

Governor DeSantis (00:00):

Purdue and gracious check, uh, from fema. Uh, as of 8:00 AM this morning, Hurricane Ian is located roughly 200 miles south of Key West. It's moving north at 12 miles per hour and is anticipated to exit, uh, land in Cuba very soon. It is now a major hurricane, category three hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 125 miles per hour, uh, overnight and into this morning. Some of the modeling, uh, that has been done, uh, is now projecting a landfall south of Tampa Bay. Uh, I know we've talked about the cone of uncertainty where the landfall was projected. We had it North Florida just a couple days ago. Uh, that's consistently been moved more east into the Florida Peninsula. Uh, yesterday, uh, evening, there were a lot of solutions bringing it right into Tampa Bay. Now you have a lot of solutions bringing the landfall into the Sarasota area.

Governor DeSantis (00:54):

Uh, there's still uncertainty with where that exact landfall will be, but just understand the impacts are gonna be far, far broader, uh, than just where the eye of the storm happens to make landfall. Uh, in some areas there will be catastrophic flooding and life threatening storm surge. And so if you're on Florida's Gulf Coast, uh, from Naples all the way through the Tampa Bay area and some of the counties north of that, uh, that could be something, uh, that happens. And, and it will certainly happen in some parts of Florida's Gulf Coast. Now, I know there's folks in southwest Florida who remember Hurricane Charlie was projected to make, uh, direct impact into Tampa Bay, uh, and then it turned and, and went in into southwest Florida. I would just say the, the, the track may end up doing something similar, but this is a much different storm.

Governor DeSantis (01:46):

Charlie was a lot smaller. It was powerful. It was a category four. Most of the damage from Charlie was from wind and wind destruction. What we have here is really historic storm surge and flooding potential. And so if you're looking at those places in Fort Meyer, Charlotte County, uh, Sarasota, uh, the storm surge that you're gonna see generated from this, uh, is gonna far eclipse, uh, what we saw there. And so, as you look to see, uh, what is going on with the local counties, there's evacuation orders that are in place, uh, on all these counties, uh, from Pasco and Pinellas down, uh, to the Fort Myers area. And our recommendation is, is to heed those evacuation orders. Uh, what those evacuation orders are doing is identifying people that live in areas that are vulnerable to major storm surge and that storm surge, uh, can be life threatening.

Governor DeSantis (02:45):

Uh, there's certain things we can protect against in terms of the wind and the structures, and we've got great building codes. But when you have five to 10 feet of storm surge, uh, that is not something that, that you want to be a, a part of, of, and, um, mother nature is a very fearsome, uh, uh, uh, adversary. So please heed those warnings. You do not need to evacuate to another state. You don't need to go hundreds of miles away. There's shelters that are open and all of these counties at this point. Uh, the important part is if you're under an evacuation order, is evacuate to to higher ground, uh, that is gonna be safe from the type of surge and flooding, uh, that, that we're, that we're fearing with this storm. Uh, of course there's certain Floridians that may live in, in mobile homes or manufactured housing that would be vulnerable if you're under an order.

Governor DeSantis (03:38):

Of course, you know, you want to be in a structure that is gonna be able to withstand, uh, some of the hurricane winds. Uh, but, but by and large, uh, we're looking at really, really major storm surge up and down the west coast of Florida. There are people that, of course, you know, are evacuating on different roadways. Uh, there there has been been traffic, but there has not yet been, um, the, the backups where FDOT and FHP, uh, have opened the emergency shoulder lanes. Uh, they will do that once sustained speeds, uh, are at 40 miles per or less. And so when that happens, they will make that call. Uh, people will be able to use those. Um, you know, but don't use it until then because that obviously, you know, carries some risk if, if people, um, you know, don't know that that's something that, that, that is going on.

Governor DeSantis ([04:24](#)):

Uh, you also can use things like gas buddy to find gas stations, um, in the area that have fuel. And I would note if you look at these updated tracks, uh, that we've been getting this morning, and I think you'll probably see that reflected in the 11:00 AM advisory from the National Hurricane Center. Uh, you have potential paths of the storm, uh, entering Florida's Gulf Coast, cutting across the state and exiting from to into the Atlantic Ocean. Uh, that means some of those, uh, counties that are more interior, uh, you know, you could absolutely see power outages. You could see inland flooding, um, you know, you could see various types of tree and, and, uh, damage from wind. So, so just be prepared for that. Uh, we were here 48 hours ago, and most of the solutions had it going up the coast, the west coast of Florida.

Governor DeSantis ([05:12](#)):

Well, now most of them have it, uh, ramming into the state of Florida and cutting across. And so just be prepared for that and understand that that's something that could be happening. Uh, Visit Florida has partnered with Expedia to launch an emergency accommodations page. Anyone who has been ordered to evacuate can use this page to find available accommodations in other areas of the state by visiting expedia.com/florida. Again, expedia.com/florida. We have, uh, about 2.5 million Floridians that are currently, uh, under, uh, some type of an evacuation order. Uh, make sure you know your evacuation zones, so you can find that at Florida disaster.org/planprepare, Florida disaster.org/planprepare, and of course, uh, if you are called upon, uh, to evacuate, uh, you know, make sure you take care of your pets. Uh, don't leave your pets behind, uh, when you, when you're evacuating. Um, and, and, you know, there's pet friendly shelters.

Governor DeSantis ([06:12](#)):

There's, there's things that can be done, uh, to take, to take care of pets. We wanna make sure, so there is information, uh, about planning for your pet. Uh, at Florida disaster.org. Uh, ford slash plan prepare. Uh, we wanna make sure that we're, that we're taking care, um, of our friends. To find shelters, again, visit Florida disaster.org/shelters. Most of these counties are gonna have shelters within the county that are in higher ground. The buildings are gonna be hurricane proof. They're gonna be able to withstand, uh, a category three hurricane in terms of the winds. Uh, but it's gonna put you in a situation where you're not gonna be vulnerable to the effects of the storm surge and the effects of the flooding. Uh, we have, of course, suspended tolls, uh, starting yesterday to assist people who may be, uh, may, may be moving around the state and, and following evacuation orders.

Governor DeSantis ([07:07](#)):

You can look at those facilities at fdot.gov that list them. We may add more if there's a need to do that as the storm impacts other parts of the state, and we will make that announcement, uh, at the

appropriate time. We have 26 school districts that have announced school closures. Uh, and you may and you may very well have more as the track becomes more certain. If you want the most updated school information, go to fldoe.org/storminfo, fldoe.org/storminfo. Uh, we have 5,000 national Guardsmen that are activated. We've got 2000 additional guardsmen from other states, and I know Jim's been talking, uh, with other states, uh, you know, to help us with, with even more assets. We do have our urban search and rescue teams activated. We have three additional teams on standby ready to deploy. Our FWC has officers placed in every county, um, in anticipation of heavy rains and flooding.

Governor DeSantis (08:07):

And you will see heavy rains in parts of the state, uh, that are not necessarily on Florida's Gulf Coast. Uh, we also have high water vehicles and shallow draft boats that are ready for immediate deployment to the affected areas. We also have FWC's aviation section placed on standby, and it's ready. All appropriate aircraft are ready for deployment, uh, for search and rescue and post storm damage assessments as needed. Uh, FHP has implemented their 12 hour shifts. They've mobilized additional state troopers to the Gulf Coast, and of course, our partners in the US Coast Guard, uh, are standing by and are able and willing to assist. Uh, we do report today 100% of operating long term care facilities do have a generator on site. Uh, of course, we have a state of emergency for all 67 counties. We are gonna keep that in place.

Governor DeSantis (08:58):

I think if you look at the tracks that have come out this morning, uh, the chance that you have major impacts in northwest Florida, of course, have, have declined. Uh, but we also understand there's gonna be people that are gonna be evacuating, and we want to give every county flexibility, uh, to help their fellow Floridians. Uh, we have issued the waivers of weights, uh, for commercial trucks. We want the fuel and the resources continuing to come into the state. We've spoken with, with our partners, uh, there, they're gonna keep doing it until, um, uh, it's no longer safe to do so because they understand how important it is. Uh, we do have emergency refills of maintenance prescriptions. Uh, those are authorized for another 30 days, and we now have 28,000 across the state. Between our investor own utilities, our municipal utilities, and our rural electric co-ops, More than 28,000 linemen are staged for power restorations across the state of Florida.

Governor DeSantis (09:53):

And we understand as, as the storm hits and passes, the need to be able to restore power, uh, as soon as possible for as many Floridians as possible. Uh, make sure you're executing your plan. Uh, this is, uh, this is imminent. Uh, we appreciate everybody in our counties, uh, who've worked very hard, uh, to execute, uh, their plans. Uh, Kevin will talk a little bit more about from the DM perspective, but we've had more than, we've had about 500 requests for assistance from our, our counties. Uh, the state is fulfilled 466, some others are on the way, and some will be fulfilled. They just can't be fulfilled until the storm actually hits. Uh, we mention sending medical professionals to Hillsborough County Special Needs shelters. We send another 120 to surrounding counties. We do have our logistical staging area in Polk County, uh, and we will have additional staging later today.

Governor DeSantis (10:45):

300 ambulances supporting special needs evacuations have been deployed. Hundreds of generators and pumps have been staged, primarily in the Tampa area. And of course, pre landfall. Food and water has been staged, uh, for Tampa, Tampa Bay region. Now, as the track has, has moved, uh, a little bit more to

where you have potentially greater impacts in south disorder. I mean, we knew you were gonna get storm surge, uh, all along. I mean, it's just the nature of a storm this big. Uh, however, Kevin is gonna be mobilizing more resources, uh, to be able to assist those counties, uh, in the Southwest portion, uh, of the state of Florida. Again, go to Floridadisaster.org/getaplan, uh, to make sure that, that you have what you need. You know, you still have time today to, to execute, uh, what you need to do. If you're in an evacuation zone, you have time to be able, uh, to heed those orders.

Governor DeSantis ([11:36](#)):

If you're not, you have time to be able, uh, to get whatever supplies, uh, that you may need, uh, to deal with what's gonna happen over the next few days. Uh, I would just tell all Floridians who are in the path of this, you know, there's gonna be interruptions and things like power, there's gonna be interruptions in fuel, maybe interruptions in communications, uh, that is to be expected. So just plan for that. And of course, all these resources are mobilized to try to restore the services, uh, as quickly as possible, uh, once it's safe to do so. Uh, safety is paramount when you're talking about storm surge like this, when you're talking about historic flooding, uh, that water is a very, very difficult adversary. You do not wanna put yourself, uh, in harm's way, uh, unnecessarily. So if you're ordered to evacuate, that's a decision based off what we're seeing with this storm, what your local officials are seeing with the storm and the potential impacts that could have, uh, on your part of the state of Florida.

Governor DeSantis ([12:33](#)):

And doesn't mean you need to go all across God's creation to evacuate. Just get to the higher ground, get into a safe, uh, structure. We have shelters open and all those counties now at the county level. Uh, and we would encourage people to, to do that. Uh, once the storm passes, you could be able to get back in your home. We'll be able to assess, uh, whatever damage, uh, may have occurred and be able to, to, to make the, the necessary, um, improvements and, and, and rebuild. Uh, but we can't unring the bell if you stay, uh, and you end up getting washed away with, with a historic storm surge or get caught in really, really significant flooding. So Kevin Guthrie is gonna, uh, say a few words and then we're also gonna have, uh, Jared Perdue from FDOT give an update on the traffic situation.

Kevin Guthrie ([13:20](#)):

Thank you Governor, and good morning. Uh, I'm gonna start with a bullet point that I actually don't have because it was just sent to me. But, um, the National Hurricane Center is now predicting that landfall will be Venice in 35 hours at 125 miles an hour. So again, Venice and 35 hours at 125 mile an hour, making that a major, uh, category three land falling hurricane. We currently have more. As the governor mentioned, we currently have more than 500 active mission requests from our local partners, and we are working diligently to ensure that all the needs are met. The governor already mentioned that we are starting to move additional contract staff and additional resources into the southwest Florida area. Uh, we do have the five urban search and rescue teams that are on standby. And we were moving those again around the state of Florida. I think it's very important to say that Tampa Bay region, you are not out of the woods yet. There is still going to be a, a storm surge event in the Tampa Bay region. Uh, we're waiting on that data to come in to see what those actual numbers are gonna be. But you need to additional, you need to continue to heed the warnings that are in place for Pinellas, Tampa, Manatee Hillsborough do not return yet if you have evacuated.

Kevin Guthrie ([14:34](#)):

Residents can't expect power due to anticipated impacts from the storm statewide. We do have telephone companies on standby. We have the big three wireless companies here in our EOC with us. Floridians should be prepared and have a communications plan in place with their families on how they plan to communicate after the fact. During previous hurricanes, the cell towers did go down. We expect them to go down. In this particular event, residents should have alternate ways to communicate with friends, loved ones, and family. It's also important to remember when an evacuation is ordered, order is issued, you may only need to evacuate tens of miles, as the governor has mentioned already. Instead of hundreds of miles, many people in the southwest Florida area, your best bet is going to be evacuate across the state. Just go straight across the state to Broward, Miami Dade, Palm Beach.

Kevin Guthrie (15:24):

Do not try to go north. That will certainly help, uh, the secretary from DOT to help manage that traffic. Do not go north. Go straight across, over to Southeast Florida. Residents should take the time now to determine if they live in an evacuation zone. Again, that is available at floridadisaster.org slash know or slash plan, prepare. As the governor's already mentioned, I want to take a moment to, we've had some calls come into our call center. It is not the FEMA flood site. These are evacuation zones on Florida disaster.org. They are not one in the same. We had a lady call in this morning saying, Well, it says I live in a Zone X. That is a FEMA flood map that is not a storm surge zone evacuation zone. So please know the difference between the two. Keep gas and battery tank at least half full throughout the entire season, especially in this event.

Kevin Guthrie (16:24):

That'll cut down lines at gas stations. If you live in evacuation zone and you decide to shelter in place, make sure you have enough supplies to weather the storm. We may be without power 3, 5, 7 days or more depending on the situation. You'll want to make sure that you have extra cash in case atm, or I'm sorry, in case credit card services are unavailable after the storm. Another major threat with Hurricane Ian, is going to be damaging winds. So if you can pick it up, put it up again, if you can pick it up from your yard, put it up, secure those loose items in your yard. Take the time to clear all that potential debris. Bring in furniture. Strong winds can pick those items up and, uh, crash them into your home or your neighbor's home. For more updates in your area, you remember to follow your local county emergency management activity that will be the best source of information at the local level on your evacuations.

Kevin Guthrie (17:28):

The division has activated the state assistance information line, the cell line to provide additional resources for Floridians to receive up to the date information regarding Hurricane Ian via phone residents and visitors can call this toll free line at 1 803 4 2 3 5 5 7. I'll repeat that number. It is 1 803 4 2 3 5 5 7. You can also follow the division on Facebook and Twitter. Our Twitter handle is at FL S E R T. That's at FL SERT. If you have any additional information that you need, you can always go to our, uh, Florida disaster.org website slash info. Governor, again, thank you very much for your leadership in this situation. Great,

Speaker 3 (18:21):

Jared.

Jared Perdue (18:23):

Yes, thank you Governor, and good morning. As the governor mentioned, Tulsa suspensions are still in effect for, um, listed facilities focused on the coastal areas. We are gonna continue to monitor the situation and will, um, potentially enact more as deemed appropriate. Um, you can go to fdot.gov for more information on that. Um, F D T Road and Bridge contractors have suspended operations on active construction projects within the projected path of Hurricane I. These projects are performing activities such as lowering crane booms, high mass lighting, securing barges, clearing traffic control devices, and checking drainage systems. Contractors are also opening all travel lanes and removing non-critical barricades, uh, to aid in evacuations for bridges in the potential impact area. Once wind speeds increase beyond 40 miles per hour, we coordinate very closely with FHP and local law enforcement and stop traffic from crossing bridges for the safety of the traveling public.

Jared Perdue ([19:19](#)):

Um, FHP will be closely monitoring wind speeds on critical bridges such as the Sun, sunshine, Skyway Bridge. FDOT is staging resources nearby to perform critical road and bridge inspections after the storm in order to resume bridge usage as soon as it is safe to do so. Typically, inspections are performed and we prioritize coastal bridges and move inland. For example, in the Tampa Bay area, Howard Franklin, Sunshine Skyway, Courtney Campbell, Gandy Boulevard, and Pinellas Byway would be, Bayway would be those priorities. Additional resources are being staged strategically in safe locations in close proximity to the projected path to allow for quick implementation following the passage of the storm. Uh, FDOT is activating specific emergency and pre event contracts and also road clearance contracts to expedite roadway openings after the storm passes through F D O T will also be closely coordinating with utility providers to coordinate post storm debris operations in supportive power restoration.

Jared Perdue ([20:19](#)):

We continue to coordinate very closely with FHP, Georgia DOT, Florida DEP, and the US Coast Guard, um, for other bridge and road closures, and to facilitate evacuations and debris cleanup after the storm passes through all of our sea ports currently have adequate fuel supplies and are well positioned to quickly reinstate operations following the storm to keep fuel supplies moving. Sea ports in the cone of influence have already begun suspending operations to prepare for impact and staging appropriate resources to safely restore operations after the storm. We're also, uh, very closely coordinating with our airports in the area of impact. For information on airport closures, please, please get with your local airports As as evacuations continue. FDOT has traffic management centers around the state that operate 24 7. We have teams monitoring traffic levels along critical corridors to ensure safe and efficient flow of traffic.

Jared Perdue ([21:13](#)):

We've also increased our, uh, resources in terms of F D O T road rangers and motorist assistance to aid and evacuations, and we will be closely monitoring traffic speeds, traffic volumes along the evacuation routes, and, and we'll also be considering the use of the shoulders, uh, when, when it is needed. As the governor mentioned, you know, we typically look at operating speeds of around 40 to 45 miles per hour. We've already begun operations to make sure the shoulders are clear of debris and clean so that vehicles can safely use them. Um, Florida's 5 0 1 travel information system is available for drivers to stay informed about roadway conditions during emergencies. These services includes traffic conditions, road and bridge closures, toll suspensions, and other specialized alerts. To use Florida's 511, visit the website at [fl five one one.com](http://flfiveoneone.com) or download the app on both Apple and Android devices. Again, governor, thank you for your leadership. Okay,

Governor DeSantis ([22:11](#)):

So the, um, so, so that's, the NHC is gonna have that at the 11 advisory. That's where we're being advised. Okay, So the, and we had mentioned cuz the models overnight that were coming in, were all arriving at solutions in Sarasota area. The National Hurricane Center's 11:00 AM advisory will, will confirm that, uh, with the landfall in the southern part of Sarasota County. Now, again, we, this thing is just getting over Cuba. I mean, there could be more wobbles. And so the idea that it's no longer the eye no longer projected to hit Tampa Bay directly does not mean, uh, that you will not have major impacts in Tampa Bay. Does not mean that you can't see a wobble going a different direction. I I will say, just having watched these runs over the past, uh, 96 hours or so, uh, you are seeing the models really, really push more east.

Governor DeSantis ([23:00](#)):

And so if you have an impact into a place like, like Venice, uh, that is gonna be a, a lot of inundation, a lot of surge, and places like Charlotte County, uh, places like Lee County, of course Sarasota as well. But what that will also do is likely bring it to cut it across the state of Florida. And so there's different models on that, but a lot of them now have it cutting across and going out into the Atlantic Ocean. So if you're in some of those interior parts of the state of Florida, uh, from kind of up, up by four almost, and some of those things just, just anticipate now. It's not gonna be a category three hurricane by the time it gets to you, Uh, but, but anticipate, uh, interruptions, anticipate wind, anticipate a lot of rain. Uh, and of course we have rivers and, and waterways all throughout the state of Florida, including the interior, uh, that, that, that are in danger of overflowing under those circumstances. And so, um, just continue to watch, uh, the, the weather wherever you are in the state of Florida, heed the advice, uh, of your local officials. Uh, but this is definitely something that, that, that is, uh, getting closer and closer. And so, so act now to do what you need to do to protect yourself and your family. Okay. Any questions? Yeah,

Reporter ([24:11](#)):

Governor, worst case scenario. Um, the, and I think you may have seen Jeff frame this, calculate make some calculations about the insurance impact that citizens could be, which covers 25% of the tip of the air. Could be, you know, paying out 10 billion. The total process for the Tampa Bay area could be 40 billion. Um, is, you know, is there some contingency plan in place beyond what the legislature and you approved, you know, to lower the hurricane catastrophe cap

Governor DeSantis ([24:41](#)):

You might use? I mean, we'll address, I mean, we, we have a, we have a cat fund that's flush. We put another 2 billion in into kind of an added added layer of protection. I would say though we are looking at a lot of flood claims. I'm not saying there's not gonna be wind, wind damage. I mean, it's a hurricane, so you're likely to see that. Uh, but when you're talking about things like Tampa Bay, you know, the danger in why Tampa Bay is so fragile in terms of these types of storms and why people have said that's the one place in Florida that could have the most damage, uh, is because that water's got nowhere to go in Tampa Bay. And so you end up with surge, you end up with flooding, uh, in that Tampa Bay area. We have close to a million flood policies under the National Flood Insurance Program. Got about 15,000 private policies. And so most of that is gonna end up being an issue, uh, for that. Now, of course, there's more that I, uh, want to do in terms of, in terms of the wind insurance, uh, and that'll be something that, that we're gonna address. I mean, look, at the end of the day, you know, we've gotta, we've gotta make sure folks are, are taken care of, and so we will do that, whatever we need to do.

Reporter ([25:45](#)):

Could you give us up an update on nursing homes? I mean, how many residents, how many nursing home residents have been evacuated across the state and is there an update on how compliance is going? We're hearing about power outages with the eight, uh, aca, uh, rule compliance with,

Governor DeSantis ([26:00](#)):

So right now it's a hundred percent. So the, the a hundred percent are reporting generators on site and, and we're, we're happy about that. Kevin, do you want to talk about, I know they've done it in the Tampa Bay area. Sure.

Kevin Guthrie ([26:11](#)):

Uh, Pinellas County mentioned yesterday that they are evacuating somewhere around the neighborhood of 90 hospital ALS and nursing homes. We've got similar numbers, uh, into the south of the Bay. Obviously Manatee County doesn't have that many. Um, but we're all of those counties are getting compliance with ac uh, with, um, evacuation orders and, uh, when, when, when, and if we have challenges, uh, o obviously secretary, uh, Marsteller makes some phone calls and, and we, we, we get compliance. So we're, we're getting 100% compliance right now out of the LF medical nursing home industry. And, and again, they're, they're heating the evacuation orders, they're evacuating. But again, the new, the good news story here, really good news story is we have 100% compliance with the generator rule,

Governor DeSantis ([26:57](#)):

And Kevin will be, he will be moving, I think you already are in the process of, of, of surging more of the ambulances down to southwest Florida. Obviously we've had a lot stage in Tampa Bay and there will still be support there, but as you look at the track shifting further south, uh, there's gonna be more needs, uh, there as a result. And so Kevin, Kevin is doing that and, and I think that that's good, as you know, um, and Southwest part of the state of Florida, I mean, we, we've got a lot of elderly residents, not, not just in als, uh, but certainly we, we've got, uh, we've got, we've got a lot of those facilities and counties like, like Collier, Lee and Charlotte. Yes, sir. Maybe

Reporter ([27:32](#)):

You have a broad question. Do you have an, a guesstimate on how many people are in these areas that are going to be impacted by the up to 10 feet of storm surge and we need to be evacuated? I mean, do you have kind of like maybe thousands, millions

Governor DeSantis ([27:44](#)):

Of people? Well, there's, there's under the current evacuation orders, which are probably Pasco down to Collier, would you say?

Kevin Guthrie ([27:50](#)):

Well, we have not run the numbers on the, uh, Fort Myers

Governor DeSantis ([27:53](#)):

Just got, Okay, so, but I mean, but, but, but it's, it's over 2 million. Yeah. And so that's, and again, this is not necessarily saying you have to evacuate to another state. It's not saying you have to go to Miami. It's

not saying that, uh, all those counties have shelters within their counties. Uh, the, the instruction is you're in a vulnerable area to storm surge or flooding, uh, evacuate to higher ground. And if you evacuate to higher ground in a structure that is sound, um, you know you're gonna be fine. And, and, and that's something that, that we just want people to know when they say evacuate, that doesn't mean keep traveling until you have no chance of being rained on or have no chance of having any, You don't need to do that. Uh, obviously it's a free country, you know, people can, can get in the car and do and do what they want, but that's not what, what it means the impacts as it gets into the state of Florida.

Governor DeSantis ([28:43](#)):

If you are not in a low lying area and you're in a structure that is sound, you know, you're, you're gonna be okay when you do that. And so this is Charlie in back in I guess oh four, that was like, you know, kind of a buzz saw. It was a category four, a lot of wind damage, really, really a destructive in terms of what it did in southwest Florida. Of course people thought it was gonna hit Tampa and then it shifted. Obviously if you have a cat three people say maybe it, it was, it was, we were hoping it was gonna gonna weaken before it hit landfall. The problem is the further east it's gone, the less time it has to weaken. Um, nevertheless, uh, what this is really doing because of the size of the storm is it's kicking up a lot of surge.

Governor DeSantis ([29:25](#)):

I mean, those seas, you know, the Gulf is gonna be very angry as this comes in and you're gonna see that happen. And so the, the danger to life and limb, uh, is really from that surge and from that flooding, uh, more so, um, you know, than the wind. Obviously if you're in a mobile home and you have a 120 mile an hour, uh, winds, I mean, that's gonna be a problem and, and heed the evacuation orders accordingly. But we've got a lot of Floridians who are in low lying areas, and when you have storm surge of this magnitude, you know, that can absolutely be life threatening. Our, we want everyone to be safe, of course, if there's need for search and rescue, we've got the, we've got resources, the counties have great resources, the state, national Guard, other states are helping. Um, and, and, and we will do that. Uh, but just keep in mind that when you're doing that, uh, those first responders are put at risk by, by going into those situations. So if you can avoid that at the front end, uh, by getting to a safer position, you know, that is obviously gonna be good not just for you, but it's also gonna be good for the people that may be called upon to go into harm's way as people

Speaker 8 ([30:25](#)):

Evacuated. Can you give us an update on the field supply? Let me, this may be a question for Secretary Purdue, but have y'all considered making all the lanes eastbound out of Tampa?

Governor DeSantis ([30:34](#)):

So I'll let him amplify that. But basically that issue has been studied by the department over, what, about 10 years or so. And what, what they have determined is that it's more efficient to just expand into the emergency lanes and the shoulders and open those up for more traffic rather than try to make everything going in one direction. I think part of the issue is is, you know, we need to access it in the other direction to help people and, and to bring in supplies. But I'll let Jared talk more about

Jared Perdue ([31:00](#)):

It. Yeah, absolutely. What you're referring to would be what we call contraflow. And we have done many studies and we actually have proven that using the shoulder for emergency evacuations is a successful way to do it. You do need the other side of the facility to, for continued access for first

responders and life safety, uh, missions. So yeah, so we have, we have successful examples of that and uh, we'll, we'll be closely coordinating throughout to, to make sure traffic continues to flow

Governor DeSantis (31:26):

And that, and he's gonna look, I mean, they will open those lanes once you have less than 40 miles per hour sustains traffic flow. And the places where that would happen would of course be, you know, I 75 north out of the Tampa Bay area or in Sarasota, uh, but also I 75 going across alligator Alley. And then of course I-four, uh, someone was showing some stuff about, there's some traffic on I four last night. And, um, so, so they're watching that. Uh, it has increased. Uh, although I think most Floridians who, uh, are familiar with Central Florida know you could be between Tampa and Orlando and I-4 and run into traffic really at any hour of the day, but they are sensitive to that. They will open that up, uh, to be able, uh, to, to increase the flow and basically as soon as that under 40 happens, then, then they will do it. But by and large, we've seen an increase on the roads, but you still have flow and that's monitored on a minute by minute basis. Fuel

Reporter (32:24):

Supply, are there areas where there are shortages? It's everything

Governor DeSantis (32:27):

In terms of like fuel supply, fuel supply, Kevin, you wanna adjust that.

Kevin Guthrie (32:32):

I, I know technically the ports fall under Secretary Perdue, but we did, uh, talk to the ports council executive director, um, and everything is topped off now at eight o'clock this morning. West Coast ports were closed by the US Coast Guard, but um, the port is not closed, it's closed to sea traffic. It is not closed to the fuel racks. So we can still keep getting fuel from those, uh, those tanks and, and, and get that back out into the market. And we're still doing that. That's happening right now at every port, um, on the, uh, West coast. But we are officially closed, but before they closed they topped everything completely off.

Governor DeSantis (33:11):

And I, and just, um, you know, as people, of course the fuel keep that flowing, get the power back on. I mean, people are gonna want to go back to their homes. I mean, there's a lot of people that have been evacuated in say Pinellas County. There's more evacuations all the way down the Gulf Coast when it, the bridges reach a certain sustained wind, what is it, 40 miles an hour that you, uh, that they will FDOT will alert local law enforcement and they will, they will stop access to the bridge cuz it's not safe. As you get above that, once the storm passes, the bridges are, will be open, but they will be evaluated for integrity and safety because you don't want, if there's something that happened to put people over bridges that aren't safe. So if you're thinking about someplace like the Tampa Bay area, uh, you have, I mean you have Courtney Campbell, you have Howard Franklin Gandy, you have Sunshine Skyway, uh, those are gonna be inspected.

Governor DeSantis (34:05):

Jared has people ready to go. The Army Corps is, people are gonna go, we understand that's a priority, but we also wanna make sure that it's safe. It the extent that the storm goes more in the Venice area, uh, you're looking at different bridges, uh, in and outta Charlotte and Lee County. Uh, so you will have at

some point those will be suspended in terms of people being able to use those. And then once the storm passes, they are gonna be evaluated, uh, for structural integrity as well. So really from southwest Florida up into the Tampa Bay area, we've got a lot of bridges, uh, getting in and out of these communities and, uh, they're all gonna be evaluated and we wanna make sure that, that they are, if they're safe and, and still sound, which we anticipate, they they will be. But, uh, you know, this is a significant storm. Some of 'em that may be a little lower, there'll be water pushing up. So there's just a lot of factors, but, but that will happen. So just plan on when the storm passes there, there, there may be a, a short period of time where that is being evaluated and that's just being done for people's safety. Yep.

Reporter ([35:05](#)):

Sort of a morbid question, but with the reality of this being a rainstorm and there being flooding and of course drownings and whatnot, I don't know if the state has given any estimate of how deadly this storm is going to be given those sort

Governor DeSantis ([35:17](#)):

Of, I think it's hard to say. I mean, I think that the people that, uh, when, when your local, uh, emergency officials are instituting an order for evacuation, the purpose of that is to protect people's lives. And the more people that heed that, uh, the less likely that you're gonna see fatalities when you have major storm surge or flooding in those areas. I will say, and it's something that Kevin has also talked about and I've talked about a lot in, in some of the recent storms across the country, you've had more fatalities after the storm hit than because of the storm directly. And that has a variety of different reasons. One of the things is misuse of generators inside people's homes. Uh, that exhaust has gotta go outside your home. Do not put that inside. Uh, that will be you, you could get poison and you could die.

Governor DeSantis ([36:03](#)):

So we see that happens now in, in pretty much every storm. So we've put out videos, we've put out different guidance about using, uh, generators to, to, I mean, nobody wants to be without power. Generators can be a great thing to kind of keep a sense of normalcy as you're waiting for other things around you to get back to normal. Uh, but, but you gotta use it properly. There's also, people will go into some of the standing water that you see. If you have standing water, you could have an electrical cord or something, uh, that is in there and, and you could get harmed in in that way. Driving vehicles when you have a lot of standing water is very, very hazardous. And so we would caution people not to try to drive vehicles, uh, through flooded streets. So you see a lot of the things that that happen after the storm, uh, that, that have unfortunately caused, uh, folks, um, uh, to, to, to pass away. So those are things that, that were putting guidance out on. But on the front end of the storm, the surge, the flooding, making sure if you are in a vulnerable structure like a mobile home, uh, that you be able, uh, to evacuate to a safer structure is very, very important.

Reporter ([37:11](#)):

The general, if I may, uh, given the severity of the flooding we expect, what role do you expect the guard to play, um, in the aftermath of the storm?

General Eifert ([37:19](#)):

Really it's, uh, we're a support role, whatever the Department of Emergency Management needs us to do. It could be everything from security to, uh, transportation aviation is a big part if we end up in search

and rescue kind of scenarios. So, um, you know, we're kind of the Swiss Army knife of, uh, of operations we can be used for whatever the, uh, department of emergency Management needs us to. Governor

Reporter ([37:40](#)):

Alluded to seeking more assets. Can you be more specific about what type of assets maybe you'all are, are searching for

General Eifert ([37:46](#)):

Or? Yeah, as part as we do, our planning kind of changes every day. You know, yesterday we were looking at the potential even having to do air bridges into the peninsula of, uh, St. Petersburg, Clearwater. As the storm moves further south, we think that may not be quite the plan that we need to be looking at. So kind of changes day to day as we see the updates in the hurricane and where it's gonna be and, uh, what kind of potential damages and, uh, missions it might introduce for, uh, our forces. So, um, we're constantly reassessing, uh, some big things that we're looking for from outta state. Uh, additional aviation assets for, so, uh, HH 60 s uh, ch 47 s uh, heavy lift, um, capability to be able to, uh, move supplies and people and equipment, uh, search and rescue equipment and supplies also a big part of that.

General Eifert ([38:32](#)):

So, uh, you know, it, it really depends. Could be security depending on, you know, where we are and, uh, what the aftermath looks like as we go through the recovery stages. So, um, we've got, uh, transportation's another big one looking for high water vehicles as well as, um, uh, swift water vehicles if we end up with a flooding event where we're needing to get to folks who can't, uh, can't move by land. So, um, really almost everything that, uh, you can imagine that the director, uh, might be needing some additional muscle on will be, uh, providing it. Yeah,

Reporter ([39:01](#)):

This might be from Director Guthrie. The, uh, i, we keep talking about the flooding and the surge and it kind of reminds me of what happened with Katrina, where the damage and the threat was more flooding and surge and, you know, in advance of that they got like 80 to 90% of New Orleans evacuated, uh, and managed to avoid a lot of serious stuff, but there was still people on rooftops, people in car. Yeah. Yeah. Have you thought about that? Have you looked at Kit Katrina as a potential model for what you need to do to respond here?

Kevin Guthrie ([39:35](#)):

Absolutely. You know, history is past performance. The best predictor for future performance is past performance. So we look at, we certainly look at all of those after action reports and, and, and take the best practices from 'em. And, you know, that's one of the reasons that, uh, in the last question was just answered by the general, we're beefing up aviation assets so we can actually go out and do that recon after the disaster happened. So we, if we have somebody in a, uh, in an island situation or maybe even on a vehicle rooftop or even God forbid, a, uh, an actual, um, structure rooftop, these guys can help us locate that and we can start moving ground assets into that situation. Or, um, if need be, we call in the Coast Guard and the Coast Guard comes in and starts doing some type of aerial type rescue. So all of those things are true. But again, I wanna reiterate what the governor just said. If people will heed evacuation orders, and it goes back to Eric's question, if they heed the evacuation order, I have a 100% guarantee that they will not die from storm surge. If they heed the evacuation order, I have a 100%

guarantee that they will not have to be rescued off a rooftop if they heed the evacuation order. Where we're at right now is ex execute your plan, start evacuating if you've been asked to evacuate.

Governor DeSantis ([40:48](#)):

So we, um, uh, we're gonna be continuing to, to work with our, with our local partners. I do want to thank everybody up here at the Florida Department of Emergency Management, everyone involved with the EOC. Uh, this was something that, that, that we saw coming when it was just, I guess, a disturbance off the, uh, you know, coming in there and, and we understood the potential. Uh, and so we've been working with, with all the local partners under a state of emergency, and I do really appreciate all the work that they've done. That one thing about Florida we have to deal with, with a lot of these threats, it's just, it's just something that you do when you live in a kind of a tropical paradise. But we're fortunate we have some of the strongest emergency management professionals, uh, in our counties, anywhere in the country. And, and I think that they're, they're doing a great, great job and they'll continue to serve the people of their communities well, uh, as we weather this over the next, uh, many days. Thanks everybody.