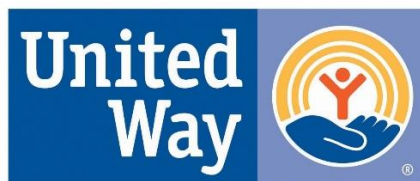


After the Storm

Charlotte County, Florida

A resource guide to help you get back on your feet after you have braved the storm.



United Way of Charlotte County

**17831 Murdock Circle
Port Charlotte, FL 33948
941-627-3539**

Information: 2-1-1 or 1-941-205-2161

After the Storm – Next Steps

Use these checklists to guide your plan of action for recovery.

For Your Family

- List your available financial resources
- Identify other sources of financial assistance
- Make a list of things you will need to replace
- Take photos of damage that has occurred
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- Consider joining a support group (or start one of your own)
- Return to normal routines as soon as possible
- Talk about your feelings

For Your Children

- Give lots of reassuring hugs
- Provide factual information about the disaster
- Encourage them to talk about their feelings– and be honest about your own
- Spend extra time with them at bedtime
- Return to regular schedules for work, play, school and rest
- Involve your children in the recovery with specific chores
- Praise responsible behavior

For Yourself

- Eat properly and drink plenty of liquid
- Exercise helps reduce stress– take a brisk walk
- Don't take on too much as you begin to rebuild
- Get plenty of rest – nap if you can't sleep
- Talk about your fears and concerns
- Consider talking with a counselor who can help you manage your stress
- Don't hesitate to ask for help when you need it

For Your Home or Apartment

- Contact FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- Be sure your residence is safe before you return
- Contact your insurance agent– don't guess at your coverage
- Get more than one estimate for repairs
- Set up a safe place to keep receipts for all your expenses
- Determine what you can do by yourself
- Determine what you can do with the help of a few friends
- Determine what requires an expert (electrical, plumbing, etc.)
- Check references carefully
- Check contractor and repair firms with the Better Business Bureau

A Roof Over Your Head

The experience of homelessness for those who have been forced out of their homes as a result of a natural disaster is particularly devastating. Suddenly, in spite of years of careful planning and saving, you may have lost your home and its valued contents. You may have lost treasured mementos and cherished possessions that are an important part of your history. If this is the case, you have reason to grieve. While no one can truly recapture all that you have lost, there is help available to help you begin again.

FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency)

If your area is declared a national disaster, you may qualify for financial aid. You are encouraged to apply for FEMA assistance or aid, regardless of the extent of the disaster you experienced.

People who suffered damages from the storms are eligible for assistance through various programs offered by FEMA. If you are a renter, you may be eligible for a grant from FEMA to cover Short term rent assistance at a new location. The process involved in applying for FEMA may seem time-consuming. However, you may be missing an important source of financial assistance if you fail to take advantage of this opportunity.

When you apply, please have the following information available:

- Social Security number
- Current and pre-disaster address
- Telephone numbers where you can be contacted
- Insurance Information
- Total household income
- A routing and account number from your bank
(only necessary if you want to have disaster assistance funds transferred directly)

Call the FEMA Helpline or check online if you need additional help or have questions. You can also learn the status of an application, additional services, or the location of specific services.

FEMA Application Line 800-621-FEMA (3362)

TTY # 800-462-7585

You can also apply online at www.DisasterAssistance.gov.

Additional Resources

Abuse, Battered Women

Center for Abuse and Rape Emergencies 941-639-5499

Counseling

Charlotte Behavioral Health Care 941-639-8300

Children's needs

Charlotte County Healthy Start 941-764-9700

Dept. of Children and Families (DCF) 877-595-0384

Disaster (Fire, Flood, Etc.)

Crisis Clean-up 800-451-1954

Disaster Distress hotline or disasterdistress.samhsa.gov 800-985-5990

Emergencies 9-1-1

Non-emergency Business – Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte 941-639-2101

Non-emergency Business – Englewood 941-474-3233

Employment

Career Source 941-235-5900 or 800-557-3242

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) 800-204-2418

www.floridajobs.org/job-seekers-community-services/

Goodwill, Industries of Southwest Florida 239-995-2106

Financial Services and Consumer Advice

Consumer Credit Counseling 941-460-9111

Food Pantry

Harry Chapin Food Bank 239-334-7007

Charlotte HIV/AIDS People Support (CHAPS) 941-625-2552

Healthcare Resources

Charlotte Behavioral Health Care 941-639-8300

Virginia B. Andes Volunteer Community Clinic 941-766-9570

Florida Dept. of Health 941-624-7200

Legal Services

Disaster Legal Services 866-550-2929

Florida Rural Legal Services 800-277-7680

Insurance

Florida Office of Insurance Regulation **General Inquiries** 850 413-3140
<http://www.floir.com/Office/HurricaneSeason/hurricaneresourcepage.aspx>

Mental Health

Charlotte Behavioral Health Care 941-639-8300

Other Benefits

Dept. of Children and Families – ACCESS Florida 866-762-2237

Poison

For Poisoning Emergencies 800-222-1222

Police (Emergencies only) 9-1-1

Senior Care

Alzheimer's Association, Florida Gulf Coast Chapter 727-578-2558

Senior Friendship Centers 941-955-2122

Senior Choices Elder Helpline 866-413-5337

Shelter

Charlotte County Homeless Coalition 941-627-4313

Suicide and Depression

Charlotte Behavioral Health Care 941-639-8300

Volunteer Florida – Volunteer and Donations www.volunteerflorida.org

When a Crisis Strikes

Living through a major crisis produces many different types of feelings. You may feel anxiety, depression, confusion and tension. These feelings may cause a breakdown in our usual coping mechanisms. You may find it hard to function, behave in unexpected ways or have trouble making decisions.

Although a crisis can result in a sense of anxiety, pain or hopelessness that makes it hard to cope, these same feelings can serve as motivation to look for help and develop new coping mechanisms.

That's where this guide comes in...we hope you will use it to guide your steps as you begin the rebuilding process.