



## *SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL*

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# Hurricanes

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From 1873 to 1993, Southwest Florida experienced forty-nine tropical cyclones of hurricane intensity. Eight of these typical cyclones prior to 1885 were differentiated as tropical storms or hurricanes. Therefore, some of these early storms could have been below hurricane intensity. A hurricane is defined as a tropical storm with sustained winds equaling or exceeding seventy-four miles per hour (approximately 64.3 knots). Seventeen hurricanes passed within fifty miles of Fort Myers, averaging one every seven years. For the fifty-to-one-hundred-mile radius from Fort Myers, an additional thirty-two hurricanes passed by and through the Region at a rate of one every two and one-half years. Based on this information, using a one-hundred-mile radius as a minimum distance for issuing hurricane warnings, Southwest Florida can expect to receive such warnings once every two and one-half years. Of course, deviations can occur. During the 1985 hurricane season, for example, two warnings were issued in Southwest Florida.

The official Atlantic hurricane season is June 1 through November 30. The period of greatest hurricane frequency in Southwest Florida is the three-month period from August to October, when 90 percent of all hurricanes passed within 100 nautical miles of Fort Myers (the center point of reference) have historically occurred. September is the worst single-month period for hurricanes in the Region.

Hurricanes that cause the greatest amount of damage have wind velocities averaging greater than one hundred and eleven miles per hour (96.5 knots). Such storms passed within one hundred miles of Fort Myers on the average of once every five and one-half years from 1973 to 1993.

### **"Go Box" Essentials**

A "Go Box" contains copies of important information, documents and supplies essential for a business to continue operating in the aftermath of a disaster. This information should be stored in a secure fireproof and waterproof container in an off-site location.

- Emergency contact list of employees and key customers/clients
- Voice mail box number and remote password information
- Insurance policies and agent contact information
- List of suppliers and vendors
- Several copies of your "Authorized Passage Under Emergency Conditions Memo or Letter"
- Back up files/tapes or servers of data
- Essential papers and emergency procedures and your "Business Disaster Continuity Plan"

- Copy of all required licenses
- General office supplies
- Pictures of your business (inside and outside)
- Camera
- Documentation Requirements for an SBA Disaster Loan or other type of assistance that might become available after a disaster:
  - Current Profit and Loss Statement and Balance Sheet
  - Inventory List
  - Current Schedule of Liability
  - Tax Returns for the last three years