

Governor DeSantis (00:00):

You got the state reps, You got, uh, uh, city officials, Probably some county I didn't see. Uh, I know we have the mayor here of Cape Coral. Uh, John Gunner, thank you for being here. I have Dane Eagle, who's our secretary, Department of Economic Opportunity, local guy who's from Cape Coral. And so he's, uh, we're gonna be doing tomorrow with Jimmy Patronis, Uh, some, some sites for insurance and for other types of relief that the state offers. Gracia and FEMA will be joining that effort, I think, either tomorrow or shortly thereafter for those disaster recovery centers. And so we appreciate the hard work. Kevin Guthrie, Florida Department of Emergency Management. Is Melissa from Duke Energy here? I guess not. Okay. Uh, well, she may end up coming here. Uh, so, so far we've had more than 1900 rescues. Uh, and the USAR teams, uh, with more than 1000 personnel have gone door to door to 65 different structures, uh, to check on occupants.

Governor DeSantis (00:59):

And those are mostly structures in the really hard hit areas, the barrier islands and, and the like. Um, our vision of emerging management is continuing to bring large quantities of water, food, and other sustenance into the area, uh, to help everybody get by. You know, it was at 3:00 AM right after the storm had passed, uh, that Charlotte, Lee and Sarasota already had the bulk commodities there waiting for them. Uh, the first pod point of distribution for food, water were also distributing tarps, uh, for the, for the roofs. Although I, I will tell you one thing I've noticed, the new construction in Florida seemed to have held up very well. Uh, I thought with the, something that was coming in at 155 miles an hour, there'd be roofs everywhere. Um, in reality, if that was a little bit, if that was in the last 20, 25 years with those building codes, um, uh, you did a good job.

Governor DeSantis (01:50):

But nevertheless, some people have roof. So we have that and we're happy to give that out. So the first point of distribution for those supplies, food, water, uh, was up within 18 hours. So normally in post-disaster, it's like a 96 hour process. Uh, we have 28 different pods in affected areas across Florida. Eight of those pods are right here in Lee County. Uh, we also have had tremendous support from non-profit organizations like Florida Baptist, Disaster Relief, Red Cross, and World Central Kitchen. Uh, they are distributing hot meals, which is something that you, you, you need, uh, you know, the pods will give different types of non-perishable, uh, but, but it's good to get hot meals. And so they're doing that. Uh, Chick-fil-A is bringing their disaster relief bus to Fort Myers tomorrow. And I know there's a lot of people that are gonna want to do that.

Governor DeSantis (02:43):

Uh, we have, we have stationed in South Florida, uh, 1.6 million gallons of fuel. Now, I think as I was coming in, I saw some gas stations open. I saw some mothers that may not have had power. If they don't have the generator, some of them aren't working. Bottom line is, I think there's a lot of fuel available. I think it's more power, but to the extent there's fuel, we can run fuel out. We just ran a tank of fuel out in DeSoto County for folks who couldn't get, cuz some of the roads are flooded and so they can't get to the gas station. Some of the other gas, some of the gas stations are too small to, they're not required to have generators, so they're not pumping gas. So we're able to do that, and Kevin and his team have done that very, very well.

Governor DeSantis (03:27):

Uh, if you look most throughout southwest Florida, most Publix and Walmarts are open. Uh, Publix was open in, I saw Cape Coral. We were here Friday right after the storm. It was open. The parking lot was absolutely packed. Um, so we appreciate that. I mean, that really helps the residents be able to get what they need. Um, right now, statewide, 95% of customers have power. Uh, we're down to only 5% of customers without, uh, if you think about, we've had three full days of restoration since the storm left. Thursday evening, the state, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, Um, we had part of Thursday. And then so far today, that's over 2.1 million restored, uh, with just in a few days. And so we really appreciate those efforts that have been done. This was a storm that affected many, many counties throughout the state. You know, do you see the same damage like you see in Fort Myers Beach?

Governor DeSantis (04:21):

And some of it, no. But you saw major flooding, You saw major interruptions to critical infrastructure in those places too. So right now we're down to really the places that have, uh, anything more than unanimous out out outages by and large are in southwest Florida. So you have, Charlotte is 58% out. Lee is 55% out, and they're the most, these rural counties are now getting back online. There's a great day to day and DeSoto Hardy, and I think you're gonna see that tomorrow and the next day. Uh, and I think they're gonna be back very quickly. Southern Sarasota also sarasota's 30% as a county, but most of those outages are in the southern part because it's still flooding there. So some of the power lines, it's, it's messy. So you need that to, to go. And then there's obviously parts of Collier, uh, that still have that.

Governor DeSantis (05:11):

Um, but bottom line is, uh, we're looking at, uh, this was a massive effort, uh, to get the power back on across the state now. And I'm gonna say something about this in a minute. You know, now it's time to bring all the resources to bear to help everyone here, uh, so that we can catch up in this area. Uh, we have now, uh, either deployed or are in the process of deploying 375 of the Star Link Elon Musk internet devices to support internet access in the impacted areas. And basically you have that device. The satellite has been positioned now over Southwest Florida. You get it, it goes right to your phone, right from this device. And I did a press conference in Hardy County, Rural rural county, and we did it on wifi on the Elon Musk wifi. And it was crystal clear. I mean, it was like watching, almost like watching a movie, you know, on your big screen.

Governor DeSantis (06:07):

And so this is a really good tool. Uh, those are at all the pods and some other places where the locals are putting them. But if you're going through a pod, you need food and water. You can then get online and you can contact, uh, different folks if you don't have connectivity. So we are here, we're, we're, we're happy to be here cuz we have a lot of really great and important announcements. Uh, first, uh, I was here on Saturday when we were doing the first pod in, in Lee County. And they had people ask me, Hey, what about this bridge in Pine Island? The residents want to get off cuz they were talking about running boats and all this stuff. And so, you know, I went back and told, uh, Florida department transportation, you know, what are our options and let's move forward. And so today more than 130 F dot trucks deployed to begin, uh, working on the temporary bridge fix for Pine Island.

Governor DeSantis (07:00):

And so they're gonna be able to get that done relatively quickly. Uh, this is not necessarily gonna be a bridge. You want to go 45 miles an hour over maybe, but at least you have connectivity to the mainland. And, uh, their goal is to have it completed by the end of this week. And I told them, make sure you, you

use the resources necessary to do it. So you're gonna now be able to have those residents be able to get back to the main, you know, they're, they're offering evacuations for those residents, but, but most of them wanna be on the island. They just want to be able to go back and forth. So we're gonna be able to do that. Um, and I'm happy to do that. And that's the state just doing it. I don't need, you know, anyone to give me my, we're gonna do it and, and we're happy about that.

Governor DeSantis (07:42):

Uh, the also, we also are going to try something similar for the causeway going to Sanibel Island. Uh, so right now Florida Department of Transportation is, uh, is putting together a plan for a temporary fix. And there is a request for bids, emergency requests for bids for the work. So there's gonna be somebody that's bid is accepted soon and there's like a process where it's, you know, it's a competitive process. So they're gonna do that and then hopefully there'll be a plan to move forward there. I can't tell you now without seeing who it's gonna be, exactly how long that's gonna take. Uh, but I can tell you is no one was really doing anything about it and we are doing something about it. And so now there's gonna be access to Sanibel a lot quicker than there would've, uh, had we not done this.

Governor DeSantis (08:27):

That's obviously not gonna be a permanent solution. Uh, the permanent solution of that, maybe a little more complicated just cuz the bridge is severed in more locations than Pine Island. But we know we've gotta restore that. You know, they were talking about running like fairies and stuff, and honestly, you may be able to do that, but I think this is an easier thing and I think people need their vehicles anyways. Uh, so we're going ahead with that. So, so those are really, I think, positive announcements. I know there's so many other stuff going on, and we've, there's still doing the, the life rescue, they're still doing the food distribution. My view is you gotta do all this stuff in parallel. You don't only do that and then say, we'll get to the bridges in two months. You don't only do, uh, food and then not do electricity or some of these others.

Governor DeSantis (09:10):

So all these things need to move in parallel. And when there's a gaps of a local community doesn't have, then Kevin and our guys will, will fill that. And so with power restoration, another great announcement. Uh, if you look right now, I think FPL in Lee County is about 50% or more, uh, that they have restored, uh, Lee County Electrical Cooperative, you know, has not gotten to that level. Obviously most of it is out in Lee County. I don't know what the number's gone today, but I think as of this morning it was like 3% with power, 97% without. Um, and that at the end of the day, this is a more difficult restoration than what was being done in other parts of Florida. So I called on the, uh, I uh, the, uh, Electric Lee County Electric Cooperative to accept mutual aid. Uh, and they, they, they want to do that and they're working very hard and we appreciate it. And so we reached out to the Florida Association, uh, for electrical co-ops to help. And so that means with what they have been providing now to Lee County, uh, the co-op for the state of Florida, they're sending an additional 1000 linemen down here to help with the power restoration.

Governor DeSantis (10:24):

But that's not all. So you see what a great job these, these linemen have done. We had 42,000 linemen stationed throughout the state of Florida. When the storm, as the storm was about to hit, I was there Tuesday, uh, I think yeah, Tuesday, or we, I may actually, it was Wednesday the day the storm actually hit. I'm in north Florida with all these linemen driving back to Tallahassee and I see, where's my

weather? Oh, okay, I see nothing but these, these trucks coming into our state, and it was a really great site to see. So they've done this and really record time, if you look at the number of restorations that they've been able to do, uh, which we're really happy about. But what I told my folks is, is, okay, you know, if we're at 3% here or even higher with some of the others, uh, I'm driving in, I still see power lines down.

Governor DeSantis ([11:13](#)):

We need more manpower. So we said, don't, And these linemen are coming from all over the country. I mean, it's, they're fantastic people. You know, I met 'em from Texas, Alabama, all these places. And so what, what I've told my, my folks at this state EOC and what they've put out, the word is, Okay, you're doing a good job getting all the power back on these other counties. Don't go home yet. Uh, we want first dibs on moving you down to Southwest Florida. And the thing is, when you do this mutual aid, we ran into this with Hurricane Michael, you know, there's all these different utilities that provide, some of them didn't want to accept because some of the cost share and then they're on the hook for cost. And so what, what I've said is Florida has the largest budget surplus in the history of the state by far. Okay. I can pick up the cost share, I just want the power back on. So we'll pay for it. Uh, that's fine.

Governor DeSantis ([12:11](#)):

And we do have, Melissa from Duke is here, President of Duke, uh, for the state of Florida. So Duke is, they help get the, the big things on for Hardy and DeSoto today. So they've gone up dramatically. They're, I think that's gonna be done relatively soon. So Duke, FPL, all these companies, you know, are pledging support to bring in more, uh, linemen. And I would like to see, like if you live in Lee County, you can't even go out and, and, and, uh, check your mail or something without seeing linemen somewhere. I mean, that's what I want to see, you know, in these coming days. I think it's really important and we need it. I mean, I, I think we dodge like two or three power lines down just to get here. Uh, you bring all these, this additional manpower, get that up, get it going, it's gonna make a big difference.

Governor DeSantis ([12:56](#)):

And the way I view it is, uh, that the time is really important. Everyone knew going into this, I think I said this in every press briefing, expect to lose power. I think Floridians understood that. I think that they understood that wasn't gonna be something that just gonna be like a 12 hour deal, uh, and in the hardest hit areas, of course, typically it takes a little longer. But man, I think people are ready to get back in the saddle. They wanna bounce back from this. Uh, but this is really a critical thing. And so I'm proud to say that, um, we're marshaling all the resources to be able to assist. No one has to accept the help, but I'll tell you, they're there and we're paying for the share. So we'll worry about the reimbursements from the state. You don't gotta worry about it here on the local level.

Governor DeSantis ([13:38](#)):

That's something we're gonna take care of. And part of the reason we're able to do this is, yes, we have the record budget surplus, but since I've been governor, I work with the legislature to establish, uh, a disaster response fund for the state of Florida. So we have \$500 million budgeted for disasters. And we've spent obviously in the run up to this because we've done such a massive mobilization. But that's why we created that for, just for situations like this. So I'm happy that we have that, and I'm happy that we're gonna do it. We also, um, saw there was something put out, uh, that the, that the Lee co co-op put out, um, saying that they, they have the Sanibel and Pine Island, and obviously they can't get to it

because the bridge isn't there. Uh, and so our view is, is that, uh, we want that to commence as soon as possible as well.

Governor DeSantis ([14:27](#)):

So I have, the National Guard is gonna be flying electrical personnel onto both of those islands to begin surveying the substations and begin commencing repairs. Now that may require reconstruction on those islands because the storm was very ferocious when it hit. Um, but what I don't wanna do is wait weeks for Sanibel's bridge to be ready and then send people. We're, so we're sending them now. So they're gonna be arriving by Chinook helicopter. Uh, they're gonna be dropped down there and they're gonna do their work. And so we're happy about that, uh, because we understand that it's important, uh, for the islands as well to get up and running. And at least let's diagnose the, the, the extent of the reconstruction. If that's needed, then we need to get in there and know that. And right now, nothing's been done because of the, the lack of the, the transportation.

Governor DeSantis ([15:15](#)):

While we're changing that, we're surrounding that with our air assets, and we're happy to do that. And, you know, I've told Kevin Guthrie, uh, make sure that, um, that there's no deterrent for getting people down here if people can be useful, if there's a place for them to work, we want him working in Southwest Florida, but particularly in Lee in Lee County. And, uh, and he's got that message. And again, uh, we're picking up the cost share, so don't worry about that. And so we're happy, uh, that the, uh, Lee County Electoral Cooperative updated its restoration timeline. It initially been October 23rd for all the non barrier island communities. They updated that to October 8th. Obviously with this manpower, you know, you, you have a chance to really make some headway. Uh, and we hope that Santa be and Pine Island can be on some kind of a schedule once we get the folks dropped in there with the Chinooks and they can go see, uh, and survey the extent of the damage.

Governor DeSantis ([16:08](#)):

But bottom line is, um, you know, we need to all work together right now, and we need to get people back up on their feet. I am really, really, uh, thrilled at the speed in which the power's been restored throughout most of the state. I mean, to have 5% without power after a storm of this magnitude came through, you know, just Wednesday afternoon, evening here and, and didn't even leave the state until Thursday evening. You know, that was pre preplanning, pre staging, and really working hard to get it done. And so this is kind of the final piece to do that right here. Uh, third announcement. Uh, we understand, uh, that part of the county, uh, is still having problems with this water main break. Some of the issues with, uh, with the running water. Uh, when this happened, they reached out to us to ask FEMA for support.

Governor DeSantis ([16:57](#)):

FEMA sent the Army Corps of Engineers to go help them, You know, at the same time, you know, we understood, I mean, the Army Corps may diagnose, they may not necessarily be able to reconstruct or to patch it. And the thing is, we want to fix and we want this to be able to go. So I asked Kevin Guthrie, uh, to mobilize additional assets, uh, to help fix some of these problems with the water mains throughout the county. And so we have now, Kevin, right now there, right? Yes, sir. We are gonna bring PSI by. So they are onsite now. We have one of the top engineering firms in the world. These are guys that went to mit. Um, they're there. And we basically said, you know, we want water to people's homes and businesses. And that's really what we're doing. And again, we're putting the, we're front, we're

accepting the cost on that as the state, even though it's not a state utility or anything the state really is involved with, because yo, we've got the resources and we have the sense of urgency.

Governor DeSantis ([17:55](#)):

So I'm hoping that we'll continue to see good efforts. You know, the mayor, he's gonna come up and talk, um, you know, they have water, but you have the sewage. And so they need some generators to help with some of these, these pump and lift stations. So we're gonna be doing, I think, a hundred generators, right? Yeah. So we're delivering a hundred generators to the city of Cape Coral for the sewage, and they're gonna be able to straighten that out. So I think that's gonna be really important, uh, to be able to do. Finally, I just point out that, um, we enacted, uh, during the legislative session, and it went into effect October 1st, uh, a gas tax holiday for Floridians. And so 25 cents off every gallon, I think I was actually looking, I actually saw gas once the holiday went into effect. And one part, I think it may have been DeSoto or Hardy two, it was under \$3.

Governor DeSantis ([18:43](#)):

I haven't seen under \$3 gas in what, a year and a half or almost two years. I mean, you go back to January 2021, 2 years. And so, so that's, so that's gonna help provide relief. I think now we're, uh, because of the gas tax holiday, I think we're in the top 10 for lowest gas prices in the country. And so in a time like this, I mean, what better time could it be to get some relief at the pump? And, uh, we're, we're, we're happy that that's in effect, and we hope that that saves, uh, saves Floridians, uh, a lot of money, uh, over the coming month. So, okay, Well, we have an update. We have, uh, uh, Dane Eagle, Kevin Guthrie, uh, well, Melissa from Duke will speak, and then, um, we'll have it here from the mayor.

Sec Eagle ([19:24](#)):

Well, I wanna thank the governor for the bottom of my heart, not as one of his agency heads, but as a native of Cape Coral in southwest Florida to see this mobilization. Uh, it, it is one of the fastest and largest in Florida's history, and it's thanks to this man right here. Uh, so as your friend and neighbor, as a former Southwest Floridian, I hope that you have hope and faith in what you've heard today. The governor does not take no for an answer. He charges through obstacles with the full weight of the state behind him. And you're seeing that the results and the announcements that we've made today. So that is extremely exciting. Governor, I thank you. Okay,

Sec Eagle ([19:54](#)):

Two quick announcements on economic recovery, thanks to the governor and what he's been able to allow us to do through DEO. My job as Secretary of DEO is to help with economic recovery. We're working with businesses to make sure supplies are on the ground, businesses are open, they have what they need, working with Kevin's team for generators, things like that. Two things that you can take home with you. Florida disaster.biz, Florida disaster dot b iz. There you can file for disaster unemployment assistance. We know that a lot of people are without work. They're no fault of their own. We wanna help you get through this gap. You can apply and be eligible until you can find gainful employment. Number two, businesses who are hurt. We need to know what's going on. We need to know, uh, why you're outta business. You know, your losses, what's going on. We know why. But you're, you're, you're, you're your situation. Uh, you can fill out the, the survey, uh, the business Damage assessment survey, both things Florida disaster.biz. Please go there today. Uh, and if you don't have internet, we're gonna get that up and running thanks to the governor's leadership. So thank you.

Governor DeSantis (20:46):

Okay. Before I bring Kevin Guthrie up, I think it's important to point out, you know, I mentioned all the rescue missions, which is obviously, you know, impressive, but we have more urban search and rescue teams helping, mostly South Florida, but really the floods and other parts of Florida too. So really statewide, uh, than has ever been in one location since September 11th, uh, and responding to September 11th. And so that's a massive mobilization. It's made a big difference, and it's, uh, it's definitely helped a lot of people. Okay. Kevin Guthrie,

Director Guthrie (21:19):

Thank you Governor DeSantis for your leadership. And I wanna thank my friend and colleague, uh, Secretary Eagle, uh, for all of his help and all of the agency heads that have been helping out CFO, pet patrons in the fire marshal's office with the Urban Search and Rescue and Fire teams. Thank you. From the bottom of my heart, I'd be remiss if I didn't say all of these things that the governor's been announcing today. Uh, come from our state Emergency Operations Center back in Tallahassee, who have been working 24 hours a day, seven days a week since, uh, Sunday, uh, a week, eight days ago. Um, they have given up their time, which that is their job, and they are grateful to do. But, uh, especially our logistics section, uh, they are moving heaven and earth getting, uh, generators. Uh, we're, we're, we're faster than counties.

Director Guthrie (22:05):

Counties can't keep up with us. And, uh, that's one of the things that both the governor and myself have been committed to is being faster at what we do to make sure that Floridians can recover from disasters. Just a couple of things real quick that the governor already mentioned. We talked about the generators coming to Cape Coral. Those generators are being mobilized right now. They will be put on the trucks, They will start moving in from around the area. We have five logistical staging areas all around the state. Those things will be moving from as far away as North Central Florida, all the way down to right here in, uh, in Lee County to get to the necessary, uh, generators in place to help bring this back online. Number two, as the governor said, we've, we've got a world class, uh, company that is working on the Fort Myers, um, or I'm sorry, the Lee County Water System.

Director Guthrie (22:49):

Uh, they have done maintenance on that system before. They have done work on that system before. And I'm glad to say that in a, a county, uh, uh, gaggle that we did earlier today, uh, they're already starting to recharge 45 psi to those lines. So people are already starting to come back online with water. So, um, I'm very, very proud of that. We've still got a long ways to go, but, uh, we're well on the way of trying to achieve water restoration to those that can actually receive water, those that get power registration to those that can receive power, um, by next Sunday. Um, I'm shooting for 100% by next Sunday in both power and water. Uh, again, Governor, thank you so much for your leadership. Thank you for your support. I'm now a resident right now of Lee County for probably the next couple of weeks, so if not, uh, a little bit longer. Thank you, sir. Hey,

Governor DeSantis (23:34):

You know, he hasn't, um,

Governor DeSantis (23:38):

He hasn't been able to sleep very much, um, really since, uh, last week. I mean, we were discussing this, uh, you know, know last Thursday, you know, week more than a week ago, uh, and doing the, uh, uh, preparations, even before this was a disturbance. And we were doing a full state of emergency and doing so. It's been pretty hectic, uh, at the EOC. But I told them, I was like, Um, you get eight hours of sleep as soon as Lee has the water and the power back on, and then we'll, we'll let someone else come in. So we're, we're working on that. Um, okay. Um, who else we have? Oh, Melissa from Duke. Okay, go ahead. Thank you,

PResident Duke Melissa ([24:14](#)):

Sir. Good afternoon, everyone. I have the privilege of being the state president for Duke Energy Florida. Three days after Hurricane Ian exited the state, Duke Energy has restored power to over a million customers. And as of four o'clock this afternoon, we had 4,000 customers without service. Nice. And it is our commitment that they will all have power by midnight tonight.

Governor DeSantis ([24:40](#)):

Brought

PResident Duke Melissa ([24:40](#)):

Out the only customers that may still have some challenges because they have damage to their homes, or severe flooding, we think is around 200. But we're very proud of that ability to expedite, um, restoration. And a lot of it had to do with the expectations and the work, just, uh, the partnership with the State of Florida, with the governor and with Kevin Guthrie. So we're very grateful for that. I'd also like to share that as of last night, uh, we had restored and energized every single transmission point of delivery in the state of Florida, including Hardee County. And so, uh, last night, as soon as we energized those substations, uh, the city of wauchula, and Teco Energy we're able to start picking up load, providing service to their customers, helping them get their lives back in order. So, very happy. Wanna thank the city leaders, uh, and all of those, uh, leaders from those, uh, municipality and from, uh, the co-op and the municipality, uh, to get that done.

PResident Duke Melissa ([25:46](#)):

The third thing I would say, and this is really the emphasis of the governor's message, and that is Duke Energy stands ready to release some of the resources that we have, about 2,500 to about 3,500 line personnel damage assessment, veg management, ready to be redeployed here to Southwest Florida to help all of you be able to get back to living your lives. And, uh, and this is a long process, right? So, um, what I'll also emphasize is that Duke Energy is stands by for the long term because we are just north of you to the east of you, um, across the Skyway Bridge. So as long as it takes, we will be here ready to help. Wow, Thank you

Governor DeSantis ([26:33](#)):

All. Thank you so much. That's great.

Governor DeSantis ([26:37](#)):

You know, every time I would meet with any of the utilities since I've been governor, including if I talk to Melissa or any of these other, you say, Okay, if we have a storm, you know, what's the plan? And they, they've put a lot of emphasis on this. Um, you know, they don't really need, I mean, I know the customers get mad, but a company could just, you know, throw up their hands and say, Oh, but they've

all really, uh, dug in and understood that this is important. And I think that to have as many restorations as we've had, um, in this, this amount of time, you know, really is a testament that I'd also say some of this stuff is able to be hooked up a little quicker, uh, because, uh, there's been a lot of investment in the infrastructure, uh, to make it more resilient.

Governor DeSantis ([27:16](#)):

Uh, I know that there's been things undergrounding, but also the things above ground. So, so that matters. And those investments, I think, are paying off in terms of what we, what we see now with, uh, with the progress. And I mean, that's a massive commitment to be putting 25 to 3,500 personnel just in really a relatively small, um, area where we're going, where the outages are in Lee. I mean, maybe they do Charlotte, although FPL has Charlotte, so you're really looking at, at Lee, um, and maybe a little bit of Collier. And so that's, that's an unbelievable manpower. And again, we're happy to be, uh, directing that as the state and, and we'll handle the reimbursements and everything on our end. Don't worry about that. But one thing I would say, speaking of reimbursements before I bring the mayor up, cuz it applies to municipalities and counties, um, debris, you get a hundred percent of your cost for debris removal for the first 30 days since the declaration they get, they approved our declaration, uh, last Saturday.

Governor DeSantis ([28:16](#)):

So state of emergency on Friday, I guess, what was that, The 22nd or third? What? Since the 23rd? 23rd, Yeah. So they, so, so they've done it since the 23rd, which basically means we've already chewed up a lot of that time. A lot of the localities have not contracted with people to remove debris and, you know, maybe we'll try to get more than 30, but I would not count on that. So I would just get that going. You see the debris coming in here, uh, it costs money to get rid of that. Why would you wanna have to bear that cost if FEMA has agreed to do 100% reimbursement? And again, I know there's so many other things going on. Um, but parallel tracks you can work on bunch, you know, keep moving together, have those folks start to do the debris and just know that you pay 'em, you submit and you'll get the reimbursement. And so I think that that's really, really significant. Okay, Mayor, come on up.

Mayor ([29:11](#)):

Thank you very much, governor. Good. I wanna thank you for, uh, coming out to our city. We really appreciate it and everything that you're doing for all the Floridians and our residents here in the city of Cape Coral. As you all know, our priority focus right now is water, sewer and electricity. Water, we got a hundred percent, uh, has been energized. We're working on our sewer system as the governor mentioned, uh, earlier today, uh, I reached out to his office and actually spoke with his, his wife, and told him what we needed for our sewer was generators, because we have over 400 lift stations throughout our city now that we have water on, our lift stations are failing. Soon as I made that phone call, he was right there. He stepped up to the plate just like he has each and every time. I've had constant communication since this event, either with him or his, uh, senior staff. They've been there all the way. So thank you very much. We appreciate that because we know we, we can't do it alone. We need not only states' help, but federal help also have reached out to, uh, Congressman McDonald's on several occasions. And federally they're there to do what they need to do as well. We'll get through this together. Everyone that stands behind me as a team, we all are working together for our residents to make sure that we overcome this horrible, catastrophic event. Thank you again, governor. Yeah,

Governor DeSantis ([30:44](#)):

Well we take pride in in getting things done, and I tell Kevin, I'm like, you know, you just gotta cut through the bureaucracy. He's done a great job doing it. But I will say, as proud of as we are of that, um, if you really want to get things done, list the First Lady in it and she will get it done. And then some, in fact, she's, uh, spearheaded our charitable, uh, recovery efforts, relief and recovery efforts through the Florida Disaster fund.org that people can go and donate to. And they've raised over 22 million. I actually didn't get an update today, so it's probably even higher than that. And, uh, we're, we're happy There's already been money dispersed to charities that are on the ground helping folks. And as much as we, uh, understand, you know, Dane talked about our programs for small businesses and some of the other things, that's great, and I think it'll be helpful. FEMA has certain individual assistance that we've been approved from for great. Uh, but those are certain silos. There's gonna be other needs and some of these charitable groups can make a big difference in doing that. So my hats off to First Lady for really digging in and, and really making a difference. Okay. Any questions?

Reporter ([31:49](#)):

Governor? Uh, governor. So the Democrats and the media are saying that you're, there's a photo op where, uh, resources have been stopped when you're walking. Can you correct the record on that?

Governor DeSantis ([31:57](#)):

Yeah, it's just, it's a categorical lie. And the sheriff and the county said it's a lie. I don't know why we're worried about these silly issues when we've got people to help. Okay. I was the first one to show up in DeSoto and help those people. They were appreciative that we were there, weren't stopping anything. They had had distributed a bunch of water and food and whatnot. There was no even in line at the time. Uh, so it's a total lie and, uh, it's just dumb. But I, I don't have time for that. What I want to do is continuing, figuring out, doing what we can do to help these efforts here on the ground. And I think today's announcements, um, are really fantastic and it'll make a very big difference, uh, for a lot of these people.

Reporter ([32:39](#)):

Uh, you mentioned, uh, their help is available for, I guess, Ice. Have you heard from Ice c Are they gonna take that help and and how do you feel

Governor DeSantis ([32:46](#)):

They're responsive? Yeah, Yeah. No, no. I, I think they are. Uh, I think that they, I think they're working really hard, but this is a unique disaster and, uh, we have all these resources in the state, and I just think that we've gotta offer everything we can. I absolutely think they are gonna accept the help, and I think they wanna move forward in a very rapid fashion. So I feel good about it. I feel good that we've got the thousand from the other co-ops, uh, that are, that are either here or en route. And then you see the offers. That's just Duke. I mean, you know, we've got other people in the state to, to be able to come down here. So I think all hands on deck, I just want, uh, I want Lee County to be the lineman capital of the world for the next however many days we need to do it. And if we can do that, I think people will be really happy. Yes, ma'am.

constituent ([33:31](#)):

This is from Lee County. It's a little thing, but we wanna tell Casey how much we love and

Governor DeSantis ([33:36](#)):

Admire. Oh, good. I will give it to her. Thank you so much. We appreciate that. Yes, sir. Can

Reporter (33:40):

You give us idea of how many people feel unaccounted for?

Governor DeSantis (33:43):

I'll let, I'll let Kevin, um, Kevin handle that.

Director Guthrie (33:48):

So right now what we've done is we've, we've, we've got a lot of disparate data across multiple platforms. And just for example, law enforcement has, you know, missing persons reports. We have the urban search and rescue teams through, uh, CFO patronis that are, have over probably nearly 50,000 way points by now. Sure. Um, so that's on a different platform. Uh, the data that we were collecting is on a different platform. So what's happening right now is the governor has directed, uh, the Chief Information Officer, Jamie Grant, to come in and help start consolidating that data. We hope to have a better number on that, uh, going into the next couple of days to make sure and cross reference all of that disparate, uh, what we call, um, unstructured data to start cross reference, cross referencing it from a data standpoint. What do we actually have? I cannot answer that number, but we are getting it. We're whittling it down more and more every day.

Governor DeSantis (34:40):

The important thing to know, I mean, they, they did this thing where they texted people, Hey, you can muster basically to say you're okay. And, you know, not everyone wants to communicate with the government. It doesn't mean that they're necessarily no one's under an obligation to answer any of those surveys. And so, you know, it's a mistake to conflate someone that doesn't answer a survey with like a police report that's filed on a specific individual, Hey, this person's missing, they should be here. So just keep that in mind. That's just one tool that was there. It has been convenient for what, 10, 12,000 people over 15, over 15,000 have used it and great. And, you know, maybe some family, uh, were able to be, to be kept in mind. But that is not the exhaustive way to say, if you haven't mustered ergo, you're missing because there's a lot of people that got that text message and just decided not to respond. And that is totally their right. Because I know a lot of people don't necessarily wanna share information, uh, with the government. So that's fine. You don't have to, it's just there. If you want to use it, you can use it.

Reporter (35:36):

Governor, I, I know there was a lot, lot of uncertainty about the trajectory of the storm, where it was gonna hit. I wanna talk to you about evacuation orders.

Governor DeSantis (35:42):

Yeah, I, you know, honestly, this has been, Excuse me, excuse me. Pam, Pam over here. The, excuse me, This has been handled at nauseam. I I know you can talk about these officials, ask him about it. That's fine. Go ahead, ma'am. Need to settle, But Pam here in the audio Go ahead, ma'am. Go ahead, ma'am. Okay. Okay. Okay. Stop, stop, stop. Okay. It's been, this has been dealt with, the Lee County has explained what they did. They went through that. Um, what know is when

Reporter (36:06):

The dust settles, are you prepared to order a formal review into how the Lee County officials handle the operation

Governor DeSantis (36:11):

Orders? Well, of course you're gonna review everything we do in these storms. I mean, that's the way it works. Part of the reason we have all these linemen and we have record power is because we've learned from Irma and some of these others, which weren't actually bad, but okay, how could we do that better? That's why we had the pods ready to go. That's why we had the search and rescue ready to go. So of course, you're gonna look to see, you know, all these other stuff. I just think that we have so many people, uh, that are here working hard, trying to pull themselves up. So many people, we need to be helping. We should be focusing on what we can do to do good. We should be focusing on lifting people up and stop incessantly talking and trying to cast dispersions on people that we're doing the best job they could with imperfect information. I, I'm always,

Governor DeSantis (37:04):

I just, and I, I was some from the last, the Friday before the storm, I followed not just the nhc track, the euro model, the icon model, the gfs, most, you probably don't even know what those are. So I followed those religiously, overnight, all this stuff. You'd get the data, you'd go and you'd try to figure out it was moving west and then it started coming back east. So people were doing that. And I just think it's fine to like say what you want, but it's a little rich coming from an industry that on Monday all day, they were all in Tampa Bay saying it was gonna be the worst case scenario for Florida straight into Tampa Bay. That's what they were saying. Now they're turning around and wondering why people 150 or 120 miles didn't do something they were not telling people to do.

Governor DeSantis (37:52):

There may have been people here in southwest Florida who were watching those reports saying, Well, it's gonna go to Tampa, so I'm gonna stand, I'm gonna stand Pat, I'm gonna, I'm gonna ride it out. So, um, of course you look to see what you can do better, but I, but I just think we need to focus on, on, on getting people where they need to be, uh, with power, with food, with all these different things. Um, and let's spend a little more time doing that and let's spend a little more time, uh, maybe thanking the people that are out there on the frontline saving people's lives. Amen. All right. We'll see you guys soon. We'll be back. We'll be back with some more good stuff tomorrow.

Reporter (38:34):

Hey, how are,

Speaker 8 (38:40):

Yeah, unless you wanna get any of these guys here detail, we gotta follow. Okay. All right.