

Biden-Harris Administration Responds to Hurricane Idalia, Encourages People to Be Vigilant to Post-Storm Risks

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WASHINGTON -- Today, FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell is in Florida and will survey damage from Hurricane Idalia with Gov. Ron DeSantis. Together with Gov. DeSantis, Administrator Criswell will meet with local officials, emergency response staff and meet with survivors. They will be surveying damage in Cedar Key and Horseshoe Beach following briefings at the state Emergency Operations Center in Tallahassee.

Under President Biden's leadership, the administration mobilized more than 1,500 federal personnel, including four Incident Management Assistance Teams, over 540 Urban Search and Rescue members and three Disaster Survivor Assistance Strike Teams to support states in Hurricane Idalia's path. Mobile Emergency Response Support vehicles are also in Florida to ensure communications capabilities.

FEMA has pre-positioned Disaster Survivor Assistance Strike Teams on standby to survey damages and make assessments.

Federal response to Hurricane Idalia

Prior to the hurricane's landfall, FEMA staged commodities and critical supplies, including more than 1.3 million meals and 1.6 million liters of water available pending requests from states. Additional meals, water, tarps and infant and toddler kits are in transit.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers deployed teams and resources to assist the state with infrastructure, power assessment and temporary roofing requirements as needed.



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Page 1 of 3

The U.S Department of Health and Human Services declared a Public Health Emergency for the state of Florida Wednesday. This declaration gives the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services health care providers and suppliers greater flexibility in meeting emergency health needs of those who use Medicare and Medicaid. Medical and disaster management professionals deployed to Florida to address the potential health effects of Hurricane Idalia. These personnel include National Disaster Medical System health and medical task force members and pharmacists.

Non-profit partner support for Hurricane Idalia survivors

- Our non-profit partners are critical to meeting the immediate needs of survivors after disasters.
- The Salvation Army has mobile feeding units staged in Lakeland, Florida, with additional teams on standby.
- Team Rubicon and the American Red Cross both deployed staff and volunteers ahead of the storm to help meet immediate needs of survivors and conduct damage assessments.

Stay safe after Hurricane Idalia

If you are in an area that has been affected by the storm, be aware of continued risks. Residents and visitors in potentially affected areas should have a family emergency communications plan, keep their devices charged, ensure they are receiving emergency alerts and check on neighbors, especially older adults or those who may need additional assistance.

- **Use generators safely.** Generators can be helpful when the power goes out. It is important to know how to use them safely to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning and other hazards. Generators and fuel should always be used outdoors at least 20 feet away from windows, doors and attached garages.
- **Stay off the roads.** Emergency workers may be assisting people in flooded areas or cleaning up debris. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way.
- **Don't drive through flood waters.** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low-lying areas at bridges



and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.

- **Do not walk or wade in flood waters.** The water may be contaminated by oil, gasoline or raw sewage. It may also include dangerous wildlife. If your basement flooded, never attempt to turn off power or operate circuit breakers while standing in water.
- **Be careful when cleaning up.** Wear protective clothing, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants, work gloves and sturdy thick-soled shoes. Do not try to remove heavy debris by yourself.
- **Avoid downed power or utility lines.** Consider all downed lines live with deadly voltage. Stay away and report them immediately to your power or utility company.

For additional information on staying safe during and after disasters, visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov).



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Page 3 of 3