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City of St. Petersburg Reports Back from Hurricane Irma

The background image shows a residential area in St. Petersburg, Florida, after the impact of Hurricane Irma. In the foreground, there is a large pile of dark, charred debris, likely from a destroyed structure. In the middle ground, several palm trees are visible, some leaning or damaged. A white SUV is parked on a street, and a few people can be seen walking in the distance. The overall scene depicts the aftermath of a major storm.

THE STORM, ITS IMPACTS, AND THE RESPONSE

Hurricane Irma

City of St. Petersburg

Hurricane Irma

- She was HUGE
 - *650 miles wide! Tropical storm force winds 600 miles wide!*
- She was STRONG
 - *Category 5 clocking sustained winds speeds up to 185 mph!*
 - *Strongest storm on record to exist in the Atlantic*
- She was EXPENSIVE
 - *\$64.8 billion in damage*
- She was LONG-LIVED
 - *August 30, 2017 – September 13, 2017*
- She was DEADLY
 - *134 fatalities*

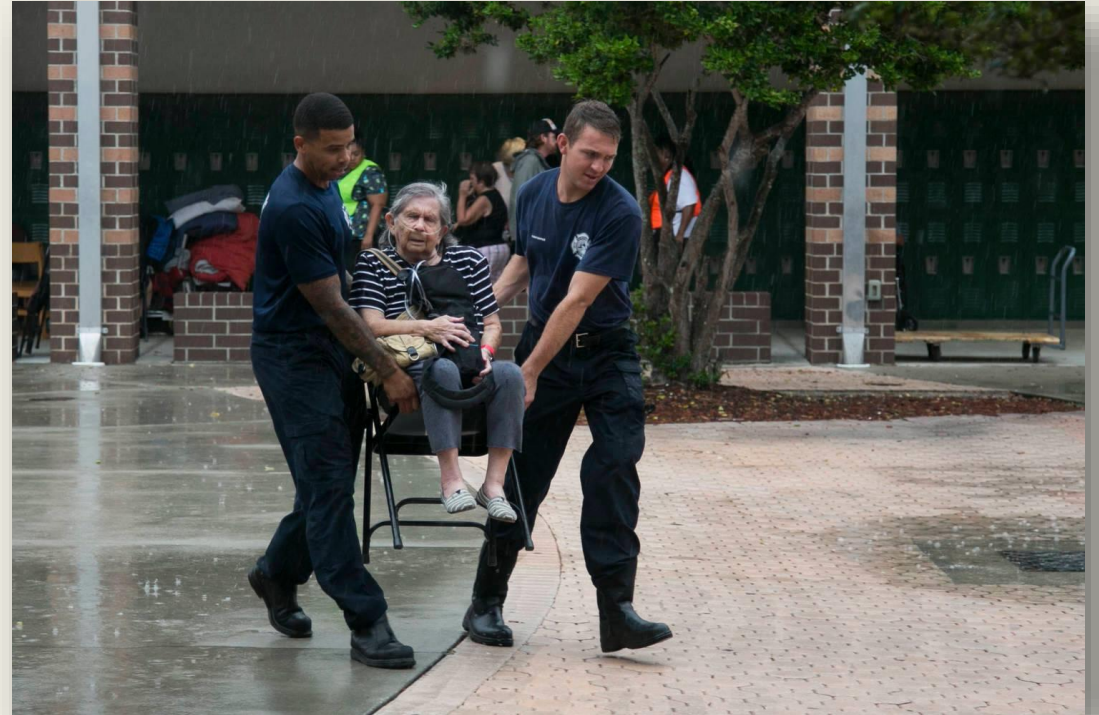
City Preparations for Irma

Activated City Disaster Operation Plan (DOP)

- In days before the storm
 - *City departments review internal staffing and disaster operations plan*
- Thursday, Sept. 7
 - *Meeting of Executive Policy Group for strategy review and decision making*
- Friday, Sept. 8
 - *Partial activation of the EOC*
 - *City staff on alert, beginning to stage at critical locations*
 - *Assets strategically staged around the city to ensure a swift response post storm (high water vehicles, boats, search and rescue teams, and debris push teams).*
 - *Sandbag distribution*
 - *Mandatory Evacuation Order given by Pinellas County*
 - *Special Needs Transportation, PD/FD @ shelters*

City Preparations for Irma, cont.

- Saturday, Sept. 9
 - *Full EOC activation*
 - *Emergency Critical Staff on duty*
 - *Family shelters opened*
 - *Citizens Information Center open*
- Early Sunday, Sept. 10
 - *Evacuations nearing completion*
 - *City buildings were prepared for hurricane conditions*
 - *All City Staff in place*
- Evening of Sunday, Sept. 10
 - *Street operations were terminated until hurricane and tropical storm conditions ceased*
 - *City-wide curfew in place*



Impacts

- Irma was nothing more than a tropical storm for St. Petersburg
 - *Sustained winds in 50s, gusts in the 70s*
 - *Expecting catastrophic impacts!*
- Mandatory evacuations for zones A, B, and all mobile home parks
 - *That's 321,053 people, countywide!*
- 17 shelters opened in the county, 6 in St. Pete
 - *About 24,000 sheltered total*
- All City services were at least partially interrupted by Hurricane Irma.
- City did not reopen for business to the public until Wednesday, September 13.
- Extensive debris, property damage, and widespread power outages

Irma by the numbers in St. Pete

- Before the storm, St. Pete had **551** registered Special Needs Shelter clients. SPFR processed an additional **733** just in time requests for citizens!
- Fire Rescue picked up **411** special needs residents and transported them to shelters
- Distributed **152,000** sandbags
- **640** trees cleared
- **11** confirmed storm related structure fires
- **103** physical inspections of healthcare facilities for a welfare check during power outage.
- The Citizens Information Center processed approximately **5,774** calls during activation period.
- Over **24,000** citizens sheltered county-wide, at least **8,000** of those in St. Petersburg
- In the state of Florida, **15 million** people without power. Pinellas County reported **87%** of customers without power.
- Many residents had **7** days of NO POWER
- At its peak, about **130** intersections were not functional, triggering over **100** portable stop signs and dozens of generators at intersections across City.
- Initial city-wide damage assessment (public property only) was over **\$10 million!**

Inside the Emergency Operations Center

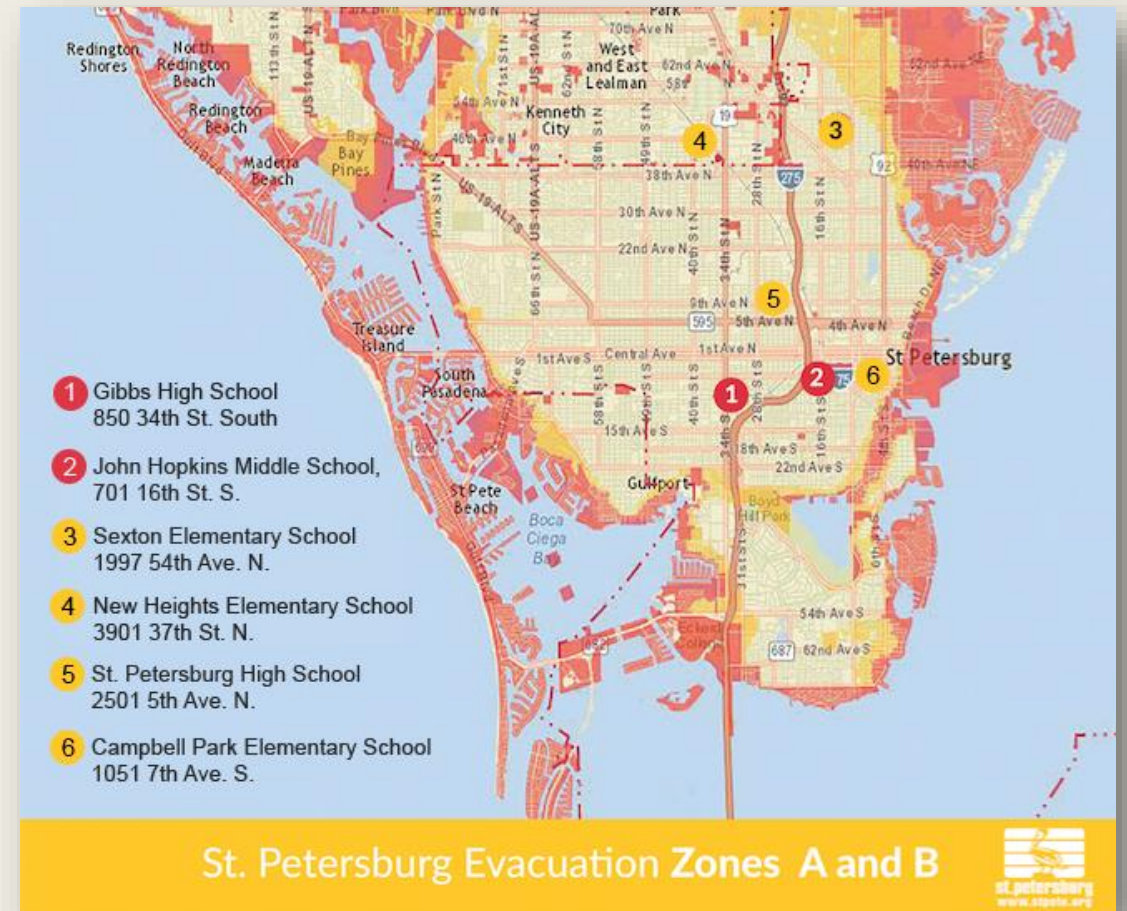
- Staffing
 - *Legal*
 - *Mayor's Action Center/Citizens Information Center*
 - *Planning Section (Emergency Management and Fire HQ staff)*
 - *Operations (Police, Fire, Debris Mgmt.)*
 - *Logistics (DoTs, Fleet, Procurement)*
 - *Executive Policy Group (Mayor's Office, Department Administrators, PIO)*
- Operations
 - *Situation reports*
 - *Support sub-center activity*
 - *Communicate with PC EOC*
 - *Coordinating resource requests*
 - *Coordinating recovery efforts*
 - *Problem solving*



EOC Communications and Public Information

Team made up of City's PIO, Marketing, and Mayor's Action Center

- Citizens Information Center
- Social Media
- AlertStPete



Recovery Post-Storm

- Search and Rescue Teams
- Push Teams
- Damage Assessment
- Damage reporting from public
- Wellness checks of healthcare facilities
- Status checks of Special Needs client homes



Documents Generated Following Hurricane Irma

- After Action Report (AAR)
 - *High level overview of City response with Strengths and Areas for Improvement.*
- Corrective Action Plan (CAP)
 - *Documents gaps and deficiencies*
 - *Identifies the Issue, Action To Be Taken, Who is Responsible, and Start/Completion Dates*
 - *Living document*

Hurricane Irma After Action

Strengths

- Internal coordination and communication was clear and timely.
- The City's Executive Policy Group response decisions were timely and productive.
- The use of the newly formed "Street Teams" proved to be highly effective and successful.
- Damage Assessment was complete and submitted to the County within 48 hours.
- The use of public buildings as relief centers for cooling off and power stations.
- Social media campaign was responsive and highly effective.
- Issued over 150,000 sandbags.

Areas for Improvement

- Ensure critical City facilities are hardened to withstand high-wind storms.
- Streamline process for reporting down power lines and trees to the appropriate departments.
- Planning for pro-longed power outages based on lessons learned.
- Have pre-identified relief centers that are advertised to the public pre-storm.
- The current City Code was found to be cumbersome to implement.
- Public education for preparedness and recovery.
- Sandbag distribution was a frenzy.

Conclusion

- This storm tested our City like we haven't been tested before
 - *Mandatory evacuations*
 - *Large amount of debris*
 - *Power outages*
- Overall the City was able to coordinate large-scale response and recovery activities, involving a variety of partnering response agencies, to quickly and effectively meet most citizens' needs following the disaster.
- The strengths and areas for improvement in this After Action Report will help to further enhance the City's preparedness for future emergency events.
- The City will work diligently to take these lessons learned and implement solutions before the next storm finds its way to St. Petersburg.
 - *See Corrective Action Plan*



THANK YOU