stetson apartment, boarding of windows or sandbagging is optional. Below are some points to consider:

- In the event of a hurricane or storm, Facilities Management will be focused on securing the campus facility and will not be in a position to board individual residences or to assist you before, during or after the storm.
- You are not precluded from boarding windows on the ground floor, but should understand that under the terms of your lease agreement, you are responsible for any resulting damage.
- With the exception of certain Stetson houses in which windows have been upgraded and boarding materials supplied as part of new code requirements, the College of Law will not pay for supplies to board windows on residences. For those houses that have boarding materials, you are encouraged to use them if you feel comfortable you can safely do so.

If I live in Stetson housing, is there anything I need to do regarding the physical facility?
Yes. Please bring inside material that could get blown away, such as toys, lawn furniture, bicycles, potted plants, etc. Please turn off main power to your house or Rosa Apartment at the breaker panel(s) located inside your premises, if you feel comfortable you can safely do so.

If I stay on campus during a hurricane warning or watch, and campus is closed but not evacuated, what services will be available?
Public Safety will be open, but all facilities (including the library and student life building) close in the event that campus is closed. Only residential students may remain on campus in the event

of a campus closure. If a mandatory evacuation order is issued for Zone D all offices will be closed, and power and water will be shut off. Everyone will need to leave campus at that time.

Typically, who will be on campus during a hurricane?
Unless we evacuate, Public Safety officers will be on campus in Gulfport. In Tampa, some Public Safety Officers typically will be on duty.

If I have special needs, who should I contact about possible assistance during a hurricane warning or watch period?
Please contact Public Safety, who will direct you to the appropriate on-campus or off-campus office or service.

What personal precautions should I take before and during hurricane season?
Ideally, you should develop a family plan. You can do so online at http://www.floridadisaster.org/family/. At a minimum, every person should prepare a hurricane kit. For a list of items to consider including in your kit, consult http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/prepare/supply_kit.shtml. It is important that you have at least three days of supplies on hand, as emergency services likely will not be available in the area until that time. Local Pinellas County officials now recommend a minimum of seven days of supplies due to the unique geographic configuration of Pinellas County. Although we will not know until after a storm hits where county and state emergency services will be based, Tyrone Mall and Tropicana Field are two likely possibilities.

Make evacuation plans before a storm hits. Consult http://www.floridadisaster.org/family/ to look for evacuation routes by county.

Also, make sure to protect legal documents, such as passports and drivers' licenses. Consult http://idtheft.about.com/od/preventionpractices/a/IDTheftDisaster.htm.

If you have pets, please plan to care for them during the storm. Consult http://www.floridadisaster.org/petplan.htm.

For information about swimming pools and boats, consult http://disaster.ifas.ufl.edu/pdfs/chap07/dpr-0716-web.pdf and http://www.boatus.com/hurricanes/brochure.asp.

Where can I learn more about hurricane season and hurricane preparedness?

http://tampa.about.com/(search "hurricane") (hurricane guide, preparedness information, explanatory information about hurricanes and tropical storms)
http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster-safety-library (hurricane checklist)
http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes (general information about hurricanes and preparedness, preparedness information; website also contains information about what to do during and after a hurricane)
http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/ (for reports about hurricanes and tropical storms)
http://www.floridalink.com/links/weather/florida_weather3.htm (active hurricane tracking)

http://egis.pinellascounty.org/apps/knowyourzone/(for Pinellas county, enter your address and this site will tell you what evacuation level you're in, the closest hurricane shelters, and the closest special needs shelters)

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