

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Hurricane Irma Release 01-9/5-3:00 p.m.

**LOWNDES COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
PRESS RELEASE**

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Lowndes County Emergency Management Tracks Irma

Lowndes County, Georgia – Lowndes County Emergency Management is tracking the path and development of Hurricane Irma. According to the National Hurricane Center, Irma is forecast to impact the southern tip of the Florida Peninsula by this weekend. Depending upon the path, Lowndes County could experience the effects of Irma by the middle of next week.

Just as local governments are preparing public infrastructure for impact, citizens are encouraged to take steps necessary to protect homes and businesses. Current recommendations are as follows:

- Sign up for CodeRed, Lowndes County's free emergency notification system by visiting www.lowndescounty.com, and clicking on the storm icon.
- Have an emergency plan in place, for preparedness tips visit www.ready.ga.gov.
- Those in our community that have sheltered from severe weather in the past, should make plans for shelter now. While public shelters will be available if needed, citizens are usually more comfortable sheltering with friends and family. Do not wait until the last minute to start looking for a place to shelter.
- Pet owners that may need to relocate to a shelter should make alternate plans for their pets. While some shelters may be pet friendly, there is no guarantee pet friendly shelter space will be available. In addition, local ordinances require pets

to be properly cared for during periods of severe weather. Pets must be provided adequate shelter that allows them to stay dry and out of the weather to include extreme temperatures.

- Update emergency contact lists to include key friends, family, or others to include service providers.
- Make sure your home/business is free of items that could become flying debris during a strong storm. Pay close attention to patio furniture and trampolines. Citizens are encouraged to disassemble trampolines to the extent they cannot become airborne. Trim any trees/limbs that could cause damage to property. Please remember that local governments cannot perform work on private property.
- Generators should be tested and fueled prior to power outages.
- If you or someone you are responsible for are dependent upon electricity for any life sustaining measures such as oxygen, medical equipment, etc., and do not have a back-up power source available, plan now for an alternative solution.

The City of Valdosta is in regular communication with Lowndes County Emergency Management and is activating its storm plans in order to prepare for inclement weather. Preparation includes communicating with employees regarding workplace readiness, filling fuel tanks, lowering water levels at the Mill Pond to accommodate additional storm water, checking catch basins, testing generators, and ensuring all city equipment is ready to use. The city remains vigilant and encourages residents to take storm precaution seriously for their safety and the safety of their families.

Currently, the forecast path for Irma does not lend itself to Lowndes County being a favorable location for evacuees to seek shelter. This could change if the path of the storm moves

out of our area. According to Georgia Welcome Center officials, hotel/motel rooms are booked from the Georgia-Florida line to north of Cordele.

Additional information will be release as it becomes available. For more information, please contact Lowndes County Public Information Officer, Paige Dukes, 229-671-2400 or pdukes@lowndescounty.com.

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