

# *Emergency Management*

## WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

EOC News

JANUARY 3RD, 2025

### **Wildfire Season Begins**



Although hurricane season has concluded, wildfire season is just beginning. Here are some strategies to safeguard yourself and your property. Florida faces a significant risk of wildfires and can experience them throughout the year. To prepare for potential wildfires, consider the following actions:

1. **Establish a defensible space:** Create a buffer zone of 30–100 feet around your home, free from flammable materials such as leaves, debris, and yard waste. This area can include landscaping elements like grass, shrubs, and trees.
2. **Utilize fire-resistant materials:** When constructing, renovating, or repairing your home, select materials that are resistant to fire.
3. **Maintain your roof, gutters, and deck:** Regularly clear away dead leaves, pine needles, and other debris from these surfaces to prevent them from catching fire.
4. **Trim tree branches:** Cut back branches from large trees that extend over your home, ensuring they are kept 6–10 feet from the ground to reduce the risk of fire spreading to your house.
5. **Keep mulch away from structures:** Ensure that mulch is positioned at least 5 feet away from your home, as it can be highly flammable.
6. **Clear items from under decks and porches:** Remove any stored items from underneath your decks or porches to eliminate potential fuel for a fire.
7. **Display your address clearly:** Make sure your home has visible street names and numbers for easy identification by emergency services.
8. **Identify a water source:** Have an outdoor water source equipped with a hose that can reach any part of your property. This can be crucial for extinguishing small fires before they spread.

By taking these proactive steps, you can significantly reduce the risk of wildfire damage to your home and ensure that you and your loved ones are better prepared in the event of an emergency.

Stay informed about local fire conditions by signing up for emergency alerts from your fire department. Engage in community efforts to reduce wildfire risks, such as participating in clean-up days and supporting fire safety education. Develop and regularly practice a family emergency plan, including evacuation routes and communication strategies. Preparation is crucial for protecting your property and enhancing community safety during wildfire season. Stay vigilant and proactive to ensure safety for yourself and your neighbors.

## **Emergency Management Staff, Volunteers, & Stakeholders**

*Shining a spotlight on the people who make this agency function.*

### **Florida Forest Service**



The Florida Forest Service is dedicated to safeguarding and managing Florida's forest resources, ensuring their availability for generations to come. They oversee more than 1 million acres of state forests, catering to various public needs such as timber production, recreational activities, and wildlife habitats. Additionally, they provide landowners with technical information and grant programs to enhance their forestland.

Through efforts in wildfire prevention and suppression, they strive to shield homeowners from potential damage in a naturally fire-dependent environment. They do so much for our community, yet their work often goes unnoticed. These committed individuals are the unsung champions who diligently operate in the background to ensure a harmonious balance between human needs and environmental conservation. Their expertise not only protects the forests but also supports the local economy by promoting sustainable practices.

During the upcoming fire season, the Florida Forest Service will be on high alert, ready to respond to any emergencies with precision and care. They conduct prescribed burns and educate the public about fire safety, ensuring that both our natural landscapes and communities remain safe. Let's take a moment to appreciate their hard work and commitment to keeping Florida's forests thriving and resilient.

### **Chilly Weather and Shocking Safety Tips!**



To ensure electrical safety as temperatures drop, it's vital to maintain your home's electrical system, have backup power sources like flashlights and batteries on hand, and be aware of potential hazards such as damaged cords, overloaded outlets, and the heightened risk of electrical problems in freezing conditions. Additionally, it's important to implement effective strategies for managing power outages if they occur.

Key preventative measures include:

- **Inspect Cords and Appliances:** Replace frayed cords and faulty appliances.
- **Clean Electrical Panels:** Prevent overheating by keeping panels dust-free.
- **Check Outdoor Outlets:** Ensure they are weatherproof.
- **Professional Inspection:** Older homes should be assessed by a licensed electrician.

For managing power outages:

- **Emergency Kit:** Stock up on flashlights, batteries, and a battery-operated radio.
- **Food Storage:** Keep non-perishable food items on hand.
- **Space Heating:** Use space heaters safely, away from flammable materials.
- **Circuit Breakers:** Know which circuits power essential appliances

Be aware of cold weather risks:

- **Frozen Pipes:** Avoid using electrical appliances if pipes freeze.
- **Water and Electricity:** Never handle devices with wet hands.
- **Outdoor Power Lines:** Stay clear of and report downed lines.

**See What We Are Up To**

*A glance at the projects that each staff member and prominent volunteer is undertaking.*

- Jennifer Daniels, the Director, has been working on reimbursement for Hurricane Debby, Hurricane Helene, and also updating our directories.
- Amanda Anthony, the Coordinator, is working on updating our finance books and our Survival Guide.
- Jessica Lockhart, the SPN Coordinator, is trying to coordinate a Contractors meeting for 2025, and taking training to further her knowledge about the field of Emergency Management.
- Tim Keith-Lucas, the Operations Chief, is refining our checklists to ensure comprehensive hurricane preparedness, equipping our Mobile Command Trailer, and also setting up for Holiday on the Harbor.
- Scott Bush, the Quartermaster, is currently reorganizing the EOC trailers to accommodate a wider array of events, coordinating the organization of the Hangar, and also assisting with equipping our Mobile Command Trailer.
- Judi Ring, the CERT President, is developing educational materials to raise awareness about the CERT program among the public, updating our event schedule, and prepping our oncoming class of Certers.
- Rob Zingarelli, the Lead Radio Operator, is concentrating on the radio wiring setup within the command trailer and is doing weekly check-ins with SARNET.
- Robin Daniels, the Inventory Manager, is in the process of consolidating equipment from various areas within the EOC to both the command trailer and its supporting trailer.
- Robin Gibson, our Vehicle Inspector, has been diligently checking and ensuring that our county vehicles are maintained and ready at a moment's notice.
- Allen Sanders, the Groundskeeper, has resumed grounds maintenance activities in preparation for the forthcoming summer season and is currently maintaining chainsaws.
- The team eagerly awaits the review and approval of the new building plans by the state Office of Environmental and Historic Preservation.




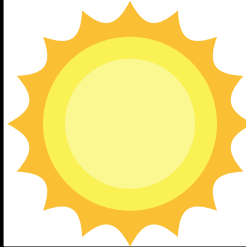
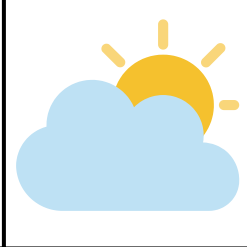
**Upcoming Events**

Event	Description	Date	Time	Location
Oyster Cook Off	Apalachicola Oyster Cook Off	Saturday January 18, 2025	8:00 AM- 5:00 PM	Riverfront Park
MLK Day	Martin Luther King Jr, Day	Monday January 20, 2025	All Day	-
Winter Field Day	Ham Radio on Air Event	January 25 - 26	All Day	-

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## Weather Outlook

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	<u>Sat, Jan 4th</u>	<u>Sun, Jan 5th</u>	<u>Mon, Jan 6th</u>	<u>Tues, Jan 7th</u>	<u>Wed, Jan 8th</u>
<b>Weather</b>					
	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	AM Rain	Sunny	Mostly Sunny
<b>Temp. (F)</b>	<b>45 / 61</b>	<b>61 / 67</b>	<b>32 / 66</b>	<b>31 / 51</b>	<b>31 / 50</b>

### EOC Tip of the Week

## Pet Cold Weather Safety

- Keep pets indoors: Limit outdoor time during extreme cold.
- Protect paws: Use petroleum jelly or vet-approved paw protectants; consider booties.
- Provide clean water: Ensure drinking water doesn't freeze.
- Feed extra food: Increase food for outdoor pets to maintain warmth.
- Create a warm shelter: Ensure outdoor pets have a dry, warm place.
- Use space heaters cautiously: Avoid risks associated with space heaters.
- Check vehicle engines: Knock on the hood before starting to ensure no animals are hiding.
- Contact animal control: Report any pets left outside in unsafe conditions.



### Let Us Know What You Think

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