

# 10

## Hurricane-Preparation Actions Officials can take

# now!

According to **CNA hurricane experts**, emergency management officials can avoid the costly and sometimes tragic mistakes of the past.

### 1 ● Plan for internet outages.

Millions of Floridians lost their internet after Hurricane Irma, yet local emergency managers rely heavily on social media and other internet applications for critical communications. **Planning, training and equipment for backup communications have to be addressed in advance.**

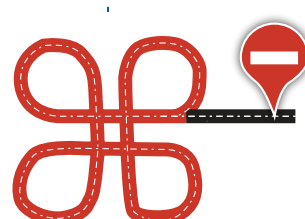


### 2 ● Coordinate electric utility and road clearance teams.

CNA after-action analysis of Hurricane Irma found that **Road Clearing Task Forces facilitated power restoration and road clearing**. Where the utility and road crews worked separately, utility crews were often blocked by fallen trees and road crews couldn't work where downed lines created the risk of electrocution.

### 3 ● Get ready to track evacuees in shelters.

During last year's hurricane season, some home health agencies couldn't find their evacuated clients; fire departments wasted precious time searching for citizens who signed up for transportation assistance. Concerned relatives couldn't get information about who was in what shelter. **Technological solutions to track people—and pets—in shelters require advance planning.**

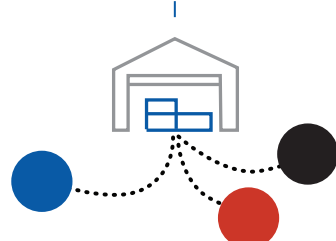


### 4 ● Have a back-to-school plan.

Schools are often used as shelters, but sometimes the school is ready to reopen when evacuees still are unable to safely return home. **Local governments should consider locations other than schools for some shelters**, especially for residents who may have to stay longer because they have access or functional needs.

### 5 ● Sit down with private sector suppliers of key commodities.

"Governments simply can't provide everything that's required in the aftermath of a disaster," says CNA emergency management analyst Mary Fisher. **Grocery warehouses often store more than enough food for emergency supplies, but without advanced planning food could be trapped inside distribution centers during an emergency.** After Hurricane Irma desperately needed medical supplies and equipment sat unused in local warehouses.

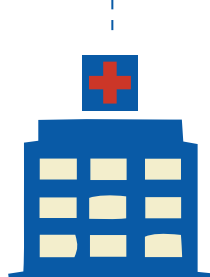


### 6 ● Prepare 9-1-1 for hurricane info calls.

It's important to **get the message out that 9-1-1 is only for emergency assistance**—but experience from previous hurricanes tells us many ignore the advice. If 9-1-1 call centers are prepared with hurricane talking points or an effective way to reroute information calls, they can quickly provide help and get back to their essential duties.

### 7 ● Review Plans to Shelter Residents with Disabilities and Access and Functional Needs.

In one hurricane jurisdiction, CNA found that only 10 percent of evacuees requiring assistance had pre-registered. **Sheltering those with access and functional needs requires extra planning to ensure adequate supplies and care** while avoiding overburdened hospitals.

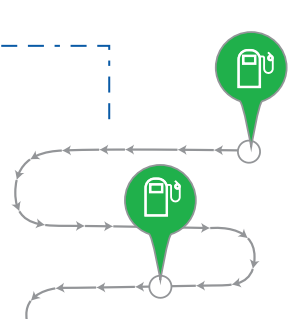


### 8 ● Prepare separate evacuation plans for critical businesses.

In the 2017 hurricane season, CNA analysts found some gas stations and grocery store managers thought residential evacuation orders applied to them, resulting in some panic for evacuees who needed to fill up and stock up. **Planners need to create and communicate designated windows of evacuation.**

### 9 ● Keep your cool.

When 14 nursing home residents died because their air conditioning failed during Hurricane Irma, we saw the urgency of planning to prevent deaths from overheating. **CNA has found that mobile cooling stations are one effective option to bring relief to facilities that have no AC.** And, planners will need contingency plans for facilities where "generator power" is only enough to keep the lights on.



### 10 ● Make sure you won't be dumped by debris removal contractors.

In the 2017 hurricane season, many jurisdictions learned the hard way that debris removal companies go where the money is—even if a contract is in place. **Local leaders should review debris collection contracts and identify competing contracts** with cities and neighboring jurisdictions.

