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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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PHOTO RELEASE

Governor Scott Issues Updates on Tropical Storm Nate Preparedness Efforts



PENSACOLA, Fla. – Today, Governor Rick Scott joined Pensacola Mayor Ashton Hayward at the Escambia County Emergency Operations Center to be briefed by local emergency management officials and give an update on Tropical Storm Nate and the storm's potential impact on Florida. Yesterday, Governor Scott declared a state of emergency in 29 counties within the State of Florida in response to Tropical Storm Nate. Read more [HERE](#).

See below for more information on what the State of Florida is doing to support Tropical Storm Nate preparedness efforts:

EMERGENCY SUPPORT FUNCTIONS BY STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

WATCHES AND WARNINGS

- Hurricane Watch is in effect for:
 - East of the Alabama/Florida border to the Okaloosa/Walton County Line
- Storm Surge Watch is in effect for:
 - East of the Alabama/Florida border to Indian Pass Florida
- Tropical Storm Watch is in effect for:
 - East of the Okaloosa/Walton County Line to Indian Pass Florida

MILITARY SUPPORT

- Right now, 100 National Guard members are actively preparing for disaster operations and support of local Emergency Operations Centers.
- The Florida National Guard has 7,000 guard members available for deployment if needed.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- The Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) continues to monitor traffic and is coordinating with FDOT and local emergency operations centers regarding any potential evacuations.
- The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is monitoring the storm and ready to respond as needed with a variety of specialized equipment including shallow draft boats, ATVs, airboats and four wheel drive vehicles.

TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS

- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is monitoring the storm and holding teleconferences with the regional FDOT district offices to ensure local communities are prepared.
- FDOT has suspended interstate and highway construction in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa and Walton counties until Monday, Oct. 9 to allow for the possible increase in traffic as motorists evacuate from the Florida panhandle coastline area. All rail, transit and seaport facilities are functioning as normal.
- FDOT will assist first responders with traffic control, detours or road closures, as long as weather permits.
- For the latest closures and updates, travelers can access Florida's 511 service from cell phones, landlines and online at www.FL511.com.
- FDOT district offices are placing emergency crews on standby and reaching out to construction vendors to have them remove any materials that block roads to facilitate potential evacuations and checking on fuel supplies. FDOT is also actively monitoring for roadway flooding in areas already impacted by Hurricane Irma and stands ready to respond as needed.
- FDOT asset maintenance contractors have been contacted to support potential activities.
- FDOT will continue to reach out to county emergency operations centers directly to coordinate any necessary response actions including activating traffic counters, providing local evacuation support and providing maintenance of traffic and other assistance.
- Florida's seaports are monitoring conditions.

POWER AND UTILITIES

- The state has contacted utilities to put them on notice to start reporting outage and restoration information if needed.
- Utilities are contacting their mutual aid partners to determine availability if external resources are needed to restore services.
- The state is monitoring the power grid for sufficient power in the state.
- The state is monitoring the natural gas infrastructure for any damages that can cause a loss of service to power plants.

FUEL

- The state is contacting fuel industry partners, such as the Florida Petroleum Council, Florida Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association, to prepare for potential storm impacts.
- The state is currently monitoring for fuel assistance requests. At this time, there are no reported supply, distribution or retail fuel shortages or issues.
- The state has also contacted emergency fuel and equipment provider for status of emergency fuel supply and equipment.

SHELTERS

- The state is preparing to support potential sheltering operations in the Florida Panhandle.
- More information on shelters will be made available as decisions on potential evacuations are made.
- The American Red Cross is positioning shelter equipment and staff to support local communities in the North Florida area if needed.
- The state is working to inventory food and water resources in state contracted warehouses (SCWs) and is prepared to coordinate with the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army on potential feeding needs.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICAL

- The Agency for Health Care Administration (AHCA) and the Florida Department of Health (DOH) will join Governor Scott on tropical storm preparedness calls with Florida hospitals, assisted living facilities and nursing homes later today.
- DOH is standing by to assist with potential needs of healthcare facilities and special needs shelters.
- DOH and AHCA have requested hospitals, nursing homes and ALFs in regions 1 and 2 to report their facility status daily at 10AM and upon any status change through the FLHealthSTAT database.
- The Public Service Commission (PSC) is working with Health and Medical Services to identify all nursing homes and assisted living facilities that could be affected by possible electric outages.
- APD regional office serving the west coast and Panhandle counties of Florida are reaching out to waiver support coordinators, individuals in independent living, and providers to ensure they are prepared.
- APD is holding daily meetings to review storm preparations.

EDUCATION

- The University of West Florida will be closed from Saturday, October 7th through Monday, October 9th.

WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICTS

- Water Management Districts are monitoring waterways and water levels, preparing staff and vehicles, and are prepared to adjust flows as necessary.
- Lake Okeechobee is currently at 16.83 feet and is being continuously monitored by the United States Army Corps of Engineers, which manages Lake Okeechobee water levels. The Army Corps will continue releases from Lake Okeechobee until further notice.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

- The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) and the Division of Emergency Management (DEM) are working to provide updates to private sector partners. Information is available at www.flvbeoc.org.
- The state has activated the Private Sector Hotline at 850-410-1403, which is available for business inquiries about storm preparedness and response.

CONTACTS

- The State Assistance Information Line (SAIL) contact number is 1-800-342-3557.
- The State Emergency Operations Center Media Line: 850-921-0217.
- Follow @FLSERT or @FLGovScott on Twitter for live updates on Tropical Storm Nate.
- Visit <http://www.floridadisaster.org> to find information on shelters, road closures, and evacuation routes.

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