

Preparing for Ivan

The following are some general steps that you can take to help prepare for a hurricane.

- Turn your refrigerator and freezer down so it will be colder to keep your foods longer in case of the loss of power. Keep a thermometer in both your refrigerator and freezer to know when the temperature has risen to dangerous levels during a power outage. (If your refrigerator is above 40°F for more than 2 hours perishable foods should be discarded. This would be anything that is labeled “must be refrigerated after opening.”)
- Freeze any water bottles or freezer packs (blue ice) that you may have. By having them in your freezer it will help to keep it colder longer. They can also be placed in coolers to keep perishables cold and once the water thaws it can then be used for drinking.
- Remember the fuller your freezer the longer it will keep your foods frozen, so if you have multiple freezers you may consider consolidating into one.
- Once power is lost limit the amount of times that you open and close your refrigerator/freezer. You may consider having a cooler for perishable items and drinks that you will be using frequently stocked with ice or ice packs for easier access.
- Make sure your camera has fresh film and batteries. Charge your video camera.
- Remember you can use your pool water for washing, flushing toilets and even drinking WHEN it is purified with 8 drops of laundry grade chlorine bleach per gallon of water. DON'T buy the bleaches with dyes or perfumes.
- When possible use screws to attach plywood or patches to your roof or windows. South Florida found that nails got pulled out in Charley. BUT, nails will be better than nothing.
- Fill up your car with gas as well as your gas cans for your future needs during the storm.
- Have cash on hand as ATM machines, debit cards and credit cards may not have electricity.
- Throw your patio furniture into the pool if it is waterproof and will not be damaged. Shock the pool to raise the chlorine level and if the power is off for a number of days consider adding a solid chlorine source. If damage occurs to the pool area, take pictures and clean out the pool as quick as possible as any foreign object removes chlorine from the water.

For further information regarding this topic and any other topic relating to disaster preparedness and recovery contact the Osceola County Extension Office at 321-697-3000 prior to and after any storm.