

OSCEOLA
NEWS-GAZETTE

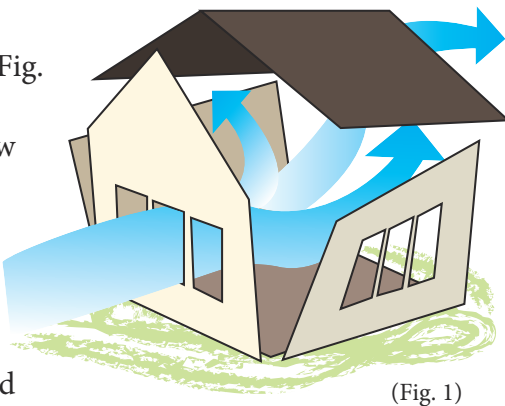
HURRICANE SEASON 2025

Protect your home and family

Yes, it's that time again! Summer and Hurricane Season in Florida. We are likely to face hurricanes, as well as tropical storms with high winds and large amounts of rain.

One of the best investments you can make is to have hurricane shutters installed on your windows. They are essential protection for your home, yourself and your family. Also, having hurricane shutters may qualify you to receive reductions on your insurance premiums, and will greatly reduce chances of damage to your home.

The diagram (Fig. 1) shows how easily a window cracked or broken by flying debris, can cause massive destruction and even the collapse of your home.



(Fig. 1)

During severe thunderstorms or hurricanes, homes may be damaged or destroyed by high winds. Debris flying through the air can break windows and doors, allowing high winds inside your home. If even one window or door is compromised, wind can increase the uplift forces on the roof and literally blast it off of your house!

There are plenty of different styles of hurricane shutters available to fit both cost and aesthetic needs for all homeowners. For the best quality protection, you'll want to look for impact-resistant ratings and test standards.

Here are some of the different types of hurricane shutters available:

Rolling Shutters

They simply roll up when the weather is nice and roll down when a storm is expected. They can also provide your home with additional insulation and privacy without sacrificing aesthetics.

Bahama Shutters

These are easy to extend the arms and open up the shutter during nice weather and they also provide shade. They are called Bahama or Bermuda shutters, because of their popularity in tropical areas.

Accordion Shutters

These hurricane shutters are manually unfolded accordion-style and then locked into place. Accordion shutters are usually more affordable than ones that roll up and down. They're also great for large windows or sliding doors.



Hurricane Panels

If you don't have time to have permanent shutters installed before a storm hits, then these temporary storm panels are your best bet. You may also need to purchase additional hardware to mount them.

These are some of the most affordable and easiest ways to protect your windows, your home and your family. With hurricane shutters, you will be much less likely to have wind and water damage in your home, and when a storm strikes, you'll be ready!

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WE ALSO DO REPAIRS

New bill sparing National Weather Service

By Emely Albelo
For the News-Gazette

A new bill has saved the National Weather Service from the Trump administration's budget cuts.

National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologist Mark Wool said in a podcast that he is aware of the number of personnel the agency has lost.

“However, we just recently gotten an exemption as an agency and are being allowed to hire,” Wool said. “So, finally, the curve is moving in the other direction from no more layoffs because there was a lot of the entry-level folks that were out of probationary status just got fired for no reason, so we lost the coming new generation”

“Hurricane season is here, and this bill is necessary to fill critical staffing needs at the National Weather Service, so communities are safe and prepared for weather events.”

REP. JARED MOSKOWITZ
Former Director of Emergency Management for the State of Florida.

According to Congressional bill H.R.3809, dubbed the Weather Workforce Improvement Act, it will waive certain legal requirements to permit the



Director of the National Weather Service to expeditiously hire for positions that are critical for public safety, and for other purposes.

The bill was introduced on June 6, by Rep. Mike Flood of Nebraska and joined by Rep. Jared Moskowitz, the former Director of Emergency Management for the state of Florida.

“President Donald J. Trump recently authorized over 100 new hires at the National Weather Service,” Flood said in a Facebook post. “Our Weather Workforce Improvement Act speeds agency hiring.”

The bill mandates positions for meteorologists, physical scientists, hydrologists, and computer specialists, along with roles in equipment operation, maintenance, analysis, information technology, or engineering.

“Hurricane season is here, and this bill is necessary to fill critical staffing needs at the National Weather Service, so communities are safe and prepared for weather events,” said Moskowitz via social media.

Wool said these 120 positions that are going to be these new hires are going to be targeted

to those offices that are in most need.

“It took too long to get this exemption, unfortunately, so now we have people that have just gotten hired and have not been able to report to their stations yet,” Wool said.

Wool said he thinks this urgency of hiring is a result of this upcoming hurricane season.

“The cat is out of the bag,” Wool said. “Everybody knows what is going on and I’m not gonna lie to anybody about how things are.”

Wool said that Tallahassee currently has 11 out of 14 meteorologists in their entire management team.

“We are okay here,” Wool said.

Wool said the fact that this exemption has finally been approved and we are finally going to be able to reverse the drain of personnel to start bringing more people is going to take some time.

“This is more than just a Band-Aid,” Wool said. “This is really going to help those offices that are in really dire straights and then the presumption would be that after that, there will be another round of jobs advertised.”

Florida statewide Tropical Training Week returns

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Daily Sessions 11AM, 1PM & 7PM EDT

DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
Monitoring the Tropics Seasonal Readiness	Get Ready for Potential Impacts	Sheltering & Hunker-Down Mode	Post-Storm Safety Lessons Learned

Florida Tropical Training Week (National Weather Service)

By Emely Albelo
For the News-Gazette

Tune into the National Weather Service's Florida Tropical Training Week to keep updated on the latest changes this hurricane season.

“You have to be prepared not have your normal means of communication,” NWS Warning Coordination Meteorologist Mark Wool said in a recent podcast with the News Service of Florida's Dara Kam.

Wool said people need to prepare not to have electricity, nonperishable food, plenty of portable water, lots of batteries for their flashlight, and a battery-powered radio as it may be their only way of hearing storm and recovery updates.

“We want to teach about tropical weather forecast products and how to properly interpret them,” he said. “We want to reach you where you are. Wherever home is and whatever stage of life you are in, tropical readiness is critical if you live in the state of Florida.”

That's why the NWS is offering three virtual training sessions daily that anyone can attend through mobile device or computer.

According to the NWS, this virtual training offers daily sessions occurs July 21-24 at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 7 p.m. Eastern Time, covering essential hurricane preparedness topics from tropical monitoring and impact readiness to sheltering and post-storm safety.

“One of the first things you are going to have to determine is whether you are going to ride it out,” Wool said. “If you live in a well-built home that is going to withstand hurricane-force winds, have you had your roof retrofitted? You should know this because it will reflect in your home insurance as a reduction.”

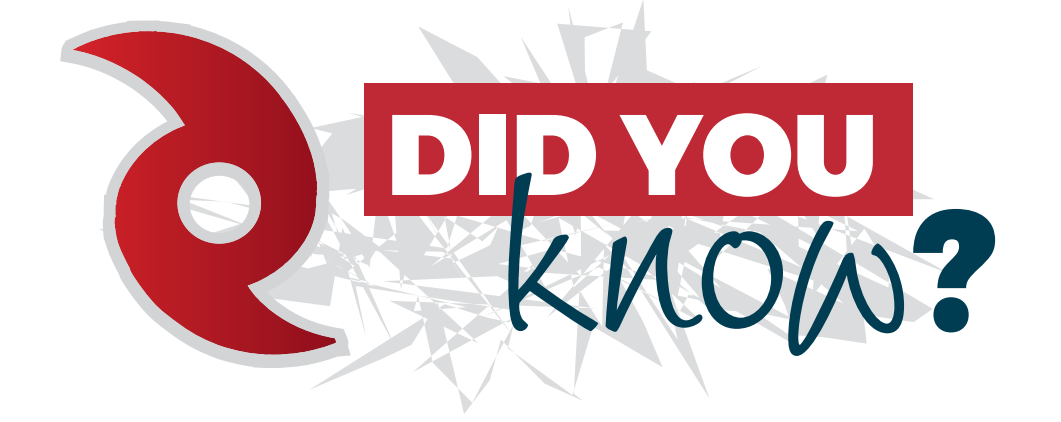
The NWS said the purpose of this webinar is to help keep you in the tropical-weather-know so you and yours can respond appropriately when tropical weather hazards threaten, and make plans ahead of time.

“We want to make weather forecast products meaningful and actionable, so you know how to interpret the information and then make the best safety decisions possible for you and yours,” said Wool. “Too many people die after the storm has gone by, because they are trying to get back in and do repairs to their property too fast.”

Wool said deaths from carbon monoxide poisoning from generators and electrocuted from downed power lines once the hurricane passed through are all too common.

“When you are going through a trauma like that, you are absolutely desperate to get home, so you take risks,” Wool said.

Presentation attendees will have the ability to chat with NWS meteorologists during the session and post questions via a Google Form found at: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfjrPWSZZonEA451VCebwP_Cru6aQo5n6dfyufHQs7rhFpELA/viewform?pli=1.



According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the shifting climate across the planet is impacting extreme weather throughout the globe. NASA notes that heat waves affecting the land and the sea, severe floods, droughts lasting years in some cases, extreme

wildfires, and hurricane-related flooding are becoming more frequent and intense due to climate change. Warming air and ocean temperatures resulting from the increased burning of fossil fuels is affecting the water cycle, shifting weather patterns and melting land ice, all of which is making

extreme weather even more severe. And NASA warns that severity only figures to increase even further as the planet continues to warm, meaning the storms of today, already devastating to the communities they affect, figure to be even more so as air and ocean temperatures continue to rise.

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- Gather disaster supplies such as nonperishable food, water and medicine to last each person in the family at least three days. Keep cash on hand to pay for food and other necessities and stock up on batteries and battery-powered flashlights.
- Speak with your insurance provider to ensure you have adequate coverage should your home and/or possessions be damaged during a hurricane.
- Document your belongings.
- Plan with loved ones and share all details with family members and close friends. Identify a meeting place, ideally one that is accessible for everyone.
- Safeguard your home. Installing storm shutters, accordion shutters, and/or impact glass so a home can more capably withstand a hurricane. Trimming trees and seal outside wall openings so a home is less vulnerable to water damage.

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Slow and steady start to '25 hurricane season

3 weak tropical storms have formed

By Ken Jackson
Editor

Thus far, the 2025 Atlantic Hurricane Season has had little fanfare—but has had three named storms.

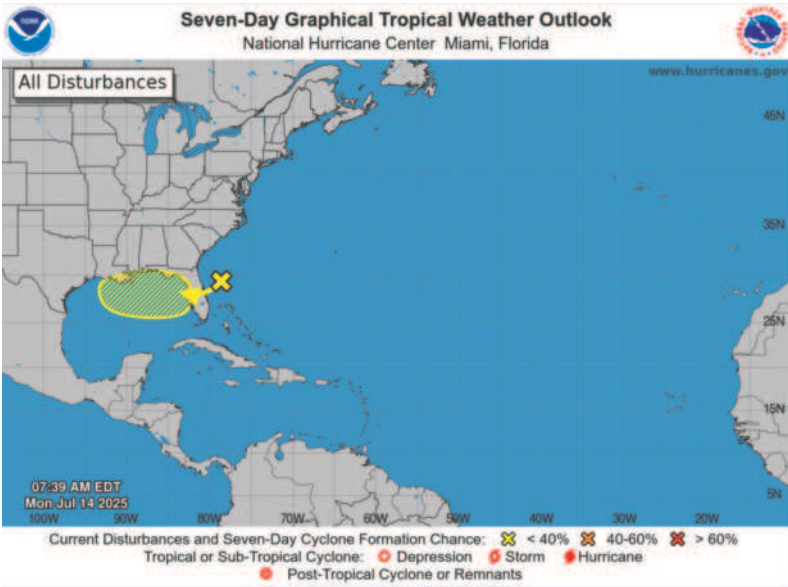
If you blinked, you may have missed them.

Tropical Storm Andrea formed in the middle of the north central Atlantic between Bermuda and the Azores on June 24. It lasted just three National Hurricane Center advisories, or 18 hours.

Tropical Depression Two formed four days later in the Bay of Campeche, and it became Tropical Storm Barry about a day later, just before making landfall June 30 in central Mexico south of Tampico, Mexico. In Veracruz, two people drowned after rough surf swept them out to sea in their car. Three others were reportedly swept away by floods.

And then, over the July 4 weekend, a weak area of low pressure developed along a decayed frontal boundary in the Atlantic just offshore of north Florida and the Georgia coast. (It was the same weather system that brought our area unsettled weather the week leading into the holiday.) On the 4th of July, the circulation associated with the low became well-defined and was designated Tropical Depression Three by the NHC, and was named Tropical Storm Chantal on the 5th. It reached sustained winds of 60 mph before making landfall at Litchfield Beach, S.C. near Myrtle Beach on the 6th. It brought some wind to the South Carolina coast, and flooding rains in North Carolina and Virginia as it headed inland, and five people have been confirmed dead in North Carolina due to flooding.

The next name on the Atlantic list is Dexter, which replaces the Dorian. That 2019 Category



Could this be Dexter? A low-pressure system crossed Florida’s this week and could develop once in the Gulf. (Graphic/nhc.noaa.gov)

5 storm caused catastrophic damage in the Abaco Islands of the Bahamas and Grand Bahama Island and flooding in the Carolinas.

The Pacific season has already seen quite a bit of action;

that basin is already on the ‘F’ storm and has seen three hurricanes, including two major storms, Hurricanes Erick (which reached Category 4) and Flossie, which affected the western Mexican coast.

Hurricane names for this season

ANDREA	LORENZO
BARRY	MELISSA
CHANTAL	NESTOR
DEXTER	OLGA
ERIN	PABLO
FERNAND	REBEKAH
GABRIELLE	SEBASTIEN
HUMBERTO	TANYA
IMELDA	VAN
JERRY	WENDY
KAREN	

2025

Florida makes some disaster supplies sales tax-free starting Aug. 1



(Photo/Metro Creative)

By Ken Jackson
Editor

If you’ve been asking when the sales tax holiday for supplies needed for your storm or disaster kit begins, the answer is: Aug. 1.

And it’s permanent. The Florida Division of Emergency Management and the Florida Department of Revenue announced last week that, starting next month, key disaster prep items are permanently sales tax exempt in Florida.

That list includes standard batteries, fire extinguishers, portable gas or diesel cans of five gallons or less, generators (which generate 10,000 running watts or less), waterproof tarps, insect repellent, sunscreen, life jackets, bicycle helmets and tie-down kits.

Most food items, like bottled water and canned goods are already tax-free.

Previously, Florida offered temporary sales tax holidays for disaster preparedness items during specific times of the year, often coinciding with the start of hurricane season.

New legislation passed as part of the state’s 2025-26 budget makes the tax exemption permanent, allowing residents to purchase these items tax-free throughout the year, rather than just during limited periods. Last year, the state held one tax-free period at the start of hurricane season in early June, then held another in early September so residents could restock their supply kits. Florida got hit by three hurricanes in 2024 (Debby, Helene and Milton)—making residents use up a lot of supplies.

Also on Aug. 1, the state’s tax-free period on Back to School supplies will begin, and last the entire month.

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SALES TAX EXEMPTIONS ON DISASTER PREPAREDNESS SUPPLIES

Permanent sales tax exemption for the following items starting August 1, 2025:



Batteries (AA-cell, AAA-cell, C-cell, D-cell, 6-volt, or 9-volt)



Fire extinguishers



Insect repellent



Life jackets



Portable gas or diesel cans (max 5 gal)



Portable generators



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Sunscreen



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NOAA satellites face budget cuts

By Emely Albelo
For the News-Gazette

Further cuts to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administrations’ budget now risk the result of accurate weather reporting.

“Due to recent service changes, the Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP) and Navy’s Fleet Numerical Meteorology and Oceanography Center (FNMOC) will discontinue ingest, processing, and distribution of all DMSP data no later than June 30, 2025,” NOAA’s termination notice read, noting the service change and termination will be permanent.

“More science data loss with potential impact on hurricane season: DOD processing and delivery of Special Sensor Microwave Imager/Sounder ends,” said John Morales, ClimaData (SM) certified broadcast, consulting meteorologist, and hurricane specialist. “SSMIS is used by forecasters to assess tropical storm location, cloud structure, and intensity. It’ll lead to gaps in hurricane monitoring and decreased forecast skill.”

Morales also said that it’s a “combustible mix” that may not end well.

According to the United States Space Force, the DMSP has collected weather data for U.S. military operations for more than five decades and provides assured, secure global weather and space weather data to support Department of Defense (DOD) operations.

The USSF stated that two primary DMSP satellites orbit Earth in low-Earth paths, providing continuous visual and infrared cloud imagery across a wide swath of global weather coverage every 14 hours—crucial for data-sparse areas.

These satellites also measure atmospheric moisture and temperature, enabling military forecasters to track weather phenomena like fog, thunderstorms, and tropical cyclones, while additional sensors monitor space weather parameters like charged particles and electromagnetic fields to assess the impact on military systems and predict effects on satellite operations, according to the USSF.

The Trump administration’s leaked document for Fiscal Year 2026 showed a revamping of NOAA’s weather satellite and infrastructure.

“The Budget rescopes NOAA’s Geostationary and Extended Observations satellite program to achieve nearly \$8 billion in lifecycle cost savings and cancels contracts for instruments designed primarily for unnecessary climate measurements rather than weather observations,” said the FY 2026 letter. “The Budget empowers NOAA to directly negotiate contracts for satellites, eliminating unnecessary layers of bureaucracy and promoting innovation, while continuing to modernize core weather-monitoring capabilities and maintaining first launch in 2032.”

Hurricane specialist Michael Lowry said in a blog post that the permanent discontinuation of data from the Special Sensor Microwave Imager Sounder (SSMIS) will severely impede and degrade hurricane forecasts for this season and beyond, affecting tens of millions of Americans who live along hurricane-prone shorelines.

Lowry said that microwave data are used to help “fix” or position the center of storms, a task not always easily or accurately accomplished using visible or enhanced satellite pictures.

“Officials at the National



The Defense Meteorological Satellite Program (DMSP) ceased issuing data on June 30. (Photo/United States Space Force)

Hurricane Center were also caught off guard by the announcement and are preparing their team for the loss of critical forecast data for the rest of the hurricane season,” Lowry said.

He noted a response June 27 from NOAA stating that the DMSP suspension will not hinder the Nation Weather Service’s ability to report accurate hurricane forecasts with the Advanced Technology Microwave Sounder (ATMS).

“The ATMS sounder that remains is far inferior to hurricane forecasters than the SSMIS instrument the Department of Defense is discontinuing,” Lowry said. “Unlike the SSMIS which scans at a continuous resolution, the quality of the ATMS degrades considerably on its edges,

rendering the sounder useless for most operational hurricane forecasts.”

Lowry said the ATMS is not a replacement for SSMIS, which is the reason why forecasters and hurricane scientists are sounding the alarm.

The NOAA did leave a statement to their National

Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Services (NESDIS) that the data access to previously collected DMSP space weather data will continue to be available for the NESDIS to continue their work of providing the public with environmental data.

“This means a much a higher risk of missing episodes of

rapid intensification in the absence of hurricane hunters (only available for about 1 in every 3 forecasts) and less warning time for residents when a hurricane is rapidly forming or strengthening near the coast, giving those in harm’s way less time (or even no time) to prepare or evacuate,” Lowry said.

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