

Gov DeSantis (01:31):

Well, good morning. I'm here with Kevin Guthrie, our, uh, DEM director, also Major General Chris Haas, uh, Assistant Adjunctive General, the Florida National Guard, and then Tom McCool FEMA coordinating officer, and we've been working together for, for a while now because of Hurricane Ian. Well, today, obviously, uh, we are, uh, responding to Tropical Storm Nicole. As of 10:00 AM Uh, it was located roughly 50 miles west of Orlando, and it was moving West Northwest at 16 miles per hour. Uh, Nicole's still at Tropical Storm with maximum sustained winds of 50 miles per hour. The storm made landfall overnight as a category one hurricane just south of Vero Beach, uh, and is continuing to move through the state. The most recent track shows it, uh, exiting the Florida Peninsula into the Gulf of Mexico and then reentering Florida, uh, in the Big Bend region. Now, the wind from the storm is still very large.

Gov DeSantis (02:28):

The impact stretches far beyond the center track with much of the state already experiencing a tropical storm force winds, winds have been the main concern with Nicole, but we've also seen heavy rains, uh, that have, uh, resulted in three to five foot of storm surge in some areas have also seen, uh, potential flash flooding impacts have been basically what's been expected. You do have down trees, you have power lines, you have some road washouts, combined winds and storm surge. We've seen beach erosion in areas that had already seen erosion from Hurricane Ian. And these are places like Brevard, Volusia, Flagler, and St. John's counties. Uh, after the storm, there will be, uh, likely be flooding in some areas, so make sure to avoid floodwaters as their may be down power lines and other hazards. This morning, more than 50 counties were under tropical storm warnings, and that number will continue to go down as the storm moves across the state.

Gov DeSantis (03:26):

Uh, we're ready and we have resources to respond to whatever post storm needs, uh, may arise. Now, I declared our state of emergency on Monday, uh, for 34 counties so that they had ample time to prepare for the storm. Uh, this morning. As an abundance of caution, we've expanded that to all counties just simply because, uh, we're not sure the extent of the impacts in Northwest Florida in particular. Kevin and his team have been in constant communication with, uh, utility providers. We now, uh, have 3,330,000 accounts without power. That's 2.98% of the state. Uh, 23.3% out in Brevard, 16.6% in Indian River, uh, and then Volusia, Seminole Putnam, and Orange, all smaller percentages than that, uh, but there are 17,000 linemen staged to immediately begin power restoration efforts soon as it's safe to do so. And certainly as you get into places like the Martin, St. Lucie area.

Gov DeSantis (04:22):

People have been been working in those areas and will continue to go in, uh, as it's safe in other parts of the state. Uh, we had activated 600 National Guardsmen have seven urban search and rescue teams on standby, ready to respond as soon as the weather clears. We also have FWC's high water vehicles ready to assist in response efforts should that be needed. We have 250 Florida Department of Transportation crews that are ready to deploy and begin damage assessment, bridge inspections, and cut and toss operations to clear roadways as is necessary. 61 school districts are closed for today, and of course, schools are closed tomorrow for Veterans Day. An updated list for that, you can go to Florida, uh, fldoe.org, fldoe.org. I wanna thank, uh, Kevin and, and everybody for, for working on this is obviously not as significant a storm as Hurricane Ian was, but coming on the heels of that, uh, you're seeing communities particularly in the Volusia County area where you had a lot of that erosion on the coastline. You know, this has put some of those structures in jeopardy and they've been, uh, working very hard to,

to make sure everybody's safe. So I wanna thank everyone for their efforts there, and we'll hear from Kevin with further updates.

Dir. Guthrie ([05:38](#)):

Thank you, Governor. I appreciate your, uh, involvement and appreciate your leadership in, in helping us to respond to this event. Um, the men and women behind me get all the credit, um, on that floor. They've been working for 48 days straight, uh, and they continue to respond to what, uh, the what to what Floridians need most, and that is our help. Tropical storm conditions are ongoing across the Florida Peninsula, and will expand into the Big Bend and eastern panhandle this afternoon. There remains a risk for severe weather, including isolated tornadoes embedded within Nicole's outer rain bands. The latest one that we had was just about two hours ago in St. John's County. If you get a weather alert for a tornado, stay in the most interior room of your home and protect your head and body from debris with either a blanket, sleeping bag, mattress, or any type of helmet.

Dir. Guthrie ([06:29](#)):

Dangerous beach conditions will continue along the East Coast as a result of elevated tides and lingering wave heights of eight to 16 feet along the Atlantic coast. Elevated tides, ocean swells, and strong winds will push water into the St. John's River, leading to flooding along the river. The St. John's River right now at Astor is back into major flood stage this morning. We do have, uh, fish and Wildlife Commission boats on standby in the area, as well as urban search and rescue swift water teams to assist if there should be a need for a rescue. This storm is very large. Even if the eye has passed over your area, it may still be unsafe to go outside due to the heavy winds, flash, flooding, and isolated tornadoes. If there are flash flood warnings in your area, remember, it is never safe to walk or drive through flooded waters.

Dir. Guthrie ([07:24](#)):

I continue to urge Floridians to stay indoors in a safe structure and away from the coastline at this time. If you lose power, please use generators safely. We continue to have disaster deaths related to generators. Remember, keep those generators outside and 20 feet away from the house. Never operate those generators indoors. You must give a generator 20 minutes of cool down time before refueling. Avoid electrocution by keeping the generators dry. After the storm is gone there will likely be large items of debris through impacted areas, especially along the coastline. Do not try to remove the large debris without assistance. There are volunteer groups that will be able to help you. Don't over exert yourself and put yourself into a risky situation. Additionally, do not touch or drive over down power lines or stay in areas of standing water. This can cause deadly electrocution. If you see exposed fiber optic lines or any wires for that matter, do not cut them.

Dir. Guthrie ([08:30](#)):

You can text, make a cell phone call or use social media to make, uh, to report these lines that are exposed. The Florida Division Emergency Management continues to coordinate with utility companies, as the governor has stated to ensure crews are prepared to respond and restore power. Those crews are out now. They are moving up from the Palm Beach area into areas like Martin County and St. Lucie County to restore power. FDEM liaisons have been deployed to support the following counties at their request. Orange County, Lake County, Seminole Martin, Volusia, Brevard, Indian River, and St. Lucie. If you have questions about the status of the storm, please continue to contact our state assistance information line or the SAIL line at 1-800-342-3557. For any more emergency information regarding

Tropical Storm Nicole, all of that information is available on Floridadisaster.org/nicole. It's also available on the division's Facebook and on our Twitter page @FLSERT. Thank you, Governor.