ROLE OF ORANGE COUNTY PROPERTY APPRAISER DURING A DISASTER

When a disaster occurs, it is the responsibility of the Orange County Property Appraiser’s Office to assess all damaged property. After First Responders deem a certain area safe, our teams go out into the field and assess damage in four color-coded categories: affected, minor, major, or destroyed. If the disaster is major, our team will use additional resources, such as personnel from other county agencies, to help with assessments.

All estimates are based on structural damage to the improvements. The appraisers color-code the parcels on the maps based on these four categories. The maps are then brought back to the office for input and analysis by our Geographic Information Systems (GIS) department. By the end of the day, the inputted information is forwarded to the Orange County Emergency Operations Center where it is distributed to the local authorities, such as the County Mayor and his/her staff, who then decide whether to apply for further disaster declaration if necessary.
**BEFORE THE STORM**

It is important to develop a family hurricane preparedness plan BEFORE an actual storm threatens your area. The following are some guidelines for designing your plan of action:

- Locate the safest areas for you and your family to wait-out the storm. This can be either within your home or elsewhere in your community.
- Identify ahead of time where you could go if you are told to evacuate.
- Determine escape routes from your home. Have maps of your evacuation route on hand.
- Have an out-of-state friend as a family contact so all your family members have a single point of contact.
- Make sure to gather all your important documents and have them on hand for use.
- Make copies of your documents and leave them with someone you trust or in a safety deposit box.
- Take photos and/or video footage of your property. Store this information with your important papers.
- Review your insurance coverage and policies.
- Secure all loose objects on your property.
- Have your disaster supply kit ready.
- Protect windows and doors with plywood, rope, nails, and tarps if necessary.
- Use a NOAA weather radio for updates.
- Have at least 1 vehicle with a full tank of gas.

**EVACUATION ORDER**

An evacuation order is an order used by the local county government, usually provided by the Office of Emergency Management, advising all residents and visitors in the area to evacuate. Once the order is issued, immediate evacuation is required by state law. In order to determine if the evacuation order applies to your area, call Orange County’s customer service number 3-1-1 (407-836-3111). In the case of an evacuation, the following are some guidelines to follow:

- Disconnect and protect valuable electrical equipment such as computers, TVs and appliances.
- Move electronics away from any windows and cover them with plastic bags.
- If possible, move covered electronics in cabinets or closets.
- Call relatives/friends and inform them of your evacuation location.
- Secure all windows and doors tightly.
- Turn off utilities – electric, gas, water.
- If you have a pet and are evacuating to a shelter, verify it is a pet-friendly shelter.

**AFTER THE STORM**

After the hurricane has passed, make sure to take precautions when returning back home.

- If you have been evacuated, return home when local officials tell you it is safe to do so.
- Keep identification handy. You may be asked by local officials to provide proof of residency.
- Inspect your home for damage.
- Use flashlights at all times; avoid using candles.
- Drive only when necessary and with care.
- If you need to use a generator, make sure it remains outside away from windows.
- Follow instructions from authorities when turning on/off your utilities.
- Stay clear of all downed power lines.
- Purify your water supply if instructed by authorities.
- Only hire licensed contractors for repairs.
- Make sure you have all required building permits before attempting any repairs.