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2525 Estero Blvd., Fort Myers Beach, Fla. 33931

## **Town and first responders prepare for Tropical Storm Idalia**

**Town of Fort Myers Beach, FL** – The Town and its first responder partners are taking precautions to prepare for Tropical Storm Idalia that is currently in the Gulf of Mexico and could impact Fort Myers Beach this week. All of Lee County is under a tropical storm watch with storm surge possible of two to four feet.

On Saturday, August 25, 2023, Governor Ron DeSantis declared an emergency for Idalia in 33 counties in Florida, including Lee County. Though Idalia currently appears to be headed north of Tampa and along the Panhandle, the Governor continues to caution all counties along the Southwest Coast of Florida to be ready for outer bands of wind, rain, storm surge and a last-minute shift in direction.

The Town has enacted its emergency plan which includes coordination with the Fort Myers Beach Fire District, the Lee County Sheriff's Office, and the Lee County Emergency Operations Center. This plan includes securing all Town facilities and communicating key messages with the public. Current key messages regarding Idalia are:

- Prepare an emergency plan and make sure everyone in your family is briefed;
- If you are living in an RV or have a mobile food truck, the Town is requesting that you move the trailer off island as a precaution. Please do not plan to ride out this storm in a trailer.
- Stock non-perishable food and water for your family and your pets that will sustain everyone for at least a week in case power and water utilities are down;
- Secure any loose items in your yard or around the outside of your house, including garbage cans, lawn furniture and decorations, to make sure they don't become flying objects.
- Move furniture and belongings from your first floor to your second floor to protect in the event of flooding;
- Fill your vehicles with gas;

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The Town of Fort Myers Beach is on Estero Island off the southwest Florida coast of the Gulf of Mexico. The beach stretches for seven miles and is known for white sand, shell finds, and sunsets. The Town took a direct hit in September 2022 from Hurricane Ian, a category five storm, and is in active recovery. Many shops and restaurants are restored and open for business! The Town has been incorporated since 1995.

- Have cash in case credit and debit card machines go down;
- Charge all electronic devices including cell phones, and keep them charged;
- Connect to the Town’s social media, website, text and email, and CODE RED alert systems as well as local media, the Lee County Sheriff’s Office, the FMB Fire District, Lee County Public Safety, and Lee County Government to stay up on weather and other emergency alerts.
- We will have a public information board off-island, in the parking lot of Wal-Mart on Summerlin, with current messages. Staff will be there to answer questions.
- Hurricane re-entry passes are available at Town Hall Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please see the attached instructions about hurricane re-entry passes.
- Mooring Field is open for safe harborage for boaters who need to ride out the storm on their vessels. See the attached information about that service.
- We are working to provide sand and sand bags. Watch our social media and website for details. Plan to bring your own shovel.

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