

GOV. SCOTT: CAT 4 HURRICANE MATTHEW IS LIFE THREATENING AND APPROACHING FLORIDA

HIALEAH, Fla. – Governor Rick Scott today visited the City of Hialeah Emergency Operations Center to meet with emergency management officials as the state prepares for Hurricane Matthew, a life-threatening category four storm. Governor Scott also signed [Executive Order 16-230](#) declaring a state of emergency for every Florida county due to the severity and magnitude of Hurricane Matthew.

Governor Scott said, “Hurricane Matthew is a life-threatening category four hurricane and we must all take it seriously. If Hurricane Matthew directly impacts Florida, there could be massive destruction which we haven’t seen since Hurricane Andrew devastated Miami-Dade County in 1992. That is why we cannot delay and must prepare for direct impact now. Today, I signed an Executive Order declaring a State of Emergency in every Florida county to ensure we have resources for evacuations, sheltering and other logistical needs across our state. We are preparing for the worst, but hoping for the best and we will not take any chances to ensure our state is prepared.

“Hurricane Matthew has already killed four people and nobody wants that number to rise. As I said during Hurricane Hermine, we can rebuild a home or a business, but we cannot rebuild your life. The best way to prevent further loss is to get prepared now and take this storm seriously. Having a plan in place could mean the difference between life and death during severe weather, especially a major category four hurricane.

“Although Matthew is not currently projected to directly impact Florida, we all know how quickly the track of these storms can change. While there are no evacuation orders currently in place, this storm could threaten our state with very little notice and no one should be caught off guard. If an evacuation order is activated in your area, leave immediately. Once severe weather comes, our first responders will not be able to rescue you until the weather subsides.

“Our National Guard stands ready to be deployed if needed. I am also in contact with the utilities across the state and will stay in communication with them regarding their plans if there are any power outages. We are taking steps to move additional fuel to the state’s east coast. On the Florida Turnpike, we also have extra fuel trucks on standby to get anywhere in our state. Again, while we are preparing for the worst, we are hoping for the best and will not take any chances with a storm of this magnitude.”

The National Hurricane Center (NHC) reports that Hurricane Matthew is a major category four hurricane with maximum sustained winds of 140 miles per hour. Although the NHC official forecast continues to show a track east of Florida, Governor Rick Scott and the Florida Division of Emergency Management continue to actively monitor Hurricane Matthew and urge everyone in Florida to remain vigilant and take all necessary precautions as it moves through the Caribbean. The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) today activated to Level 2. Based on the current forecast,

the state's entire east coast from Monroe to Nassau counties could experience tropical storm force winds, beach erosion, rip currents and heavy rain. This is a slow moving storm and could impact Florida as early as Wednesday and last through Saturday.

State Coordinating Officer Bryan Koon said, "Hurricane Matthew is a strong and very dangerous storm. Residents should not delay and begin preparing for the worst now. This morning, the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) upgraded our activation to a Level 2. As always, we stand ready to respond to any potential impacts this storm may have on Florida communities and continue to encourage residents to visit Floridadisaster.org to create an emergency plan."

The Florida Division of Emergency Management is the state agency charged with preparing for all types of disasters in Florida. The Division is the state's disaster liaison with federal and local agencies, and is the lead consequence management agency for the State Emergency Response Team (SERT). The Division maintains the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Tallahassee and the State Watch Office, the 24-hour communications and command center for response coordination. Follow the Division on social media at facebook.com/FloridaSERT or on Twitter @FLSERT.

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