

# Contact Numbers



Tampa Electric has an automated system for reporting power outages and public safety concerns, such as downed power lines. Call our toll-free **Power Outage number** to take advantage of this system:

**1-877-588-1010**

### Tampa Electric Customer Care

- Hillsborough County..... (813) 223-0800
- Polk County ..... (863) 299-0800
- All other counties and out-of-state ..... 1-888-223-0800

After severe storms, Tampa Electric crews are available 24 hours a day to provide quick and reliable service – as soon as it is safe to do so.

### Peoples Gas Customer Care

**1-877-TECO-PGS**  
(1-877-832-6747)



tampaelectric.com



peoplesgas.com

*The information contained in this brochure is provided solely as a courtesy for our customers. Tampa Electric assumes no responsibility for the care or operation of the appliances or wiring in your home and encourages you to seek the services of a licensed electrician or appliance retailer for more information.*

# Stay Safe This Hurricane Season



- How to prepare
- Where to get help
- For more energy safety information, visit our Web sites at **tampaelectric.com** and **peoplesgas.com**

# Table of Contents

To help you and your family prepare for hurricane season, keep this booklet handy. See that all members of your household are familiar with it, so you will know what to do when stormy weather comes our way.

The better you plan, the better off you and your family will be when a storm hits. You may not have much warning.

## How To Prepare

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# Our Commitment

## Our commitment to customers and team members through hurricane season

As we enter hurricane season, Tampa Electric's comprehensive, year-round storm plan forms a cornerstone of our commitment to our customers and team members. Company-wide response drills, enhancements to customer service, and upgrades to our equipment are all part of our hurricane season preparation.

Customers may call toll-free **1-877-588-1010** to report a residential or business power outage. You may also use this automated system to report a public safety concern, such as downed power lines. (To report life-threatening conditions, please call **911**.)

To fully utilize the power outage reporting system, visit **tampaelectric.com** to update your primary and alternate phone numbers. The system can recognize your phone numbers and account number and match them to your address when you call, helping us locate outages quickly. If you have not updated your phone numbers when you call the system, you will need to enter your account number for the system to recognize your address.

## After severe weather, we're ready

When severe weather results in the temporary loss of electricity, our plan helps us restore power as safely and quickly as possible. Using all available resources, our crews work around the clock to restore electricity starting with facilities critical to public health and safety. This is followed by work prioritized to restore power to the most customers in the least amount of time.

If we are faced with a widespread outage situation and require additional help, Tampa Electric's membership in the Southeastern Electric Exchange provides support from other utilities. In turn, we will send crews to help restore power for other communities in need.



# Safety with Electricity

## Practice safety with electricity

As we make safety our top priority, we ask that you do the same. This means planning for severe weather as soon as possible. In addition, before and during hurricane season, we advise residents to follow these electrical safety guidelines:

- **Stay away from downed power lines.**

Always assume that a downed power line is energized, and move away to safety.

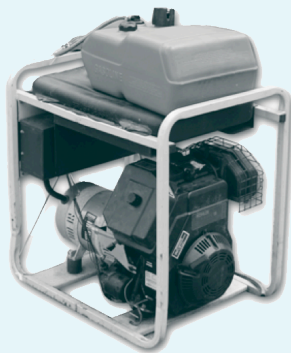
Never go near a downed wire. While some energized wires spark and snap, others may not appear dangerous. Avoid any metal objects making contact with a live wire. A wire fence, metal signpost or railroad track touching an energized wire can conduct a hazardous electricity a long distance.

- **Stay out of floodwaters.**

Floodwaters can hide energized power lines or other hazards, or put you at risk of drowning.

- **Caution: Use portable generators safely.**

DO NOT connect your portable generator to your home's circuits. Plug your appliances directly into the generator. Connecting your generator to your home's circuits may cause power to flow to outside lines, posing life-threatening danger to power restoration crews. Also, portable generators must NOT be operated near air conditioning ducts or in residences or any enclosed space (including a closed garage), where deadly carbon monoxide gases could build up.



# Safety with Electricity

- **Practice safety when water enters your home.**

Before water enters your home, turn off your electricity at the fuse or circuit-breaker box by throwing the master switch. If there is no master switch, turn all the breakers OFF or carefully unscrew each fuse.

Water on the floor can be hazardous even before it is high enough to reach electrical appliances. Never use an electrical appliance while standing on a wet floor. It can give you a severe or even fatal shock.

If an electrical appliance gets wet, turn OFF the power supply to it and then disconnect the appliance. It should be inspected before being plugged in again. If this causes the fuse to blow, unplug the appliance.

- **Use caution when driving in a storm.**

If a wire falls on to your car, always assume it is energized or "hot". If there seems to be no immediate danger of fire, do not attempt to get out of your vehicle. Summon for help, if possible, while still in your car. If help is not available, try driving your car away from the wire, allowing it to slide off.

If fire or injury means that you must leave the car, do not touch any part of the car while setting foot on the ground. Jump clear of the vehicle with both feet, making sure you don't touch the car or the electrical hot wire.

- **Do not eat food touched by floodwaters or food that may have spoiled as a result of the electricity being off.** If your electricity goes off, the insulation in your refrigerator and freezer will keep the food inside cool for up to 48 hours if you avoid opening the doors.

Visit [tampaelectric.com/weatherwatch](http://tampaelectric.com/weatherwatch) for severe weather preparation guidelines.

The screenshot shows the TECO Tampa Electric website. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for Home, About Us, Careers, and Contact Us. Below the navigation is a search bar and a sidebar with a list of links including Residential, Business, Environmental, Community, Company News & Info, Weather Watch (highlighted), Storm Safety, Frequently Asked Questions, Weather Links, and Restoration. The main content area is titled "Weather Watch" and features a background image of a storm. The text on the page includes:

**Report power outages**  
Call toll-free 1-877-588-1010 to report a power outage or public safety concern. Our automated system matches your phone number or account number to your address, helping us pinpoint the outage. This requires that you update your primary phone number (the most frequently-used phone number associated with your home or business address).  
Download and print this handy reminder card in [English](#) or [Spanish](#) and keep it in a convenient location.

**Report tree limbs that are growing into power lines**  
Learn how to be safe around power lines. Only qualified contractors should trim trees around power lines. Use our online form to [report problems](#). Before you plant, check out our [tree planting & safety guide](#).

# Safety with Natural Gas

## Handling natural gas safely

- **Take precautions with gas appliances.**

It is not necessary to turn off your natural gas service. If you are required to evacuate your home or business, your gas service should operate uninterrupted throughout the storm.

- **If you evacuate your home or business:**

- DO NOT turn off your gas supply at the main meter. Only emergency or utility personnel should turn the valve on or off.
- You can turn off the gas for individual appliances at the appliance valve near each unit if you choose. Most codes require an appliance valve within six feet of each appliance.

- **If you experience difficulty relighting the pilot lights on your appliances, contact a trained professional.**

You can call Peoples Gas toll-free to locate a qualified independent contractor to provide service and repairs, appliance sales, pipe connection and installation for all types of natural gas equipment. The toll-free number is **1-877-TECOPGS** (1-877-832-6747). A list of qualified independent contractors can also be found at [peoplesgas.com](http://peoplesgas.com).

- **Caution: Use portable generators safely.**

DO NOT connect your portable generator to your home's circuits. Plug your appliances directly into the generator. Connecting your generator to your home's circuits may cause power to flow to outside lines, posing life-threatening danger to power restoration crews. Also, portable generators must NOT be operated near air conditioning ducts or in residences or any enclosed space (including a closed garage), where deadly carbon monoxide gases could build up.

- **After the hurricane, immediately call 1-877-TECO PGS (1-877-832-6747) if you smell natural gas (odor of rotten eggs) or see a broken gas line.**



# Be Prepared

## Items you should have on hand for hurricane season

During hurricane season, you should keep essential provisions on hand. Some to include are:

- Photo ID; crucial to carry with you in the event of an evacuation. Security (police, National Guard, etc.) may request photo ID before permitting return to homes after evacuation.
- Spare cash; crucial to have on hand during the season, as hurricanes may disable ATMs. Banks may be closed and credit cards won't be accepted (nor checks) because electronic systems may be down.
- Transistor radio/weather radio and spare batteries; this may be your only communication link after a severe storm if your power goes out.
- One or more flashlights, spare bulbs and batteries.
- Lanterns, with matches in waterproof box.
- First-aid kit.
- Fire extinguisher.
- Water purification tablets or bottled water.
- Camp stove and fuel.
- Ready-to-eat foods and canned or powdered beverages that require no refrigeration. Remember to plan for the elderly, infants and pets.
- Spare electric fuses, if your home uses them.
- Emergency toilet, metal or plastic pail with tight lid, plastic bags for liners, disinfectant.
- Plywood sheeting or shutters to protect windows and doors.
- Reading material, playing cards, games for children (in case evacuation to a shelter is ordered).
- A traditional corded phone; cordless phones won't work without electricity.



# Be Prepared

## Be alert for warning announcements

- Keep in touch with weather reports on the radio, television, and the Internet.
- Double-check all your emergency preparations and supplies.
- Cover or shutter windows to protect against broken glass.
- Clean the bathtub and fill it with water; fill other containers with water for drinking. A severe storm could cut off water service for days.
- Tie down all loose items in your yard (lawn furniture, garbage cans, etc.) or place them inside a house or garage.
- Park your car in a garage or sheltered place near your home. If you have a boat, see that it is well secured.
- If a tornado warning has been issued:
  - Seek shelter immediately in a basement or heavy steel-framed or reinforced concrete building. In a house, take cover in an interior hallway or under a sturdy table on the ground floor, away from outside walls and windows.
  - If you see a tornado coming your way while outdoors, note its direction of travel and move at a right angle out of its path. If there's not enough time, lie flat in a ditch or other low place.
  - Do not stay in a mobile home if a tornado approaches. Find a place to take cover.



# Evacuation Information

## Check evacuation zones

For information on evacuation zones or a map of the area with evacuation zones listed, please pick up a copy of a local hurricane guide. The guides are available at most public locations.

### If your area is evacuated:

- Leave early. Authorities will tell you if you need to evacuate your home. If you wait too long, you could be blocked by flooded roads, toppled trees, fallen wires or heavy traffic conditions.
- Before leaving, lock your home and unplug electrical appliances (except for refrigerators and freezers, to preserve contents).
- Follow instructions of local authorities carefully.
- Travel with care. Watch for washed-out roadways, weakened road surfaces, downed electric wires, and fallen or falling trees. Listen to your car radio for important information.
- Watch for flooding. Don't try to cross a flooded area unless you're sure how deep it is. If the water is deeper than you think, you could be dangerously stranded. Cross only if the water comes no higher than the center of your car's wheels.

### If still at home in a non-evacuation zone:

- Don't leave your home until you hear from authorities that conditions are safe. Remember, a lull in a hurricane means the wind will soon return from the opposite direction.
- If water is about to enter your home, turn off all electricity: place your main breaker(s) in the OFF position or carefully unscrew each fuse.
- If you lose electricity, keep your refrigerator or freezer doors closed to preserve food as long as possible.

## Disabled evacuation assistance

County agencies are ready to help you should a hurricane threaten our area. If you will need assistance or transportation because of age, handicap or special need, please call the appropriate numbers listed on page nine of this brochure. Explain what kind of assistance you may require during an evacuation, such as wheelchair or ambulance service.

Authorities then will be prepared to help you should you need to be evacuated.

# Evacuation Information

Assistance is available to the disabled, primarily during storm-related emergencies, by various county emergency groups. Some of the emergency authorities may assist you with shelter and transportation to shelters during electrical outages (e.g., cold and hot weather rolling blackouts) which do not require mass evacuation. Since this service can vary depending upon the county, please inquire about it when you call your county emergency office.

## Special assistance phone numbers

Hillsborough County:	<b>(813) 272-5900</b>
Pinellas County:	<b>(727) 464-3800</b>
Polk County:	<b>(863) 534-5606</b>
Pasco County:	<b>(727) 847-8137</b>

**Note:** If you depend on a medical device operated by electricity, please provide yourself with a portable generator or other emergency power source. If you request, we will provide you with a list of suppliers. (See generator safety information on page three.)

## Arrangements for your pets

Pets are not allowed at Red Cross shelters. Many animal hospitals, clinics and shelters will board pets during a hurricane emergency, but such arrangements are on a first-come, first-serve basis. The time to check with them is before an evacuation is ordered. It's best to heed early warnings because shelters will not come to homes to pick up pets.

