

HURRICANE SEASON BEGINS JUNE 1

Hurricanes have hit our area of the Gulf Coast – roughly from Panama City to New Orleans – more than 30 times in the last 50 years; and for those new to the area, the 2004-05 seasons were rough ones with, in particular, Ivan and Katrina. Hurricanes can develop and hit the United States any time usually between June and late November (the season), and the busiest timeframe is August through mid-October. As this season approaches, please pay attention to category and condition information.

On June 1st, Condition 5 will be set as a reminder that the season has begun. Other conditions are set as storms develop and move towards land.

Conditions: Potential destructive winds and heavy rain timelines

- Condition 4 – possibility of destructive winds and heavy rain in 72 hours;
- Condition 3 - possibility of destructive winds and heavy rain in 48 hours;
- Condition 2 - possibility of destructive winds and heavy rain in 24 hours; and
- Condition 1 - possibility of destructive winds and heavy rain in 12 hours or less.

Categories: strength of storms based on expected sustained winds.

- Category 1 – sustained winds 74 -95 mph
- Category 2 – sustained winds 96 -110 mph
- Category 3 – sustained winds 111-130 mph
- Category 4 – sustained winds 131-155 mph
- Category 5 – sustained winds 155 or greater.

Escambia County Shelters: Bellview, Ferry Pass, Blue Angel, Molino, Lipscomb, and Carver Century elementary schools; Workman and Ferry Pass middle schools; Tate and **West Florida (special needs shelter)** high schools; and University of West Florida.

Santa Rosa County Shelters: Milton Community Center, Avalon and **Sims Middle (special needs shelter)**, and Dixon intermediate.

Hurricane shelters are provided for public use in the event a hurricane evacuation becomes necessary. Other arrangements are suggested such as staying with friends or family in a sturdy house out of the evacuation area.

General evacuation areas are everything south of U.S. Hwy 98 and all mobile homes. Check county public safety websites for shelter information and “animal friendly” shelters.

Public shelters are normally manned by Red Cross volunteers and Navy personnel. Shelters are usually crowded and your stay may be for several days. Take all essentials including books for entertaining kids.