

A background image of a beach during a hurricane. Palm trees are leaning over, and waves are crashing onto the shore. The sky is overcast and the water is turbulent.

THE HURRICANE GUIDE

Plan. Prepare. Restore.

 **OLCEC**
PEOPLE. POWER. POSSIBILITIES.


Touchstone Energy®
Cooperatives

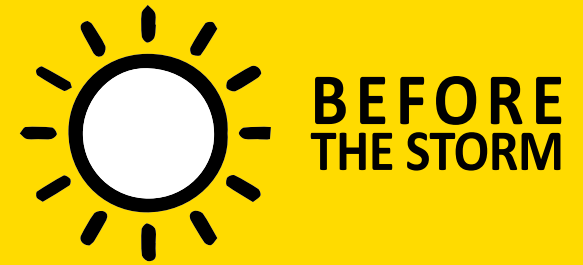


About the Guide

The LCEC Hurricane Guide is designed to inform stakeholders about how power is restored after a major weather event. Please utilize this guide to plan, prepare, and remain safe before, during, and after a storm.

Published by the LCEC Public Relations Division
For more information, visit lcec.net/Storm Center.

Stay connected with LCEC through



How LCEC Prepares

The plan involves every employee, every business partner, every day.

WE HAVE A PLAN

LCEC has a comprehensive, tried-and-true emergency restoration plan that is reviewed and practiced year-round to ensure that we are ready for any situation that affects our service territory. In addition to this plan, LCEC has an aggressive maintenance and vegetation program that minimizes the impact to the electric infrastructure.

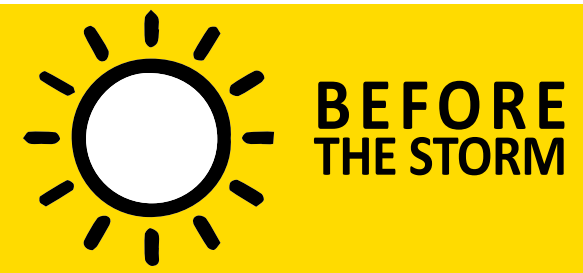
Our number one goal is to restore power as quickly and safely as possible. LCEC monitors weather 24/7, and LCEC employees and contractors are mobilized and properly equipped to respond as soon as safely possible. During severe storms, each LCEC employee plays an important role in the restoration plan and has been trained to be ready as needed. In addition, strong business relationships with suppliers, vendors, media, and service providers ensure we are prepared to serve as quickly and efficiently as possible.



RESOURCES

LCEC has strong relationships with all the essential resources needed to restore power as quickly and safely as possible following a major storm:

- o Employees – each has a role in the plan
- o Mutual Aid – cooperatives and other utilities across the nation are ready
- o Emergency Operations Centers – LCEC employees are stationed at all EOCs
- o Supplies, Materials, Vendors – relationships and inventory are cultivated prior to a storm



Building a Resilient Electric System

LCEC continues to make long-term investments toward sustainability of the electrical system, leveraging available funding programs, and comprehensive construction and maintenance planning.



CONSTRUCTION AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

Weatherizing and targeted investments in the transmission and distribution system are included in the LCEC 10-year engineering plan. A self-healing system and use of protective devices increases reliability year-round. This plan is updated annually to meet new and evolving challenges.



MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTIONS

LCEC performs ongoing inspection of the electric grid to identify potential weaknesses and make repairs before the storm hits. Heat maps indicate higher-risk areas and aging infrastructure that can be prioritized and addressed. Advanced analytics are utilized to determine maintenance schedules and potential areas of vulnerability. Once identified, proactive measures are taken and investments are aimed at preventative or corrective solutions.

ANALYTICS AND TECHNOLOGY

Resilience modeling helps provide the data needed for informed decision making and forward-looking planning. Understanding vulnerabilities and addressing them through the use of smart technology and self-healing devices and components helps potentially reduce the impact of storms. Data also allows LCEC to prioritize and make investments to mitigate risk where possible.

Developing Your Plan



SAFETY IS THE PRIORITY

It is important to develop a disaster plan to accommodate any situation. If life or livelihood depends on electricity, it is extremely important to plan for a safe backup power source or an alternate plan to stay safe until power can be restored to your location.

1. Hold a family/employee meeting and involve everyone.
2. Know your evacuation zone and where to evacuate if the order is given. Consider a visit with family and friends outside the evacuation zone. Visit your local Emergency Management website to learn about evacuation plans.
3. Inventory home/business and contents. Video/photograph valuables.
4. Review insurance policies, including vehicle policy.
5. Look for vulnerabilities such as roof, windows, garage door.
6. Care for landscaping, tree branches near electric lines, and determine a safe way to reduce airborne objects.
7. Determine where to park vehicles, boats, or RVs.
8. Plan to install shutters, and/or purchasing a generator.
9. Plan in advance for people with special needs.
10. Develop a plan for pets.
11. Determine food, water and medical needs.
12. Share the plan with others and establish an out-of-town contact so they can check on you after the storm.





Vegetation Management



TREES CONTACTING POWER LINES ARE LIKELY TO CAUSE DAMAGE AND OUTAGES

- Trim dead branches from trees and shrubs around the home or business, avoiding those close to power lines. Keep a 10-foot clearance. Remove weak branches, especially those resting on the roof. Thin-out the upper canopy.
- Newly planted trees should be properly braced and staked.
- Hire a licensed arborist to care for trees near power lines.

DO NOT EVER ATTEMPT TO CARE FOR VEGETATION GROWING NEAR OVERHEAD POWER LINES. ONLY TRAINED PROFESSIONALS SHOULD WORK AROUND POWER LINES.

- LCEC will not accept tree trimming requests in preparation for the storm.
- When clearing debris after the storm, place away from utility poles and ground transformers so workers have access for restoration.
- During restoration, workers will not clear debris due to the focus on restoring power quickly and safely. Check local government debris removal schedules.
- LCEC does not prune trees around service drops, where low-voltage lines serve just one customer. For pruning around low-voltage lines such as service drops, streetlight wires, and secondary lines, hire a licensed arborist.



Understand the Warnings

HURRICANE: Tropical cyclones east of the International Dateline to the Greenwich Meridian with maximum sustained winds of 74 mph.

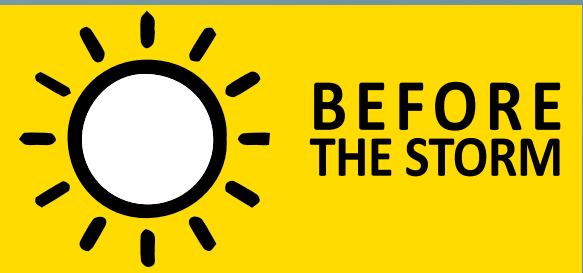
EYE OF THE HURRICANE:

The circular area of light winds that encompass the center of a tropical cyclone.

WATCH: Sustained winds of 74 mph or higher within a specified area. Issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated impact of tropical-storm-force winds.

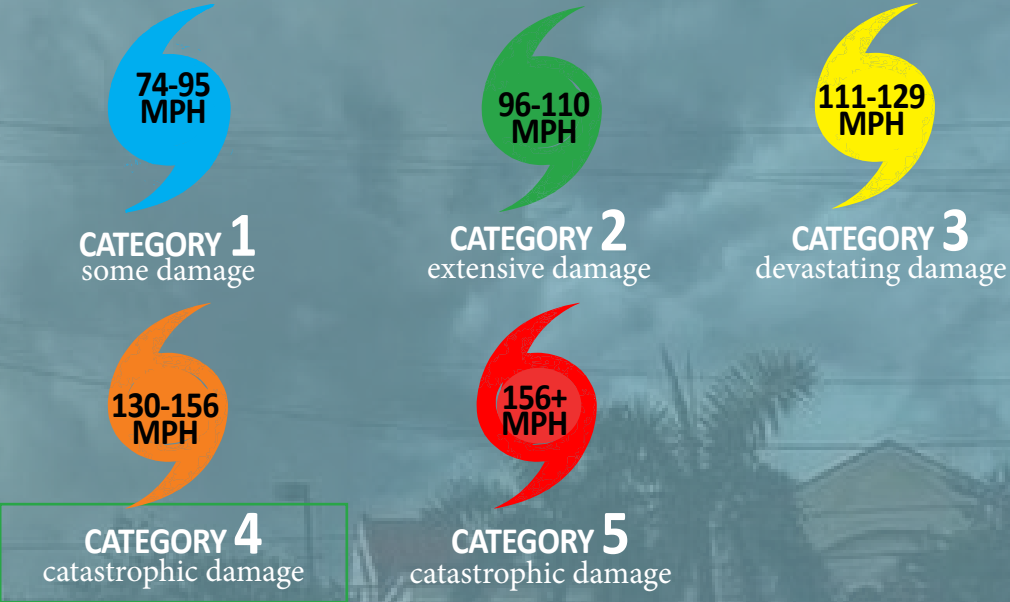
WARNING: Sustained winds of 74 mph or higher within a specified area. Issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated impact of tropical-storm-force winds. Can remain in effect if the threat of high water continues, even though winds have died down.

STORM SURGE: An abnormal rise in sea level accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm, and whose height is the difference between the observed level of the sea surface and the level that would have occurred in the absence of the cyclone.



SAFFIR-SIMPSON HURRICANE WIND SCALE

A 1 to 5 categorization based on the intensity of the hurricane at the time and an example of the type of damage from wind.



Catastrophic damage will occur due to dangerous winds and potential storm surge.



www.nhc.noaa.gov
www.windy.com



Disaster Supply Checklist

FOOD AND WATER

- One gallon per person, per day
- Non-perishable, easily-prepared items



- 3-day supply for evacuation
- 2-week supply for home

CONTACT INFO & DOCS

Family and Emergency
Identification and Insurance



SUPPLIES

- Baby Supplies
- Medications & First Aid
- Flashlight
- Battery/Hand-Crank Radio
- Extra Batteries
- Multi-Purpose Tool
- Tarp
- Fire Extinguisher
- Manual Can Opener
- Insect Repellant
- Trash Bags
- Rubber Boots & Gloves
- Lighter and Matches
- Duct Tape
- Disposable Plates, Cups, Utensils
- Disinfectant Wipes
- Sleeping Bags
- Blankets & Pillows
- Clothing & Shoes
- Underwear & Socks
- Personal Hygiene Items
- Toiletries
- Extra Cash
- Paper Maps of the Area
- Games, Book, Activities
- Extra Keys
- Mobile Phone Chargers
- Fuel

Need Medical Support?



Having reliable power for medical or life-support devices is critical. Be prepared with a plan for possible extended power loss during hurricane season. Your life could depend on it.

HOME OR HEALTHCARE FACILITY

Discuss emergency plans and backup power supply with an agency representative or facility staff.

CONTINUITY OF LIFE SUPPORT

Have a plan in place to ensure electric and rechargeable devices can be sustained. This may include making arrangements to stay with a friend or relative during an extended outage, use of a backup generator, or a special needs shelter.

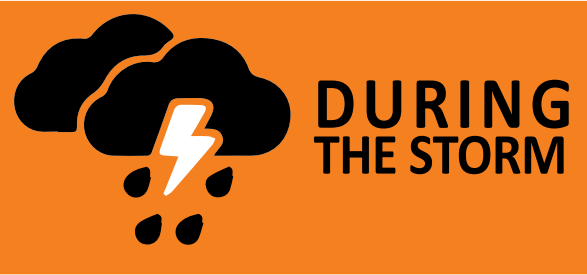
KNOW HOW TO FIND HELP

Confirm the location of special needs shelters with your local emergency management office or call your area hospitals to learn what emergency services are available for those with critical medical needs.



CALL UNITED WAY 211 FOR HELP





Shelters

BE SURE THE SHELTER IS OPEN

Visit your local Emergency Management website to learn about shelter options.

A shelter is a safe place to be during an emergency. However, it offers only the basic life-sustaining necessities such as shelter from the weather, water, food, and sanitary services.

The shelter will likely not have electricity for the majority of your stay. It may be noisy, crowded, and somewhat uncomfortable, but safe.

PETS

Select a safe place to take pets, as many emergency shelters do not allow animals. If a shelter is available, be sure to know the health requirements and if crates are required. Remember to bring all the proper pet supplies.



Special Needs

Register for a Special Needs Shelter before an emergency. Special Needs Shelters are designed to meet the needs of people who require assistance beyond what is provided at a general shelter during emergencies.

When there is no other sheltering option with family or friends, these shelters provide, to the extent possible under emergency conditions, an environment that can sustain health until shelter is no longer needed.

Review qualifications and register early:

- Lee County – www.LeeEOC.com
- Collier County – www.colliergov.net
- Charlotte County – www.charlottecountyfl.com
- Hendry County – www.hendryfla.net
- Broward County – www.broward.org

Have a plan in place to ensure the continuity of any life-support needs. This may include making special arrangements to spend time with a friend or relative during an outage or using a back-up generator.

If You Stay



Only stay home if you have not been ordered to evacuate. Make sure your home is secured to the best of your ability.

When in doubt, it is always safer to ride out the storm in a designated shelter or with friends or family if their location is secure.

- Stay inside a well-constructed building.
- Close all interior doors.
- Keep the disaster supply kit with you.
- Take refuge in a small interior room, hallway or closet on the lowest level.
- If there is not an interior room, lay on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.
- Stay away from windows and doors, even if they are covered
- If flooding is a threat, move to the highest safe point in your location.

Unless it is an emergency, wait until after the storm passes to call LCEC about a power outage. No need to call if the impact is widespread.



If You Evacuate

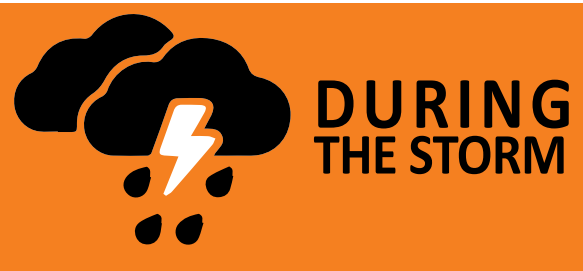


Consider evacuating before a hurricane hits if you live in a mobile home, coastal areas, flood-prone areas, or in a high-rise building. If local authorities advise you to evacuate, don't wait. Leave as soon as possible.

Evacuations are focused on areas with the greatest risk to life. Try to evacuate during daylight hours and make sure your home is secure before you leave.



- Notify family and neighbors you are evacuating.
- Add jugs of water to fill the freezer.
- Turn your refrigerator to its coldest setting.
- Fuel up and take cash.
- Map the evacuation route specified by authorities.
- Take photo ID, your disaster supply kit, and important docs.
- Turn off main electric breaker or unplug electrical devices, except for the refrigerator.



LCEC is Ready

LCEC has partnerships with power line and tree-trimming contractors, fuel companies, material vendors, food-service vendors, other cooperatives, and local agencies for mutual aid to ensure that we are ready for restoration.

Additionally, each of the 400+ LCEC employees play a critical role in the restoration plan. Employees put their typical job and personal responsibilities on hold to pitch in during restoration. From assessing damage to leading out-of-state crews, and even doing laundry for linemen, every employee has a vital role.



WE DON'T TURN OFF THE POWER

LCEC does not disconnect power before a storm. We let Mother Nature run her course and begin to restore power to impacted areas once winds are at a safe level to work.

WE ALREADY HAVE RESOURCES IN PLACE TO RIDE OUT THE STORM

Before the storm makes impact, LCEC recruits additional resources, suppliers, and logistic support so that as soon as it is safe, restoration work can begin.

NO NEED TO CALL TO LET US KNOW YOUR POWER IS OUT

LCEC crews will continue to restore power until the winds are too strong to work safely. At that point, workers ride out the storm until they are able to assess the damage and begin to make repairs.

Visit lcec.net or SmartHub to make sure LCEC has your correct phone number and email address on file.

How LCEC Restores Power



SAFETY IS THE PRIORITY

During disaster response, and every day, safety is everyone's responsibility. While LCEC and all of our responding partners are laser-focused on restoring power as quickly as possible, safety is always the priority.

- Stay clear of downed power lines, as they may be energized.
- Puddles of water contacting downed lines are dangerous.
- Keep LCEC phone lines clear for emergency calls by only calling to report safety threats.



AFTER A MAJOR EVENT... HERE'S HOW THE RESTORATION PROCESS WORKS



STEP 1. DAMAGE ASSESSMENT

Includes physical inspection of our facilities. Once damage assessments have been made, LCEC begins repairs.



STEP 2. CRITICAL REPAIRS

We repair main circuits and restore critical facilities such as hospitals, police, and fire stations.



STEP 3. QUICKLY & SAFELY

Repair lines that get the greatest number of customers on as soon as possible.



STEP 4. REMAINING OUTAGES

Restoring power to those small pockets or individuals still without power.



Damage at Your Location?



Inspect damage to the home or business as a result of the storm. It is essential to understand what LCEC can repair and what must be repaired by an electrician.

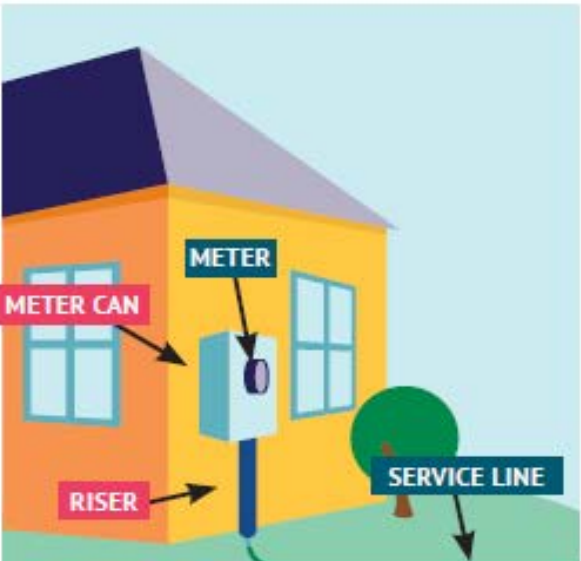
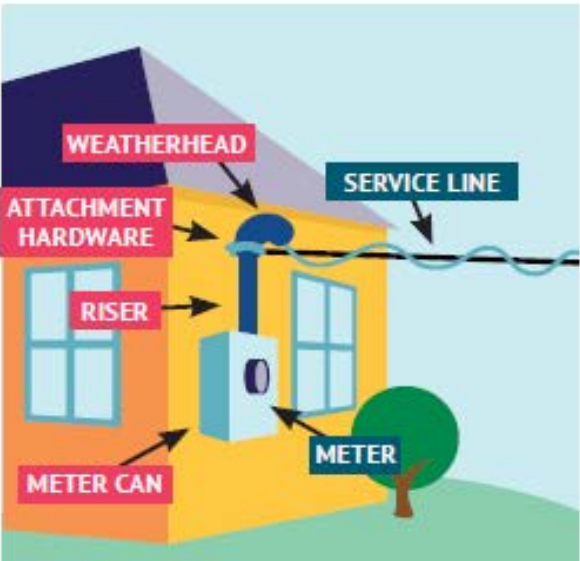
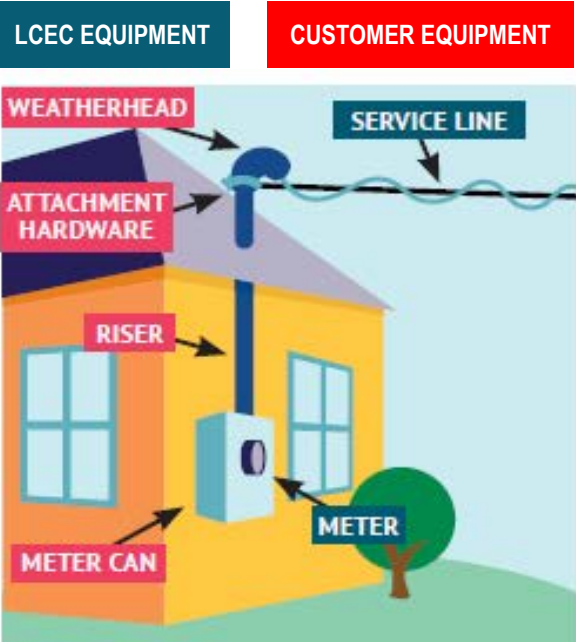
LCEC REPAIRS:

Service line – the wires running from the pole to the home
Electric meter – the device measuring electricity

CUSTOMER REPAIRS:

Weatherhead – where the electric lines connect to the home service drop, the wire extending from the weatherhead to the meter and from the meter to the fuse box or circuit breaker
Meter can – the box the electric meter is mounted in
Fuse box and circuit breaker box – the service panel housing fuses or circuit breaker
Wiring – the interior wiring that moves electricity through the home

Restoring power to damaged equipment could cause a fire.



Safety

RETURNING HOME OR TO A BUSINESS

- Restoring power to damaged equipment could cause a fire. Turn off the power at the main breaker.
- Do not enter water to access the main switch; call an electrician to turn it off.
- Do not turn electrical equipment back on until it has been inspected by a qualified electrician. Stay clear of downed power lines. Puddles of water contacting downed lines are just as dangerous.
- If power has been lost, make sure all appliances are turned off. If left on, they could pose fire hazards when the power is restored.
- Do not use candles as an alternative light source. Throw out wet or warm food.
- Consult a healthcare provider before using any temperature-controlled medications.

VISUALLY INSPECT THE ELECTRIC EQUIPMENT CONNECTED TO THE HOME OR BUSINESS.

This includes the weatherhead, the riser conduit that covers the wires, and the meter can. If damaged, contact a licensed electrician to make repairs. If flood or rainwater has seeped into the walls around electrical wiring, a licensed electrician should inspect to determine potential damage.



Once repaired, your electric system must be inspected by local government officials before power can be restored.

BEWARE OF DOWNED POWER LINES, THEY COULD BE ENERGIZED.

REPORT EMERGENCIES TO 239-656-2300





Restoration Demystified

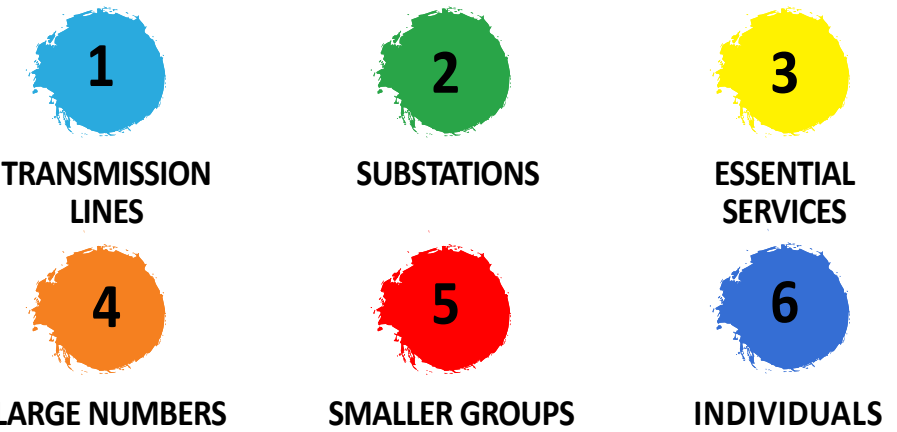
- IF YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE ON THE STREET WITH NO POWER**
- Check all circuit breakers by resetting them. If your breakers aren't the problem, one of the following situations may have occurred:
1. You may be on a different feeder line or a different transformer may serve your location.
 2. The transformer serving your location may be damaged. These are the last system devices to be repaired. Resources are focused on restoring the greatest number of customers first.
 3. Your weatherhead conduit (the pipe and wire extending above your roof) is damaged or bent. If so, you must have an electrician repair it and have an inspection before power can be restored.
 4. You own your own underground service and it may be damaged. If so, you must have it repaired by an electrician and inspected before power can be restored.

THE EXACT DATE/TIME OF RESTORATION IS UNPREDICTABLE.

There are many factors that make it difficult to determine the exact time it takes to repair damage from major disasters. The location, ease of access, and extent of the damage is different in every scenario. Depending on the situation, hundreds if not thousands of people work as quickly and safely as possible to restore power to all customers; and they don't stop until the job is done.

WHAT AREAS ARE RESTORED FIRST?

Utilities work to restore the largest number of customers the quickest. All LCEC communities within the six-county service territory are important to us.



EVEN IF YOU DON'T SEE TRUCKS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD, LCEC IS WORKING TO RESTORE POWER.

After the damage is assessed, crews will work on the main circuits first. Crews are then dispatched to make repairs in multiple locations along power lines so that they can work their way into neighborhoods.

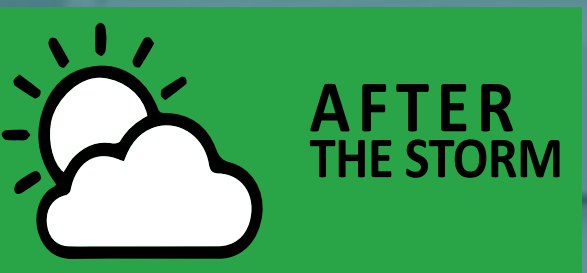
Generator Safety

IF NOT OPERATED PROPERLY, GENERATORS COULD CAUSE SERIOUS HEALTH AND SAFETY RISKS TO YOU, YOUR NEIGHBORS, OR UNSUSPECTING LINE CREWS WORKING IN THE AREA.

- Determine how much electricity is needed for your home and buy the right size generator. Read the operating instructions carefully.
- Do not connect a generator directly to the home's electrical system. Plug appliances directly into the generator.
- Never use a generator indoors or in an attached garage. Keep in an open, well-ventilated area outside and away from open windows.
- Buy a battery-operated carbon-monoxide alarm, which will alert you if carbon-monoxide levels become dangerous.
- Do not touch a generator if you are wet or standing in water.

LCEC GENERLINK™ PROVIDES A SAFE CONNECTION FROM THE GENERATOR TO THE ELECTRIC METER.

Visit www.lcec.net to find out more





Helpful Resources



DIRECTORY OF IMPORTANT NUMBERS AND LINKS

EMERGENCY

Fire, Police, Medical – 911

NON-EMERGENCY

Non-emergency help or questions – 211



LCEC

LCEC: 239-656-2300

lcec.net

www.facebook.com/LCECSWFL | [@LCECSWFL](https://www.facebook.com/LCECSWFL)



HEALTH CARE NEEDS

Lee Health General Information: 800-936-5321

leehealth.org

[facebook.com/LeeHealth](https://www.facebook.com/LeeHealth) | [@Lee_Health](https://www.facebook.com/LeeHealth)

Lee Health Dialysis Services: 1-800-400-8331

Lee Health Diabetes Care: 239-424-3127



POLICE DEPARTMENTS

sheriffleefl.com

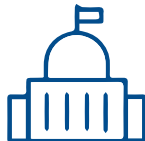
capecoral.gov

cityofmarcoisland.com

colliersheriff.org

ccso.org

mysanibel.com



LOCAL GOVERNMENT / PUBLIC & SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTERS

leegov.com

colliercountyfl.gov

charlottecountyfl.gov

hendryfla.net



COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE

American Red Cross: 800-733-2767

Lee County: 239-278-3401

Collier County: 239-596-6868

Charlotte County: 941-379-9300

redcross.org | [facebook.com/SFLRedCross](https://www.facebook.com/SFLRedCross) | [facebook.com/RedCrossCentralFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/RedCrossCentralFlorida)

Florida Disaster Planning: 850-815-4000 | (TDD/TTY) 800-226-4329

floridadisaster.org | [@FLSERT](https://www.facebook.com/FLSERT)

FEMA: 800-621-3362 | fema.gov

[facebook.com/FEMA](https://www.facebook.com/FEMA) | [@femaregion4](https://www.facebook.com/FEMA) | [@fema](https://www.facebook.com/FEMA)

National Hurricane Safety Initiative | hurricanesafety.org

[facebook.com/GetReadyAmerica](https://www.facebook.com/GetReadyAmerica) | [@GetReadyFlorida](https://www.facebook.com/GetReadyAmerica)

SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline: 800-985-5990 | samhsa.gov

United Way of Lee, Hendry, Glade and Okeechobee Counties

Lee County: 239-433-3900/239-433-2000

Hendry and Glades Counties: 800-887-9234

unitedwaylee.org | [facebook.com/UnitedWayLHGO](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayLHGO) | [@UnitedWayLHG](https://www.facebook.com/UnitedWayLHGO)

HISTORIC RESPONSES

HURRICANE IAN – SEPTEMBER 28, 2022

When the category 4 hurricane made impact on the shores of the SWFL region the electric infrastructure that took more than 82 years to build was nearly destroyed. More than 2,300 workers safely restored power within weeks to all who could receive power.



HURRICANE IRMA – SEPTEMBER 10, 2017

The storm was rated as a category 5 hurricane for three days and changed course multiple times before ravaging parts of the LCEC service territory. LCEC activated the restoration plan nearly a week prior to impact. Power was essentially restored within twelve days.



HURRICANE WILMA – OCTOBER 24, 2005

For nearly two weeks, the storm threatened SWFL before finally making landfall as a category 3 hurricane. More than 100,000 customers were left in the dark. Just over 140 utility workers, supported by LCEC employees, restored customers by October 28.



HURRICANE CHARLEY – AUGUST 13, 2004

The most powerful hurricane to impact Florida in 12 years tore through the region leaving a path of destruction. Restoration of the 150,000 customers without power took five days. Lessons-learned were incorporated into the LCEC Restoration Plan and have proven beneficial for many years since.





OUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Find the latest updates, restoration progress, safety tips, and more through the LCEC communication channels.

FACEBOOK

Find the latest updates, safety information, impacted areas, and feedback.

<https://www.facebook.com/LCECSWFL>

INSTAGRAM

Photo essays and updates about restoration progress and safety tips.

<https://www.instagram.com/LCECSWFL>

TWITTER

Quick updates and safety information.

<https://www.twitter.com/LCECSWFL>

www.lcec.net