

A satellite image of a large hurricane with a well-defined eye, swirling over the Gulf of Mexico. The storm's cloud structure is dense and extends across a significant portion of the frame. The surrounding ocean and parts of the Florida peninsula are visible.

Sarasota County 2024 Hurricane Season After- Action Report

Sarasota County Emergency Services
Division of Emergency Management

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Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the valuable feedback from county employees, municipal partners and key stakeholders. Their input during the after-action analysis is essential to the continued improvement of Sarasota County's ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. The analysis identified both successes and areas for enhancement that will further strengthen not only Sarasota County's capabilities but also its partnerships with agencies and stakeholders. Many of the action items outlined in this report are already being implemented by county employees and partner agencies.

It is important to recognize the dedication of county employees and first responders who collectively contributed hundreds of thousands of work hours in support of the community during an unprecedented hurricane season. The County is grateful for the numerous partner agencies, mutual aid teams and municipal representatives who supported operations both inside and outside the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) throughout the response and recovery. Thank you to those individuals who were part of this effort and who exemplify the whole community approach to disaster preparedness and response.

WE ARE ONE TEAM

Handling Instructions

This After-Action Report outlines the strengths and successes demonstrated during the 2024 hurricane season, as well as opportunities for enhancement. The findings in this report are based on feedback collected through 15 feedback sessions with key stakeholders, municipal partners, and county employees.

The information in this report is accurate as of its publication date May 20, 2025.

For more information or questions regarding this report, please contact Sarasota County Emergency Management at EmergencyManagement@scgov.net.

Executive Summary

Sarasota County (herein called the County) initiated the After-Action Process to assess response and recovery efforts related to the 2024 hurricanes that impacted Florida: Debby, Helene and Milton. This After-Action Report (AAR) identifies strengths and areas of enhancement observed during operations, with a focus on countywide coordination led by the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The insights and recommendations provided in this AAR are intended to support ongoing efforts to enhance preparedness, response, and recovery capabilities for future hurricane events.

An accompanying Enhancement Matrix outlines action items that serve as a roadmap for strengthening future emergency management operations across the County.

The successes and enhancement opportunities identified in this report reflect a countywide, multi-agency approach to large-scale disaster operations in Sarasota County. As such, responsibility for implementing enhancements and sustaining effective practices is shared among all county departments, municipal, and Constitutional agencies and community partners.

The AAR includes the following sections:

- Incident Overview: Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton
- Areas of Successes and Enhancement Recommendations
- Conclusion
- Enhancements Matrix

This report focuses on strategic policy-level challenges and successes. Due to the size and scope of the 2024 hurricane season, this AAR does not capture every operational detail or department-level action.

Strengths and Successes

Sarasota County and its partners identified the following areas of strength and success during the 2024 hurricane season:

- Timely issuance of evacuation notices and use of decision-support technology.
- Strong coordination with subject-matter experts and partner agencies.
- Easily accessible information for residents and businesses.
- Creative use of diverse communication tools and platforms for public messaging.
- Proactive collaboration and outreach with community partners before and during disasters.
- Year-round coordination, communication and collaboration among partners.
- Real-time EOC coordination with liaisons within the EOC during storms.
- Efficient logistical operations.
- Robust pre-season planning with Mass Care partners.
- Extensive collaboration with county staff and partners in and out of the EOC.
- Providing essential support for Evacuation Center operations.
- Organizational collaboration for an efficient damage assessment process.
- Recovery partnerships support with state, federal and non-governmental agencies.
- Unified, multi-jurisdictional response operations.
- Effective debris operations management across multiple incidents.
- Use of technology to monitor infrastructure and prioritize repairs.
- Use of crisis stabilization and mental health teams to provide support to impacted residents.
- Strategic staffing within the EOC Logistics Section.
- Effective resource management and coordination.
- Timely procurement of critical resources, repairs, and services.
- Efficient use of eRole staff and mutual aid teams across multiple incidents.
- Extended support for long-term operations in the EOC.



*County Public Utilities response,
Hurricane Milton*



*Fire and Law Enforcement coordination, Hurricane
Milton*



*Communications PIO video
recording, Hurricane Milton*

Enhancement Observations

During the AAR process, the following suggested enhancements were identified as potential actions for the County to consider for implementation (each observation has one or more enhancement recommendations included in the *Areas of Success and Enhancement Recommendations* section):

1. Enhancing coordination and communication with municipal partners.
2. Improve public messaging regarding evacuation levels and storm surge risk.
3. Clarify Staffing Unit roles and streamline activation processes.
4. Streamline EOC staffing operations and consider alternate disaster staffing solutions.
5. Evaluate internal and external training opportunities.
6. Re-evaluate departmental Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs).
7. Refine coordination between EOC staff and the County Operations Liaison Team (COLT) related to planning functions.
8. Evaluate the need for additional pre-positioned contracts for Public Assistance Category A and B work.
9. Continue planning for air and marine disaster operations.
10. Further explore ways to educate the public on potential storm surge risk.
11. Evaluate the processes and technology used to share situational awareness during EOC activations.
12. Review the processes and procedures related to Volunteers and Donations (ESF 15).
13. Continue to improve multi-jurisdictional coordination within the Emergency Services Branch.
14. Enhance its disaster communications with the lodging and tourism sectors.
15. Continue to improve coordination with county departments during disaster response and recovery operations.
16. Evaluate and enhance disaster debris management operations.
17. Further evaluate the use of space at the EOC to better support activations.
18. Continue to enhance mass care capabilities.
19. Develop plans for post-impact sheltering.
20. Evaluate areas for infrastructure resilience improvement.
21. Review and enhance EOC Logistics and Finance/Administration functions.
22. Expand logistical field operations capabilities.

Incident Overview

The 2024 Atlantic hurricane season was forecasted to have above-normal activity, with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) predicting 17 to 25 named storms (winds of 39 mph or higher), eight to 13 hurricanes (74 mph winds or higher), and four to seven major hurricanes (Category 3 and above; winds of 111 mph or higher). According to NOAA, the average season produces 14 named storms, seven hurricanes and three major hurricanes.

June 1 to Nov. 30, 2024, there were 18 named storms, including 11 hurricanes and five major hurricanes. Three hurricanes, Debby, Helene, and Milton, impacted Florida, with Hurricane Milton making direct landfall on Siesta Key, in Sarasota County, as a Category 3 hurricane. Though Sarasota County was outside of the forecast cone for Hurricanes Debby and Helene, both storms brought significant impacts to the County. Within just 65 days, the EOC was activated for three powerful hurricanes, underscoring the demands placed on county staff and emergency management teams.

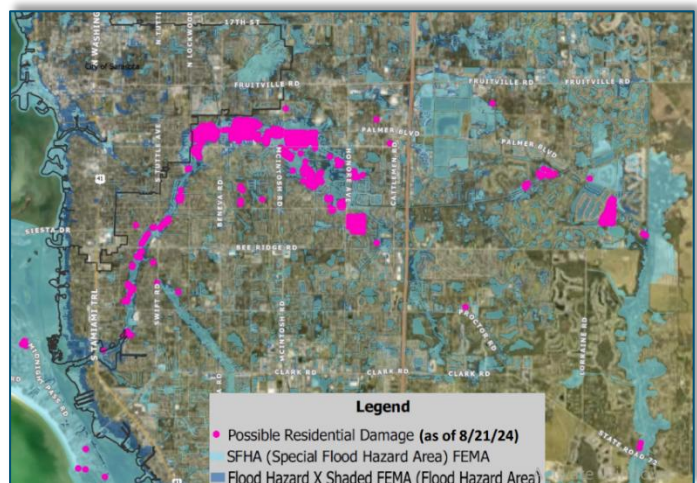
Hurricane Debby – Aug. 5, 2024



Hurricane Debby Radar Imagery

The hurricane's outer bands stalled over the County, producing 16.98 in. of rainfall in less than 48 hours, the highest rainfall recorded in the state from this storm. Significant flooding occurred in the northern part of the County, primarily within the predicted floodplain areas. Some neighborhoods had not experienced significant flooding in recent history since being developed with the current land uses. This was compounded by the above-average rainy season.

Hurricane Debby made landfall in Steinhatchee, FL, on Aug. 5, 2024, as a Category 1 hurricane. Its eyewall passed approximately 100 miles offshore from Sarasota County before making landfall in the Big Bend region. At the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ), sustained winds reached 46 mph, with gusts up to 64 mph.



Map of possible Residential Damage from Hurricane Debby, overlaid with FEMA's Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA)

The Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Task Force from Region 6 (TF6) staged south of Sarasota County awaiting deployment further north, where landfall was expected. After learning about the Sarasota County flooding, TF6 assisted local first responders with wellness checks and evacuations. Some residents requested evacuation from their neighborhoods and were transported to higher ground. Over the next two days, three additional USAR teams joined the response efforts

A post-impact shelter was opened at Suncoast Technical College in Sarasota for one night before transitioning to Woodmere Park in Venice, which sheltered 27 residents. The county activated an emergency vendor contract to support shelter staffing. Sarasota County evacuation center staff remained onsite to ensure continued responsibility for the County shelter protocols. On Aug. 11, 2024, the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) deployed a Multi-Agency Shelter Transition Team (MASTT), which arrived the next day and began casework and referrals. The shelter at Woodmere closed on Aug. 18, with follow-up case management coordinated through Sarasota County Health and Human Services on Aug. 21 and Aug. 24, 2024, to ensure that clients' needs were met.



Local First Responders and members of the Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams working jointly to evacuate residents in the aftermath of Hurricane Debby



Supply tents at the Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) following Hurricane Debby

In partnership with FDEM, the County opened a Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) providing local and state resources to approximately 600 impacted residents. This site was later designated as a FEMA Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) following the federal disaster declaration for Hurricane Debby. It continued to serve impacted residents when the County was declared for Hurricanes Helene and Milton. The EOC coordinated community recovery efforts, including distributing flood clean-up kits, food, water, fans, baby supplies, dehumidifiers and storage bins. Comfort stations with portable showers, bathrooms and laundry services were deployed to flooded and affected areas. The County partnered with nonprofit and faith-based organizations to distribute supplies, offer resources and assess the unmet needs of the community. FDEM deployed a Medical Unit to heavily impacted areas as well as Capacity Path crisis stabilization teams to provide mental health services for residents.

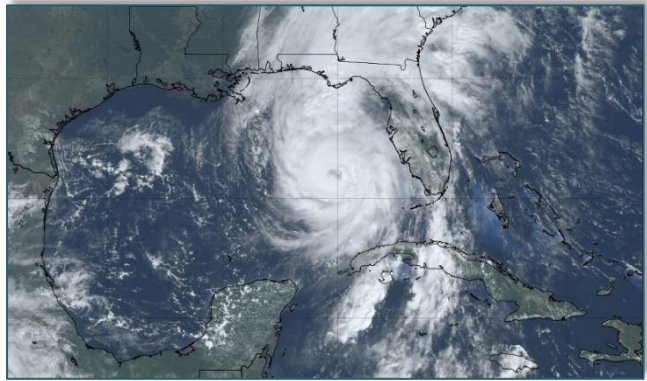


Flooding in the Celery Fields following Hurricane Debby

Hurricane Debby caused an estimated \$57.9 million in damage to 1,047 residences and an estimated \$49.7 million in public assistance costs to the County (e.g., emergency work, infrastructure repairs and debris removal) and resulted in the removal of more than 11,000 cubic yards of debris.

Hurricane Helene – Sept. 26, 2024

Helene made landfall in Perry, FL on Sept. 26, 2024, as a Category 4 hurricane. Hurricane Helene followed a similar path as Hurricane Debby, with the eyewall remaining offshore but outer bands still causing significant coastal flooding and storm surge that impacted homes and businesses near the waterfront. Helene was in the 90th percentile of hurricanes for the area, as the wind field extended over 400 miles from the eye of the storm, bringing sustained winds of 44 mph and gusts of 64 mph recorded at the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport (SRQ). The size of Helene's wind field exacerbated storm surge amounts, which caused the majority of the damage in the County. The area around the Venice Fishing Pier measured 5.71 ft. above Mean Higher High Water (MHHW) of storm surge.



Hurricane Helene Satellite Imagery



Damage to South Jetty area (Venice), Post Hurricane Helene

The County issued evacuation notices to residents in Level A, mobile/manufactured homes, and boats in advance of Helene's anticipated impacts. These notices included 70,906 residences and just over 82,000 individuals (according to ESRI's business analyst data, 2024). The County opened and operated 14 hurricane evacuation centers, which provided shelter for 411 evacuees and their pets. Breeze Transit provided transportation to the general population evacuation centers and medically dependent evacuation centers (MDEC). When the storm passed, the County transitioned their evacuation centers to two post-impact shelters located at Colonial Oaks Park (general population) and Longwood Park (MDEC).

The EOC Logistics Section deployed shelter wrap-around services (i.e., portable showers, restrooms, laundry trailers). All Faiths Food Bank delivered snacks, water, and heater meals to the evacuation centers and post-impact shelters. Non-profit agencies such as The Salvation Army, World Central Kitchen and Operation Barbeque provided disaster feeding stations in the community. The County provided much-needed flood relief and clean-up supplies to residents through five neighborhood points of distribution (NPODs), located in the areas of Siesta Key, Longboat Key, Nokomis, Venice, and Englewood. The State EOC deployed the Florida National Guard to assist with the staffing of some of the distribution sites.



The County and its partners providing disaster relief to residents affected by Hurricane Helene



Sand pushed on to Longboat Key from Hurricane Helene

Hurricane Helene was recorded as the seventh costliest hurricane in U.S. history by NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information (NCEI). In Sarasota County, residential and commercial property damage estimates exceeded \$1.1 billion, with 7,644 residential and 5,066 commercial properties damaged by Helene. The storm cost the County over \$43 million in repairs to public infrastructure, debris removal, and emergency work. Helene pushed massive amounts of sand onto coastal properties and into residential homes that had to be cleared along with debris. County debris contractors were only able to collect 261 cubic yards of debris, due to the limited time between Helene and Milton.

Hurricane Milton – Oct. 9, 2024

On Oct. 9, 2024, less than two weeks after Hurricane Helene, Hurricane Milton made landfall near Siesta Key, FL, as a Category 3 major hurricane with estimated wind speeds of 115 mph. Milton was the first storm to make landfall in Sarasota County since 1944. The storm brought storm surge inundation 6-9 ft above ground level (AGL) from Venice south to Boca Grande, with an isolated peak near 10 ft. AGL estimated at the southern end of Manasota Key. Rainfall was generally 4-6 in. throughout the County with isolated pockets above 9 in.



Damage to Siesta Beach, Post Hurricane Milton

In advance of Hurricane Milton's arrival, Sarasota County issued evacuation notices to Levels A, B, and C, including mobile/manufactured homes and boats. The evacuation area contained more than



Hurricane Milton Press Conference - October 8, 2024

160,000 residences housing more than 235,000 individuals (according to ESRI's business analyst data, 2024). This is the largest evacuation in the County's history. The County opened and operated 13 hurricane evacuation centers, which provided shelter for 9,013 evacuees and their pets. Riverview High School was not utilized as an evacuation center for Hurricane Milton due to the National Hurricane Center's storm surge inundation forecast, which indicated potential for flooding to occur around the facility.

Storm surge and hurricane-force winds from Milton resulted in significant and widespread damage across the County, with the most significant impacts experienced from Venice south through Englewood. Storm damage impacted homes, businesses, natural resources, and infrastructure. Several parts of roadways along the coastline on Casey Key, Manasota Key, and Caspersen Beach were washed out and/or blocked by debris. Services were interrupted across all sectors, including water, wastewater, communications, transportation, and power.



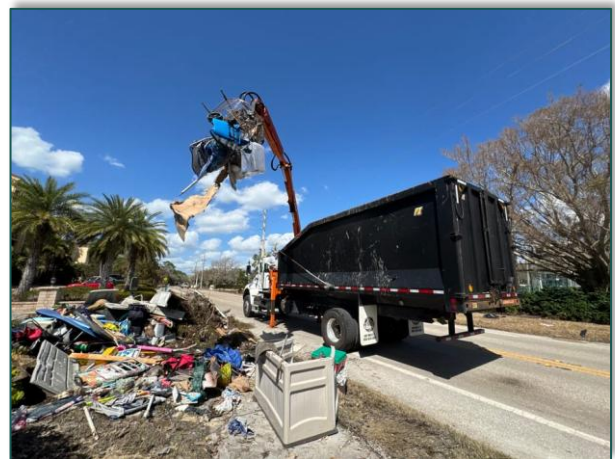
Damage to Casey Key Road, Post Hurricane Milton



Comfort Stations for impacted residents, post Hurricane Milton

Most residents were able to return home shortly after the storm passed. The County continued to operate shelters to support the 124 evacuees who were not able to return home immediately. The County provided supplies to residents in need through six NPODs in downtown Sarasota, Siesta Key, Longboat Key, Nokomis, Venice, and North Port. The County also provided three comfort stations with laundry and showering facilities for residents in the most impacted areas.

Damage estimates from Hurricane Milton to residences and commercial properties alone exceed \$600 million, with 9,649 residential and 1,120 commercial properties damaged by the powerful storm. The County Public Assistance costs for infrastructure repairs, debris removal, emergency work, and protective measures are expected to exceed \$225 million. Debris management after Hurricane Milton required a significant effort. The County collected over 2.4 million cubic yards of storm debris, including displaced sand, vegetative matter, household goods, and construction and demolition materials following the storm. The County met the deadline issued by the Governor's Executive Order to complete the debris pick-up within 90 days. The County partnered with FDEM to coordinate the removal of approximately 7,200 cubic yards of waterway debris, including derelict vessels.



Hurricane Milton Debris Collection - October 12, 2024



Storm Surge damage to homes on Manasota Key, post Hurricane Milton

2024 Hurricane Costs and Damages*

Debby

\$58M Residential / 1,047 Properties

No significant reporting on commercial damage

\$49.7M Public Assistance

Helene

\$788M Residential / 7,644 Properties

\$317M Commercial / 5,066 Properties

\$43.8M Public Assistance

Milton

\$446M Residential / 9,649 Properties

\$164M Commercial / 1,120 Properties

\$227.9M Public Assistance

Total for the Season

\$1.29B Residential/ 18,340 Properties

\$481M Commercial/ 6,186 Properties

\$321M Public Assistance

**The data was collected from unincorporated Sarasota County, City of North Port, Town of Long Boat Key, and City of Venice. City of Sarasota provided residential data only.*

Areas of Success and Enhancement Recommendations

This section provides an analysis on areas of success and best practices, as well as program areas that the County can review to enhance their ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters. This analysis is organized to align with Core Capabilities under the National Preparedness Goal (NPG). The NPG provides a common framework for local, state, and federal agencies to consider and increase their capabilities. Each observation and set of recommendations are grouped under the corresponding Core Capability. Items and Core Capabilities are *not* organized in order of priority.

The following Core Capabilities have been identified and presented in this analysis:

NPG Core Capability	FEMA Definition
Planning	Conduct a systematic process engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and/or tactical-level approaches to meet defined objectives.
Public Information and Warning	Deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community through the use of clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available, as appropriate.
Situational Assessment	Provide all decision makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response.
Operational Coordination	Establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities.
Mass Care Services	Provide life-sustaining and human services to the affected population, to include hydration, feeding, sheltering, temporary housing, evacuee support, reunification, and distribution of emergency supplies.
Infrastructure Systems	Stabilize critical infrastructure functions, minimize health and safety threats, and efficiently restore and revitalize systems and services to support a viable, resilient community.
Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Deliver essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. Synchronize logistics capabilities and enable the restoration of impacted supply chains.

I. Planning

The Planning Core Capability includes the ability of the County to conduct a systematic process of engaging the whole community as appropriate in the development of executable strategic, operational, and tactical-level approaches to meet defined objectives. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the County's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Planning, Staffing Unit, and Finance and Administration Section

The County works year-round to coordinate disaster planning and training activities with its municipal and agency representatives who report to the EOC during an activation. EOC staff noted that this effective year-round communication and collaboration resulted in a more efficient and well-coordinated response and enabled them to prepare alternate liaisons who could report to the EOC in their absence.

The following activities were EOC planning areas of success and best practices:

- Communicating with municipal and agency counterparts before activation through Flash Reports, weather briefings, and updates from the Florida Division of Emergency Management.
- Assigning an engaged and effective EOC Liaison Officer as part of the Command Staff. Partners found it helpful to have an identified, proactive, and helpful point of contact to direct questions to while inside and outside of the EOC.
- Providing EOC training for liaisons before the hurricane season, as well as meeting individually with newly identified liaisons to address specific questions or concerns.
- Having dedicated seats for liaisons and agency representatives. Partners found it helpful to be physically present within the EOC and felt that they were able to get questions answered quickly and maintain situational awareness during the evolving incidents.
- Providing a resource request training before activation.
- Developing a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for every county Department before the 2024 hurricane season.



Sarasota County EOC – Situation Room Signage

Throughout the season, EOC Finance and Administration Section staff operated with a positive mindset, fostering collaboration in and out of the section to achieve results. This level of teamwork and flexibility was necessary to process orders for large and expensive repairs. In addition to this, the County's prioritization of pre-activation contracts and staff of experienced procurement professionals aided in the efficiency of securing resources.

The County utilizes its employees to staff many essential activation roles, and the management of these personnel required support during the 2024 hurricane season. Some areas of success and best practices include:

- The Staffing Unit moved from the Planning Section to the Finance/Admin Section.
- Human Resources staff added to the Staffing Unit before Hurricane Milton's landfall.
- Staffing Unit coordination with sections and county departments to augment staff and allow them to rest between activation assignments.
- Providing ad hoc training to mutual aid EOC staffing resources to acclimate the individuals and teams to the county.
- Closure of county facilities before the arrival of tropical storm winds to allow employees to conduct disaster activities (e.g., staffing the EOC, setting up evacuation centers, running sandbag operations, securing government buildings) to have time to complete these tasks and prepare their homes and families. Employees needed an extra day of preparation, especially with back-to-back storms.

Observation #1: The County should consider enhancing coordination and communication with municipal partners.

Sarasota County incorporates its municipal partners into the EOC, allocating space for liaisons and including partners in key meetings such as the twice daily City/Constitutional Call. The City/Constitutional Call is hosted by the County, and includes municipal partners, hospital system representatives, and representatives from Sarasota County Constitutional Offices (i.e., Supervisor of Elections, Clerk of Court, Sheriff's Office, School District, Tax Collector). This call enables the County to make contact with its community partners and share information from the EOC, assess ongoing issues, and gather information on unmet needs. Currently, the County does not have a specific forum for City Managers to meet with the County Administrator. Additionally, with hundreds of resources deployed within the community for Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton, there were times when municipalities did not have full visibility on the movement of resources within their jurisdiction, especially around demobilization.

Enhancement Recommendations

1. The County should consider developing a process to ensure that municipalities are informed of decisions to demobilize resources within their jurisdiction (Goal: Sept 2025).
2. The County should consider creating a Municipal Manager/County Administrator call for the EOC Activation Schedule (Goal: June 2025).

Observation #2: The County should consider improving public messaging regarding evacuation levels and storm surge risk.

Sarasota County uses a web-based tool branded “Know Your Level” where residents and business owners can view which evacuation level their property resides in (Levels A-E). Many individual properties fall into multiple evacuation levels, which can confuse the public when evacuation notices are issued. Similarly, some subdivisions have neighboring parcels in different evacuation levels, due to differences in property elevation. This can be misinterpreted by the public and increase challenges for responders on the ground who may be assisting with evacuations. Having a clear identification of parcels included in the evacuation notice would be beneficial to this process. The EOC provided first responders with language to reinforce evacuation notices. While utilizing first responders was an effective communication tool, having guidelines and templates available pre-disaster would save time in future emergencies.

Enhancement Recommendations

3. The County should consider providing clarity on evacuation levels (Goal: October 2025).
4. The County should consider creating guidelines for first responder assistance with public evacuation notifications (Goal: October 2025).

Observation #3: The County should consider clarifying Staffing Unit roles and streamline activation processes.

During the 2024 hurricane season, the county recognized the need to add more HR support to the Staffing Unit, due to the complexities associated with staffing an activated EOC with county employees who also have full-time positions in other departments. By Hurricane Milton, this unit was moved from the Planning Section to the Finance/Administration Section, fully integrating with HR. The realignment of the Staffing Unit mid-season was necessary to effectively handle the back-to-back activations, but it did not grant enough time for the county to formally outline the specific roles and responsibilities of the unit. In the case of activation notifications, efforts were duplicated as departments and Emergency Management staff were undertaking activation notifications by various methods, including telephone calls and Everbridge notifications. During activations, Section Chiefs

and staff from the Mass Care Branch requested additional county employees for the EOC and evacuation centers via telephone, adding to an already full workload. The Staffing Unit was not utilized for activation notifications, as procedures had not been established for them to take on that role.

Enhancement Recommendations

5. The County should consider creating a guide, to include Staffing and Emergency Role (eRole) Program roles and responsibilities, request process for staff support, and other critical operational components (Goal: October 2025).
6. The County should consider refining employee activation notification and communication roles and responsibilities between county departments and the Staffing Unit (Goal: October 2025).

Observation #4: The County should consider streamlining EOC staffing operations and consider alternate disaster staffing solutions.

The County utilizes its employees to fill most EOC staffing roles. EOC shifts are generally divided between “A” (day) and “B” (night) shifts, with some sections having more personnel on B shift than others, depending on the needs of the incident. During Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton, there were personnel assigned to B shift who were proportionally less busy than their A shift counterparts. In the Finance/Administration Section, for example, Procurement personnel were staffed overnight, but county procurement was not taking place during that timeframe.



County EOC, Hurricane Milton



Florida Forestry Service Incident Management Team 1, Hurricane Milton

As the needs of the EOC changed and the County worked through the recovery process, departments needed their staff to return to daily operations. This was a challenge through all storms, as continuity of government and EOC operations created competing priorities. Sarasota County experienced challenges with the release of county staff back to their departments, as a written process for EOC staff demobilization was not in place.

As County employees worked multiple storm response and recovery operations during the duration of the hurricane season, augmenting staff capacity was necessary to enable County employees to rest and some to return to their normal work duties. Requesting resources outside of the County became necessary to meet these needs. The County was able to successfully utilize mutual aid resources from the City of North Port, other Florida counties, and from outside of the state via the Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) to augment county staff in the EOC and in the field. The 2024 hurricane season brought the most mutual aid resources that the County had ever requested/received during an activation. The County provided briefings for incoming teams, however, a formalized process to receive mutual aid resources would have been helpful to ensure that the teams are received and acclimated in a consistent manner. Requesting additional staffing allowed the County to ensure that county staff could have rest time and were eventually able to return to their department to continue vital county services for the community. The County should continue utilizing mutual aid resources where appropriate and also consider augmenting staffing through alternative means.

**Jurisdictions deployed to
Sarasota County during the
2024 hurricane season:**

- Charlotte County
- Broward County
- Miami Dade County
- Seminole County
- City of North Port
- Palm Beach County
- Highlands County
- Clay County
- DeSoto County
- State of Colorado
- State of Florida

Enhancement Recommendations

7. The County should consider identifying both internal and external staffing solutions for all phases of disaster (Goal: December 2025).
8. The County should consider developing a process to include the Staffing Unit in the mutual aid resource request process (Goal: August 2025).
9. The County should consider creating an arrival packet for external mutual aid resources and expanding the orientation process (Goal: September 2025).
10. The County should consider creating a demobilization plan to include releasing EOC Staff as soon as reasonable (Goal: October 2025).
11. The County should consider evaluating the positions needed in the EOC for B-shift and reviewing the activities tasked to B-shift positions (Goal: September 2025).

Observation #5: The County should consider evaluating internal and external training opportunities.

Sarasota County EM provided an ad-hoc training session on the County's resource request process before the 2024 hurricane season activations, which was received positively by municipal partners. The County plans to transition to WebEOC for resource request management for the 2025 hurricane season.

The damage assessment process also requires coordination between municipal partners and the County. All partners could benefit from further training on the damage assessment process and platform, to ensure that timely and accurate information is collected in the initial phases of recovery.

The County utilizes a Disaster Daily Log to capture employee activity during a disaster, which must also match employee time entry in the Workday system. Discrepancies in timekeeping create an additional workload for the Finance/Administration Section, who must reconcile the logs and verify hours worked. As this process is only used during disasters, additional training for county employees should increase the accuracy of initial timekeeping and streamline the reconciliation process.

Enhancement Recommendations

12. The County should consider providing WebEOC resource request training and allowing partners opportunities to practice using the system (Goal: July 2025)
13. The County should consider increasing the number of damage assessment meetings and training sessions offered to municipalities (Goal: September 2025)
14. The County should consider finding additional ways to incorporate disaster-specific timekeeping into employee disaster training (Goal: August 2025)

Observation #6: The County should consider re-evaluating departmental Continuity of Operations Plans (COOPs).

Hurricane Milton made landfall near Siesta Key, less than five miles from where the County Administration building is located. The impacts from Milton caused significant damage to the building. The County faced challenges with finding adequate office space for their workforce to return to operations. Every County department had a Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) developed in 2021 and updated in 2024, prior to the hurricane season. These plans identify each department's essential elements to continuing operations before, during and after a disaster. While having the plans in place ahead of impacts was beneficial for some operational components, many of the alternate locations identified within the COOPs were either unusable due to damage from the storms or multiple departments had the same locations identified, creating challenges with space allocation. Many County employees handled daily operations out of the EOC while extended incident response and recovery operations were ongoing. At the time of this report, the County is in the process of constructing multiple new facilities that would create additional workspace or eliminate the need to relocate in the event of a disaster.

Enhancement Recommendation

15. The County should consider reviewing Departmental COOP plans to ensure COOP locations will accommodate all departments and consider new county buildings (Goal: June 2026).

Observation #7: The County should consider refining coordination between EOC staff and the County Operations Liaison Team (COLT) related to planning functions.

Sarasota County previously established COLT to interface with county departments and the EOC during activations. This team provides support to Department Operations Centers (DOCs) on their internal response and recovery efforts, as well as continuity of essential government operations. During the 2024 hurricane season, both COLT and the EOC Planning Section were coordinating information sharing for situational awareness, scheduling and facilitating meetings, and providing documentation management of Incident Action Plans (IAPs) and reports. While each team coordinates with a different audience, there can be confusion with overlapping responsibilities and potential duplication of effort.

Enhancement Recommendation

16. The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities of the EOC Planning Section vs COLT and identify ways to improve synergy (Goal: July 2025).

Observation #8: The County should consider evaluating the need for additional pre-positioned contracts for Public Assistance Category A and B work.

Under FEMA Public Assistance Program, Emergency Work is classified under Category A (debris removal) and Category B (emergency protective measures). Counties are permitted to arrange contracts with vendors to supply services under these categories of work (e.g., debris removal and monitoring services, feeding contracts, emergency staffing, supplies) before a declared incident. During Hurricane Debby, the Logistics Section procured meals multiple times a day. By the time Hurricanes Helene and Milton impacted the county, the EOC team had established feeding contracts, which streamlined the EOC and field feeding operations. Positioning contracts before an incident would enable the county to operate more efficiently, saving time on the procurement process and having a guaranteed vendor for the required services. The County currently has pre-positioned contracts for debris management functions (i.e., hauling and monitoring), disaster feeding, and base camps.

Enhancement Recommendation

17. The County should consider additional pre-positioned contracts for Category A and B work (Goal: October 2025).

Observation #9: The County should consider continuing planning for air and marine operations in disasters.

Large-scale disasters can necessitate the need for additional air and marine assets to assist with emergency response and recovery missions, which require extensive communication and coordination. Before Hurricane Milton, the County had met with partners as part of their pre-hurricane season preparedness activities to discuss plans for these operations during a disaster. As the storm approached, the EOC Operations Section held air ops meetings to discuss coordination among local partner agencies, USAR, and the Florida National Guard. The Section created a multi-jurisdictional air and marine operations search and rescue plan prior to landfall to align agencies' response mission. The EOC also requested an Air Operations Branch Director from the Florida Forestry Service and requested access to FDEM's daily Air Ops calls to ensure connection with the State EOC.

Enhancement Recommendation

18. The County should consider finalizing draft framework for air/marine operations in coordination with local partners and FDEM (Goal: December 2025).

II. Public Information and Warning

The Public Information and Warning Core Capability includes the ability of the County to deliver coordinated, prompt, reliable, and actionable information to the whole community using clear, consistent, accessible, and culturally and linguistically appropriate methods to effectively relay information regarding any threat or hazard, as well as the actions being taken and the assistance being made available. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the County's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Public Information and Outreach

The Sarasota County Communications Department led the public information and outreach efforts from the EOC Joint Information Center (JIC) during the three hurricanes. Their proactive communication strategies and innovative public education efforts were instrumental in minimizing confusion, enhancing preparedness, and supporting recovery for these devastating storms.

The following activities were noted as accomplishments and best practices:

- Multi-platform updates: Provided continuous storm updates across multiple platforms, including social media, emergency alerts, news releases, and live broadcasts. Used innovative platforms such as NextDoor and Ring.
- Targeted evacuation notices: Issued precise and timely alerts, ensuring residents in high-risk areas and communities had clear, actionable guidance. Issued FEMA Integrated Public Alert and Warning System (IPAWS) and Alert Sarasota notifications to issue urgent evacuation alerts.
- Engaged the public in creative ways by taking video footage of key county staff in the EOC and the field to share information with the public on preparedness, response, and recovery efforts throughout the storm events with consistent faces. These videos also included sharing National Hurricane Center Potential Storm Surge Flooding Maps with the public to communicate the severity of potential storm impacts to Sarasota County.
- Created a centralized online portal providing accurate, real-time updates on post-storm hazards, including flooding, debris removal, and power restoration timelines across multiple platforms of social media, web, and traditional media.



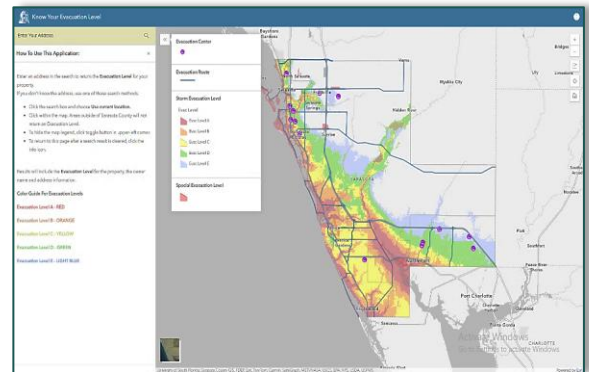
Facebook Live video showing storm surge inundation maps, Hurricane Milton

<https://www.scgov.net/government/emergency-services/hurricane-recovery-7270>

- Completed over 26,000 media engagements, including responding to queries and providing on-camera, phone and other recorded interviews. Due to the focus on landfall in Sarasota County, the JIC coordinated dozens of news media interviews with local, national, and even international outlets.
- The 311 Call Center processed 58,349 calls from the public.
- Issued 75 county emergency newsletter updates, cumulatively reaching over 888,000 contacts.
- Maintained a Public Information Officer (PIO) network consisting of municipalities and media contacts, which allowed for shared situational awareness. Municipalities utilized information provided by the JIC on their websites and social platforms, which resulted in communicating with one voice and consistent messaging across agency platforms.



311 Call Center, Hurricane Milton



Sarasota County's "Know Your Level" Web Tool

Additionally, Sarasota County utilizes an ArcGIS dashboard tool branded "Know Your Level," which received over 2 million views during the 2024 hurricane season.

Observation #10: The County should further explore ways to educate the public on potential storm surge risk.

Storm surge is a potential impact of tropical cyclone events and carries significant risk to life and property and is the leading cause of hurricane-related fatalities. Storm size, intensity, and forward speed are all factors that affect the amount of storm surge, even in areas that are outside of where the storm makes landfall. Some residents had challenges understanding the complexities of storm surge and the potential impact to their homes and families. Members of the public who have previously not experienced significant storm surge flooding may not perceive risk and therefore may be reluctant to evacuate if under an evacuation notice. It is generally understood that this is not a unique issue to Sarasota County and is a challenge throughout the state of Florida.

Enhancement Recommendation

19. The County should consider enhancing its public communications strategy for storm surge risk using NHC products and visual displays (Goal: September 2025).

III. Situational Assessment

The Situational Assessment Core Capability includes the ability to provide all decision-makers with decision-relevant information regarding the nature and extent of the hazard, any cascading effects, and the status of the response. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the county's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Situational Awareness

The EOC Planning Section led the effort to provide situational awareness to the EOC staff and partner agencies. Some best practices and areas of success include:

- Following a daily EOC Activation Schedule, which assisted with meeting coordination and operational efficiency. Strict adherence to the schedule provided stability and certainty on situational updates and planning efforts.
- Use of the EOC Situation Room as a central hub for sharing situational awareness through briefings and weather calls with EOC staff and partner agencies.
- Using various technology platforms (e.g., Geographic Information Systems (GIS), Smartsheet dashboards, CrisisTrack damage assessment tool, Microsoft Office Teams).
- Maximizing EOC displays to project updated information in multiple locations across the room allowed EOC staff to share a common operating picture.

The County Planning and Development Services (PDS) Department led the damage assessment and disaster permitting process for the 2024 hurricane season. Some best practices and areas of success include:

- Pre-rostered and trained 45 damage assessment teams before the hurricane season.
- Development of a Substantial Damage Checklist, utilizing FDEM and FEMA resources.
- Preparation and deployment of equipment prior to the storm impacts, resulting in a quick deployment of damage assessment teams (e.g., all residential damage assessments were completed in only 12 days between Hurricanes Helene and Milton).
- Referencing information from 911 and non-profits to prioritize assessment areas and coordinating with the GIS team to capture and share damage information with partners.
- Utilizing FDEM 1206 substantial damage staffing resources to assist with completing 3,448 substantial damage assessments of residences in unincorporated areas of the county.



Permitting, Sarasota County BOB Building

- Modifying processes to allow for the increase of disaster repair permits. PDS processed 5,746 storm-related permits in eight months.
- Creating guidance and informational handouts on damage assessment and substantial damage for the public.
- Provided in-person pre-season damage assessment training to county and municipal damage assessment teams.

Observation #11: The County should consider evaluating the processes and technology used to share situational awareness during EOC activations.

As Tactical First-In Teams (TFIT) were assessing areas within the county immediately following Hurricanes Helene and Milton's passing, that information was fed into the EOC via radios. First responders in the field were also relaying information back into the EOC, along with the incoming data from the damage assessment teams via their damage assessment system. There were challenges trying to encapsulate this information seamlessly into one visual format. The County should explore ways to streamline this information collection and develop a way to display the incoming data in a mapping system that can also be shared within the EOC. Additionally, the damage assessment teams reported challenges with uploading information and calculating substantial damage using their damage assessment system.

Across the 2024 hurricane season, the County held daily briefings from the Situation Room of the EOC, bringing together Department Operations Centers (DOCs) and municipalities virtually alongside the EOC staff. These briefings, conducted by the Command and General Staff, were overall well received by partners and EOC staff. The County should consider evaluating the briefing process for continuous improvement and potential efficiencies in briefing length.

Enhancement Recommendations

20. The County should consider developing a process for a more coordinated data sharing process between TFIT, the Emergency Services Branch, the Infrastructure Branch, and the Recovery Branch and create a mapping system for broader situational awareness (Goal: April 2026).
21. The County should consider assessing its current damage assessment tool and make recommendations for future damage assessment software (Goal: December 2025).
22. The County should consider standardizing the EOC data collection schedule and display process (Goal: July 2025).
23. The County should consider further streamlining the EOC Briefing format (Goal: July 2025).

IV. Operational Coordination

The Operational Coordination Core Capability includes the ability of the county to establish and maintain a unified and coordinated operational structure and process that appropriately integrates all critical stakeholders and supports the execution of core capabilities. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the County's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Response and Recovery Operations

Response Operations

Emergency Services providers are critical during the response phase following hurricane impacts. Throughout the 2024 hurricane season, the Emergency Services Branch coordinated life safety missions throughout the county. The following are areas of success and best practices:

- Pre-landfall communication with Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) teams, enabling rapid deployment when flooding presented.
- A total of four Type 3 USAR teams joined the Hurricane Debby response operations, which included over 500 high-water rescues and evacuation assistance.
- Following Hurricane Helene, dozens of rescues took place with the assistance of one Type 1 and five Type 3 USAR teams.
- Following Hurricane Milton, the County utilized one Type 1 and one Type 3 USAR teams for tactical response operations.
- Partnered with fire and law enforcement agencies for neighborhood evacuation announcements.
- Established multi-jurisdictional unified command for response operations.
- Direct communication between local, state, and federal response teams and the State EOC on projected needs and emergency impacts. This assisted with a proactive approach to response and the completion of mission requests.

Recovery Operations

Sarasota County recognizes the significant impact that hurricanes can have on the community and has aligned the EOC structure to better support recovery functions by building a Recovery Branch in the Operations Section. This enabled the county to coordinate and share situational awareness on damage assessment, volunteer and donations management, and debris management across jurisdictions and through multiple storms. The following are areas of success and best practices:

- Further building and strengthening of relationships between the County and its partners in volunteer organizations and the Sarasota Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD).

- Utilizing pre-established relationships with the COAD, non-profit agencies, and faith-based organizations to leverage resources, facilities for disaster operations, and supplies for the community.
- Coordinating with FDEM to open a Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) following Debby, which eventually transitioned to a Disaster Recovery Center (DRC). Over 13,000 people visited MARC/DRC. Sarasota County had the highest-visited DRC in the State.
- Flexible DRC operations in collaboration with FDEM/FEMA to accommodate the center's relocation multiple times over the six months it was open.
- Providing transportation to the MARC and DRC through Breeze Transit.
- Successfully building and strengthening relationships with ESF 15 volunteer, non-profit, and faith-based partner agencies.
- Bringing volunteer agencies to the EOC for briefings, when applicable.
- Coordination between ESF 15 and the Solid Waste team for specific areas' debris pick-up.
- Integration of COAD personnel within EOC operations.
- Conducting aerial assessments to determine debris estimates.
- Creating flyers for debris pick-up during Hurricane Debby for smaller-scale debris operations targeted to impacted neighborhoods.
- Including Code Enforcement Officer on debris missions to issue Notice of Violations.
- Incorporating debris management vendor support and mutual aid from Miami-Dade County.
- Managing debris operations by dividing the County into zones and sub-zones.
- Augmenting the 311 Call Center with vendor support for debris hotline.
- Developing a 90-day debris plan approved by FDEM.
- Coordinating with FDEM to clear debris and derelict vessels in waterways.
- Requesting assistance from the state to support debris operations on Longboat Key and at county park locations.
- Partnering with law and code enforcement partners to ensure traffic safety and minimize illegal dumping.
- Engaging local businesses and real estate developers to access open land for use as debris management sites as close as possible to impacted neighborhoods.



Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC), Hurricane Debby



Breeze providing transportation to evacuation centers for Hurricane Milton

Observation #12: The County should consider reviewing the processes and procedures related to Volunteers and Donations (ESF 15).

Within the Recovery Branch of the EOC Operations Section, the Volunteers and Donations (ESF 15) Unit interfaces with the Sarasota Community Organizations Active in Disaster (COAD) and Sarasota Long Term Recovery Group (LTRG), along with other volunteer agencies working within the community. This unit worked directly with volunteer and non-profit organizations during the recovery periods, but without a formalized information sharing process, experienced challenges with tracking the progress of the partner agencies' efforts within the community. The unit created a Smartsheet to track agency movement and rely on phone calls to gain information as needs were being met within the community. The County should consider reviewing the processes and procedures of the Volunteers and Donations (ESF 15) Unit, to better define how information is collected and shared between volunteer and non-profit agencies working within the county. Establishing a formalized process would enable the County to maintain situational awareness of non-profit and volunteer activity and better identify and communicate unmet needs.

Enhancement Recommendations

- 24. The County should consider clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Volunteers and Donations/ESF 15 Unit (Goal: August 2025).
- 25. The County should consider developing a process to gather information for ESF 15 agency activity and exchange situational awareness (Goal: August 2025).
- 26. The County should consider creating a process to connect with non-profit and volunteer groups in the field (Goal: October 2025).

Observation #13: The County should consider continuing to improve multi-jurisdictional coordination within the Emergency Services Branch.

Within the County, there are six agencies for fire/EMS (i.e., SCFD, City of Venice Fire, North Port Fire, Long Boat Key Fire, Englewood Fire District, Nokomis Fire Volunteer Fire), and seven law enforcement agencies (i.e., the County Sheriff's Office, City of Sarasota Police, City of Venice Police, City of North Port Police, Town of Longboat Key Police, School District Safety and Security, Sarasota Memorial Health) that coordinate during hurricanes and other large-scale events. During the 2024 hurricane season, the County also coordinated with state response partners such as the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), and Florida Forest Service (FFS).

During the response to Hurricane Debby, the Sarasota County Fire Department Tactical Operations supervised response out of the EOC during search and rescue (SAR) operations. Having these additional fire personnel at the EOC was helpful to coordinate directly on SAR, however it was a departure from the traditional Fire Department Operations Center (DOC) model, which included operating from an off-site location.

FDLE houses the Regional Law Enforcement Coordination Team (RLECT) from its headquarters in Ft Myers, FL. The RLECT provides support for law enforcement teams deploying to assist impacted jurisdictions. Some EOC staff were unfamiliar with the full spectrum of RLECT support services.



County EOC Briefing, Hurricane Debby

Some operations involve multi-jurisdictional partners, especially involving bridge and/or barrier island closures. Multiple bridges within the county have geographic jurisdictional divides (e.g., North Bridge to Siesta Key - the bridge is owned by the state, the road is owned by the county, and the bridge resides within the City of Sarasota's jurisdictional boundaries). Each jurisdiction needs to be involved in the efforts to close and/or reopen.

Enhancement Recommendations

- 27.** The County should consider ensuring staff working in the EOC are aware of other operational teams that may be working within the building and clarifying roles and responsibilities (Goal: August 2025).
- 28.** The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities between the EOC Emergency Services Branch and Regional Law Enforcement Coordination Team (RLECT) and law enforcement agencies (Goal: October 2025).
- 29.** The County should consider reviewing and updating the process for barrier island closure/re-entry (Goal: October 2025).

Observation #14: The County should consider enhancing its disaster communications with the lodging and tourism sectors.

As a coastal Florida county, Sarasota County sees nearly 3 million travelers in a year, with over 85,000 seasonal residents during the winter months. The County's Alert Sarasota County program allows residents to sign up for emergency and disaster communications but requires an address within unincorporated county or one of the four municipalities to register. Visitors from outside of Florida may not be aware of the dangerous impacts of hurricanes and may not be signed up to receive alerts and warnings from the County. Those staying in waterfront properties along the coast are especially vulnerable to storm impacts, and it is unclear if hurricane-related information is passed on to tourists during the booking process or if reservations are cancelled in advance of incoming hurricanes.

Enhancement Recommendation

30. The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities regarding communication and coordination with lodging and tourism industry pre, during, and post storm, to include home-sharing organizations (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO) (Goal: March 2026).

Observation #15: The County should consider continuing to improve coordination with county departments during disaster response and recovery operations.

The COLT's primary responsibility is to interface with County departments during EOC activations and provide support to DOCs for their internal response and recovery actions, as well as continuity of government planning. During the 2024 hurricane season, COLT collected DOC Incident Action Plans and held conference calls to share information. The County should continue to improve this coordination between the EOC and County departments and evaluate ways to enhance reporting and tracking of DOC activities and unmet needs.

The Finance/Administration Section has deadlines to provide damage estimates to FEMA for reimbursement consideration. Some departments were submitting damages to the Finance/Administration Section within days of the deadline. Having this information earlier would be beneficial for planning purposes and provide more time for the Finance/Administration Section to prepare their reports for FEMA submission.

Enhancement Recommendations

31. The County should consider evaluating ways to enhance reporting and tracking of Department Operations Center actions, needs, and status (Goal: August 2025).
32. The County should consider providing training to departments on the damage reporting process (Goal: September 2025).

Observation #16: The County should consider evaluating and enhancing disaster debris management operations.

Disaster debris management posed significant challenges during 2024. Effective and safe collection of storm debris required creative and well-coordinated solutions. Three significant storms impacted the County in a span of less than 10 weeks, each leaving damage and debris in the affected areas. Additionally, Hurricane Milton arrived only 13 days after Hurricane Helene. Helene brought 6 feet of storm surge, destroying structures and leaving storm debris scattered across the barrier islands and coastal neighborhoods. Cleanup continued as Hurricane Milton approached. The County and municipalities worked right up to the last minute to minimize the further spread of debris and to keep displaced materials from becoming projectiles.

Solid Waste led the residential and commercial debris removal operations and coordinated with the JIC to share information to the public. Emergency Management, along with vendor support, assisted with coordinating the waterway debris removal coordination with the state. Public Works coordinated waterway removal from upland waterways. General Services and Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources coordinated debris removal from county facilities and parks. Coordination occurred across the various agencies involved in debris operations. A singular lead for debris management would have been beneficial to assist with oversight of all areas of the operation.

Enhancement Recommendations

- 33.** The County should consider reviewing traffic management mobility plans for post-storm disaster operations (Goal: October 2025).
- 34.** The County should consider reviewing and refining the Right of Entry (ROE) process, including receiving ROE forms pre-season, and developing a pre-season outreach plan (January 2026).
- 35.** The County should consider identifying additional land for debris management sites (Goal: June 2026).
- 36.** The County should consider developing a debris management strategy to shift the debris management responsibility from the department level to EOC operations to include all debris operations (i.e., waterway, county property, residential/commercial) (Goal: September 2025).

Areas of Success: EOC Utilization

Sarasota County has a robust EOC, capable of withstanding up to 253 mph winds and can operate for 72 hours without outside intervention. The building includes redundancies for heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, uninterruptible power supply (UPS) system backup, and full building generators. During daily operations the building houses county Emergency Management, Public Safety Communications, the 311 Contact Center, and the 911 Call Center, all of whom add additional staff to the building during activations. There are 96 seats in the Situation Room, with additional seating in the five breakout rooms. The County EOC hosts liaisons from the Town of Longboat Key in one breakout room during activations, while the others are used for EOC Section staff.

Throughout the 2024 hurricane season, the County EOC hosted more than 300 individuals, comprised of county staff, deployed mutual aid resources, partner agencies, municipalities, state and federal personnel, and non-governmental agency staff. The following includes best practices and areas of success related to this monumental activity:

- Housing and feeding personnel throughout the response and initial recovery phases of all three activations.
- Well-trained, patient, and empathetic EOC Check-In Team working with personnel on bunk assignments and access badges.
- Improving personnel accountability by enforcing the need for EOC staff to process through check-in.
- Using an updated bunking process that more effectively allowed EOC staff to choose their bunk and move around the bunk with a more efficient layout.
- EOC Check-In Team's close coordination with the Logistics Section to provide staffing numbers for EOC feeding operations and coordination with the County Sheriff's Office to provide security at the entrances to the EOC.
- Maximizing every available space within the EOC to host breakout sessions and meetings.
- Converting open space in the Emergency Management offices into an additional conference room mid-season.

Observation #17: The County should consider further evaluating the use of space at the EOC to better support activations.

Space was at a premium during the 2024 hurricane season activations, with county staff utilizing every available room in the building for meetings, briefings, general workspace, and bunking. Following Hurricane Milton, many county departments and administration were working out of the EOC due to the damage to the County Administration Building. The EOC Check-In Team facilitated meeting space reservations using any available space within the building, including staff offices and the cafeteria.

Aside from meetings and briefings, space is needed for bunking within the EOC. Currently, the county utilizes a multi-purpose room for most bunking, as well as office spaces and ancillary locations throughout the building. During the 2024 season, the 311 staff did not have a separate location for bunking and instead had to sleep in the 311 Contact Center.

Enhancement Recommendations

- 37.** The County should consider evaluating additional space within the EOC for bunking (Goal: August 2025).
- 38.** The County should consider formalizing room coordination and process for assignments with the EOC Check-In Team (Goal: July 2025).
- 39.** The County should consider revisiting the EOC parking plan to ensure parking availability for all EOC, 311, and 911 staff (Goal: June 2025).
- 40.** The County should consider evaluating ways to increase physical space for operational coordination at the EOC (Goal: June 2029).



Sarasota County staff working throughout the EOC spaces during Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton

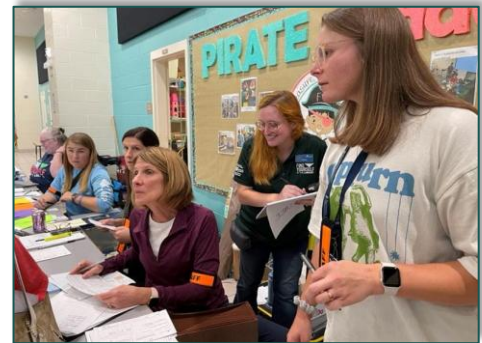
V. Mass Care Services

The Mass Care Services Core Capability includes the ability of the county to provide life-sustaining and human services to the affected population, to include hydration, feeding, sheltering, temporary housing, evacuee support, reunification, and distribution of emergency supplies. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the county's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Mass Care

Sarasota County Emergency Management manages the County's Disaster Mass Care Program and coordinates the Mass Care Branch during EOC activations. The following activities in preparation of the 2024 hurricane season and based on lessons learned in past activations, were noted as areas of success:

- Coordinated with partners at the Sarasota County School District and the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) to do pre-season walkthroughs of all evacuation centers, familiarizing staff with the facilities and fellow personnel.
- Collaborated with FDOH on enhancements to the medically dependent call-down process, which saw additions of new staff, and FDOH-led training and call-downs before the storms.
- Worked effectively with partners to transport residents to evacuation centers, provide vendor staffing augmentation in the evacuation centers, and support the movement of oxygen to medically dependent evacuation centers.
- Stationed Emergency Medical Services (EMS) at each facility during lockdown.
- Implemented new radio communication protocols to ensure consistent communication with evacuation center staff, providing guidance and sharing situational awareness during the storms. This also allowed for more frequent updates of evacuee census data.
- Implemented new Mass Care Branch accommodations in a dedicated EOC Conference Room, enabling a more collaborative process in tackling challenges with evacuation center operations as they arose.
- Activated a Disaster Feeding Unit within the Mass Care Branch to assist with the coordination of



County staff receive evacuees during Hurricane Milton



Food being prepared for distribution to residents following Hurricane Milton

feeding operations for the public. Over 81,227 meals were served to impacted communities in the County following Hurricane Milton.

- Utilized the Centers for Disease Control's Social Vulnerability Index for assessments and canvassing areas of need and tracking community feeding operations.

Observation #18: The County should consider continuing to enhance its mass care capabilities.

The County's EM and Mass Care teams have made significant improvements to the Mass Care Program, incorporating valuable feedback from county staff and best practices shared by local and state partners, since Hurricane Ian. Ongoing review and refinement of all Mass Care roles, responsibilities, and processes will further strengthen the program, enhancing both the experience for staff and the quality of service provided to residents.

During the 2024 hurricane season, leadership made swift decisions regarding evacuation and sheltering, utilizing the most accurate forecasting data available. This enabled evacuation center staff to have more time to prepare and open the centers, while also allowing staff additional time to prepare their own homes. The Logistics Section was pulled in competing directions as risk-sheltering operations were being considered due to a potential heavy rain event ahead of Hurricane Helene. When the rain event threat diminished, Logistics immediately pivoted to focus on opening evac centers. The Logistics Section had an extremely quick turnaround for restocking between Helene and Milton and getting evacuation centers ready for another evacuation.



County staff register evacuees at Evacuation Centers during Hurricane



Mass Feeding operations post Hurricane Milton

Looking ahead, future improvements will focus on efficiently supporting vulnerable populations, increasing shelter staff to alleviate strain on employees, optimizing the use of county transit assets during emergencies, and streamlining the organization of evacuation center resources to reduce the burden on the Logistics Section.

Discussion and planning for a mass feeding operations plan had started before the impacts of the hurricanes, which assisted the county in establishing a community feeding framework. They implemented an emergency contract to bring in staff to assist with coordinating the Mass Feeding Unit. The unit utilized both pre- and post-disaster data, such as the Social Vulnerability Index, Damage Assessment Data, Florida Power and Light (FPL) Data, and Crisis Cleanup App Data, to guide the operations.

Enhancement Recommendations

- 41. The County should consider reviewing the evacuation center operational plan for potential efficiencies (Goal: December 2025).
- 42. The County should consider developing a plan to accommodate sexual predators/offenders during evacuations (Goal: June 2026).
- 43. The County should consider implementing meetings with County evacuation center vendors to determine staffing roles and responsibilities (Goal: October 2025).
- 44. The County should consider reviewing rally points and associated transportation services (Goal: July 2025).
- 45. The County should consider refining plans for evacuation center operations based on lessons learned from the hurricane season, specifically related to staffing, equipment, coordination with the Logistics Section, and demobilization (Goal: August 2025).
- 46. The County should consider developing plans to accommodate pre-disaster homeless individuals in evacuation centers (Goal: September 2025).
- 47. The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities for the Mass Care Branch, including establishing a mass feeding framework (Goal: October 2025).

Observation #19: The county should consider developing plans for post-impact sheltering.

Sarasota County's hurricane evacuation centers are in public school buildings that have been "hardened" to withstand winds from most tropical cyclones. The widespread and extended impacts of the 2024 hurricane season required the activation of multiple "post-impact" shelters, as many residents were unable to return to their homes due to damage from Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton. The County faced challenges in identifying suitable locations for post-impact sheltering. Collaborating with the Sarasota County Fire Marshall's Office to determine post-impact sheltering capacity at county and other facilities will help establish an accurate and documented capacity for future use at pre-determined locations. Additionally, purchasing equipment and supplies specifically for post-impact shelters and ensuring shelter kits are pre-assembled will reduce the burden on General Services and expedite the shelter opening process. This approach will also facilitate a quicker transition from using public schools to longer-term sheltering solutions in alternate facilities.

Enhancement Recommendations

- 48. The County should consider developing a plan to increase post-impact sheltering capability by coordinating with the Sarasota County Fire Marshal's Office to set capacity numbers (Goal: October 2025).
- 49. The County should consider preparing a transitional shelter plan (Goal: October 2025).
- 50. The County should consider increasing the number of supply kits for transitional shelters (Goal: October 2025).

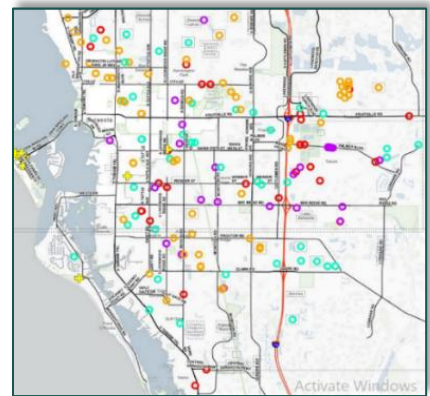
VI. Infrastructure Systems

The Infrastructure Core Capability includes the stabilization of critical infrastructure functions, the minimization of health and safety threats, and efficient restoration and revitalization of systems and services to support a viable, resilient community. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the county's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Infrastructure Systems

The Infrastructure Branch provided vital response services related to the restoration of utilities, roadway clearance, and stormwater management. The following are areas of success and best practices:

- Regularly scheduled and extraordinary maintenance of stormwater infrastructure.
- Checked and cleared drainage at all known 202 “hot spots” throughout the community. Hot spots are developed from institutional knowledge of the stormwater infrastructure and citizen input, where drainage issues occur during storms from inlets, drains, or pipes regularly being blocked by debris washed in from runoff.
- Pre-deployed generators and pumps to areas where flooding was anticipated.
- Pre-staged road hazard signs to provide advance notice to drivers of flood hazards.
- Reviewed tidal data to assess potential impacts on coastal/riverine areas.
- Operated stormwater control structures at Celery Fields and along Cowpen Slough to draw down pre-storm water levels.
- Implemented proactive lift station protective measures/part extractions (pre-Hurricane Milton).
- Adoption of a flood mapping system, which provides maps of flooded areas within 24 hours post-impact.
- Recording videos with Public Works and Public Utilities directors to provide details on the County's water, wastewater, and stormwater systems.
- Effective use of pump trucks throughout the county to mitigate the need for generators at lift stations.
- Identified seven core lift stations for future elevation projects.



Stormwater Drainage “Hot Spots”



County Public Works Director giving a video update on water drainage

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- Visibility into the water meter flow rate contributed to a more effective response
 - Used vehicle GPS trackers to track employees for safety.
 - Updated water distribution procedures in real time to identify segments (Casey Key/Siesta Key).
 - Effective use of mutual aid by bringing in Clay County to assist with the utility restoration of water infrastructure.

Observation #20: The county should consider evaluating areas for infrastructure resilience improvement.

The County's stormwater system is designed to manage 10 inches of rain in 24 hours (100-year or 1% storm event). Hurricane Debby generated over 16 inches of rain, well over Sarasota County's adopted level of service. The excessive rain inundated many areas within the County's stormwater system. The Infrastructure Branch performed several activities in response to the flooding, including:

- Inspected and cleared hot spots throughout both the County and the City of Sarasota.
- Responded to incoming calls, including road underwater calls and cleared grates where they are accessible.
- Removed trees from canals and cleared obvious storm-generated debris from stormwater structures.
- Operated structures around Celery Fields and Cowpen Slough to manage upstream flood levels while not further impacting downstream areas.

The County started an examination of rainfall data and stormwater infrastructure to determine the root causes of flooding magnitude and duration. A third-party engineering evaluation of rainfall data was performed to hindcast storm impacts and develop potential recommendations to mitigate future impacts. The County is also undergoing a full evaluation of the entire stormwater system as part of the Board-adopted 2025 Strategic Plan.

Some Sarasota County lift stations were flooded due to storm surge inundation. The Infrastructure Branch coordinated with FPL to determine when power would be restored to lift stations. In the interim, vacuum trucks were deployed to ensure flow through the system.

During Hurricane Milton, the Infrastructure Branch learned that FPL maintains a power meter inventory that assigns a meter to critical infrastructure like booster pumps and lift stations. This information is helpful to expedite restoration and can improve communication between FPL and the Infrastructure Branch.

Enhancement Recommendations

51. The County should consider adopting appropriate recommendations from the third-party storm system engineering report completed after Hurricane Debby and the recommendations provided by the more comprehensive evaluation of the entire stormwater system planned for FY26 (Goal: FY26).
52. The County should consider increasing generator availability for wastewater systems and pump/generator availability for the stormwater system (Goal: September 2026).
53. The County should consider opportunities to elevate lift stations' infrastructure in high-risk areas (Goal: December 2027).
54. The County should consider coordinating with FPL to develop a power meter inventory for key infrastructure (Goal: June 2026).

VII. Logistics and Supply Chain Management

The Logistics and Supply Chain Management Core Capability includes the delivery of essential commodities, equipment, and services in support of impacted communities and survivors, to include emergency power and fuel support, as well as the coordination of access to community staples. It also includes synchronizing logistics capabilities and enabling the restoration of impacted supply chains. The following observations relate to this core capability and include recommendations to enhance the county's capabilities in the future.

Areas of Success: Logistics, Supply Chain Management, and Finance/ Administration

During the 2024 hurricane season, the EOC Logistics Section faced many challenges from staffing to new processes, and they found innovative and effective ways to ensure logistical success. Some areas of success and best practice are as follows:

- Incorporating personnel from other County departments and partner agencies to manage the abundant resources needed.
- Coordinating with County Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources and SCFD to provide support for missions such as NPODs and evacuation center supply movements.
- Processing 921 resource requests over the three hurricanes (Debby: 193, Helene: 184, Milton: 544). The County processed 59% of the mission requests, and the remaining were sent to the State EOC for fulfillment.
- Adding a "Source Management" position to the Logistics Section, providing much-needed support and efficiency for resource procurement.
- Utilizing deployed Florida Forestry Service (FFS) personnel to assist with the County Staging Area (CSA) and other EOC Logistics roles.
- Communicating effectively through the EOC, CSA, and county warehouse to appropriately vet resource requests and creatively source resources. The Logistics Section issued radios to Logistics Section staff and field staff, which allowed the team to stay in constant contact and respond when help was needed in the field.
- Coordinating with non-governmental partners such as All Faiths Food Bank on necessary commodities [e.g., water, Meals Ready-to-Eat (MREs)] for evacuees.



POD supplies being unloaded, post Hurricane Milton



County staff deliver bins to residents following Hurricane Debby

The Finance/Administration Section brought a positive “can-do” attitude to the EOC and worked diligently to find solutions to sourcing resources. The following are the best practices and areas of success:

- Ensured adequate staffing levels throughout the hurricane season. The Section had a robust team available to assist EOC staff in completed procurement activities, assistance with tracking financial aspects of the response/recovery phases, seeking guidance on the best approach to source resources, guidance on county staff timekeeping, and development of documentation related to disaster documentation needed to meet FDEM/FEMA requirements.
- Tracked disaster employee hours worked throughout the 2024 hurricane season (as of May 2025, county employees logged over 211,000 hours).
- Utilized FDEM and FEMA subject matter experts throughout the season to seek guidance and move applications and submissions forward for elements such as damage assessments toward meeting disaster declaration thresholds, public assistance, and debris management.
- Applied flexibility to achieve results with procuring resources, especially related to repairs with high costs.

Observation #21: The County should consider reviewing and enhancing EOC Logistics and Finance/Administration functions.

The EOC Logistics Section was spearheaded by the General Services Department, which has experience and knowledge in ordering, supplying, transporting, and managing requests. The County aspires to create pre-season training for all logistics EOC emergency roles. Pre-scripted mission resource requests, reference guides, and other resources are being considered to assist in time management. Sarasota County currently does not have any specific locations in which they can drop off large bulk supplies both ordered and others that come from non-profit organizations. The Logistics and Finance/Administration Sections work very closely to secure resources. Involving the Finance/Administration Section earlier in the resource request process would assist with the coordination efforts to secure resources using the most efficient and quickest methodology.



Logistics staff unload pallets of water and supplies, post Hurricane Debby

Enhancement Recommendations

- 55. The County should consider creating training focused on specific logistics EOC roles (Goal: October 2025).
- 56. The County should consider creating a pre-scripted mission resource requests library/reference guide (Goal: October 2025).
- 57. The County should consider clarifying the resource tracking process between the Planning Section and Logistics Section (Goal: July 2025).
- 58. The County should consider increasing coordination between the Logistics and Finance/Administration Section (Goal: August 2025).

Observation #22: The County should consider expanding logistical field operations capabilities.

County field operations are key to delivering and receiving resources. Field operations play a crucial role in the item's residents, external agencies, and the County need to support the community during an emergency. County leadership, the COLT team, and the Operations Section assisted with coordinating use-of-premise agreements through the Office of the County Attorney, as needed throughout the hurricane season. Also, the County required assistance tracking property and facilities where disaster operations were occurring across the County. The COLT team stepped in to oversee this tracking process.

County Staging Area

Sarasota County's Twin Lakes Park served as the CSA during the 2024 hurricane season. The EOC requested FFS staff to manage the CSA. The Logistics Section also deployed staff with county radios to assist with communications back to the EOC. TLP's size and proximity to Interstate 75 make it ideal for staging, however the lack of paved areas and minimal ability for trucks to turn around after dropping off supplies created challenges. TLP has limited storage areas, resulting in Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources staff being unable to utilize areas where supplies were left after the CSA operations ceased.

Warehouse

During the hurricane season, the County utilized the Emergency Services Warehouse on Apex Road to store disaster supplies. The Logistics Section was unable to access supplies for some time during the response operations due to flooding in the area. Also, the warehouse is shared with SCFD, whose supplies are on the bottom floor. EOC supplies are located on the second floor, necessitating a liftgate to move evacuation center cages, medically dependent cots, and other supplies to the bottom floor. The restricted space inside the facility, as well as the limited single-bay-door access, has posed significant challenges for the Logistics Section.

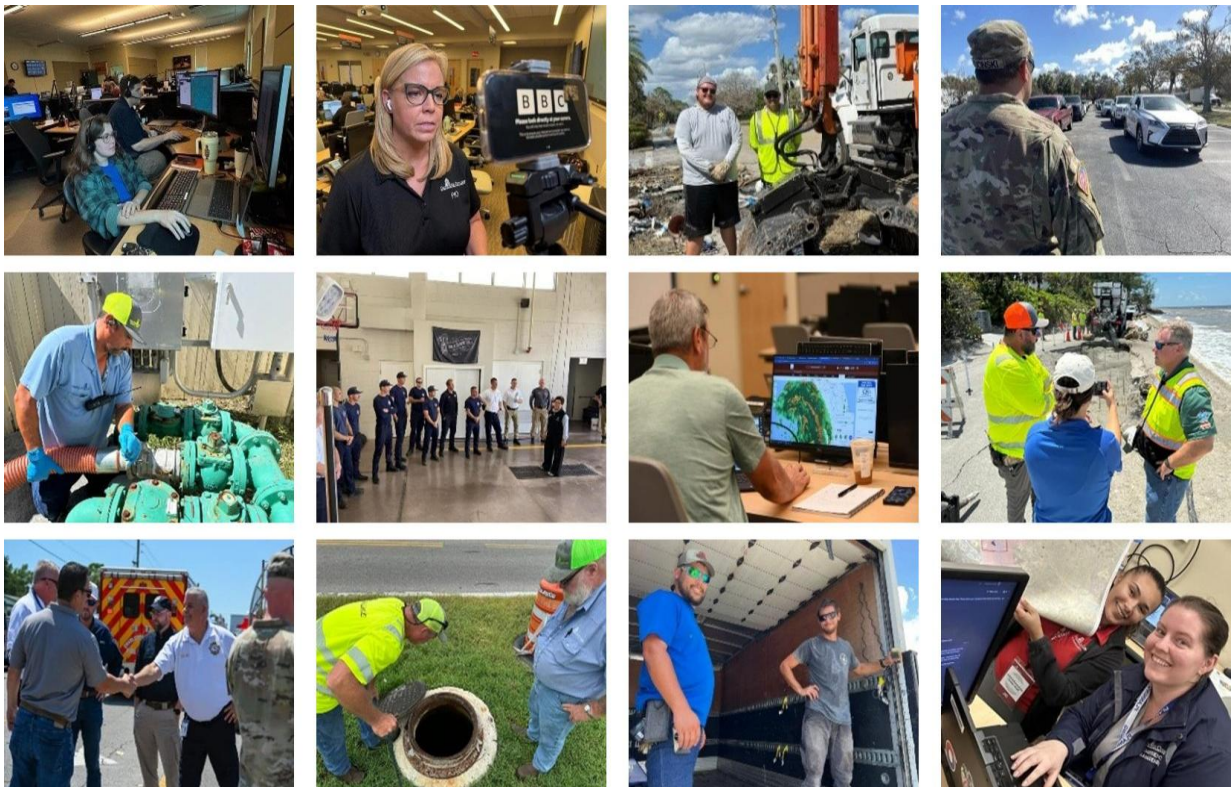
Enhancement Recommendations

- 59. The County should consider making improvements to and support documentation for Twin Lakes Park to allow for improved access and operations of the County Staging Area (Goal: June 2026).
- 60. The County should consider reviewing options for additional warehouse space specific to disaster logistics operations (Goal: June 2025).
- 61. The County should consider implementing a pre-disaster use-of-premises agreement program (Goal: October 2025).
- 62. The County should consider creating a dedicated position within the Logistics Section for property management, responsible for assisting with and tracking disaster locations and use of property (Goal: August 2025).

Conclusion

The events of the 2024 hurricane season presented historic impacts to Sarasota County that many residents had not encountered in their lifetime. County employees worked well beyond their typical scope of normal duties, embracing new roles and responsibilities. Many county employees and their families were also personally impacted by Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton while serving the community in its time of need. At the time of this report’s publication date, county employees alone documented over 211,000 hours of disaster work, which does not encapsulate the additional hours that municipal, non-profit, and private sector partners contributed in support of ongoing response and recovery efforts. Additionally, the support from mutual aid teams and state and federal partners was instrumental in the success of the response and recovery efforts.

Hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton presented the County with the opportunity to evaluate and enhance its pre-existing planning, response, and recovery operations. This form of continuous improvement is vital to Sarasota County’s ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters.



Appendix A: Enhancements Matrix

Appendix A includes an Enhancement Matrix to capture each of the recommended enhancements, involved stakeholders, and goal completion dates. Emergency Management will track enhancement statuses using a Smartsheet. The recommended enhancements represent the best thinking of stakeholders at the time. Lead and supporting organizations may choose another solution upon further review or updated information.

All lead and supporting agencies are encouraged to initiate the recommendations as soon as reasonable. A large majority of the solutions listed are to be completed within the next six to 12 months. The lead coordinating agencies are coordinating entities that are responsible for bringing stakeholders together to develop and implement the recommended solutions. In many cases, Sarasota County Emergency Management has been identified as the lead coordinating agency, which matches the agency’s role as the lead coordinating entity for emergency response. However, the support from all county departments, municipalities, nonprofit agencies, and private sector stakeholders is important for the successful implementation of these solutions.

	Core Capability	Program Area	Enhancement Action	Lead Coordinating Entity	Additional Stakeholders	Estimated Completion Date
1.	Planning	Coordination with Municipalities	The County should consider developing a process to ensure that municipalities are informed of decisions to demobilize resources within their jurisdiction.	Emergency Management	General Services	September 2025
2.	Planning	Coordination with Municipalities	The County should consider creating a Municipal Manager/County Administrator call for the EOC Activation Schedule.	Emergency Management	Planning Section	June 2025
3.	Planning	Public Information, Alerts, and Warnings	The County should consider providing clarity on evacuation levels.	Emergency Management	Communications, GIS	October 2025
4.	Planning	Public Information, Alerts, and Warnings	The County should consider creating guidelines for first responder assistance with public evacuation notifications.	Emergency Management	Communications, Emergency Services Branch	October 2025
5.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider creating a guide, to include Staffing and eRole Program roles and responsibilities, request process for staff support, and other critical operational components.	Emergency Management	Human Resources, Communications	October 2025
6.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider refining employee activation notification and communication roles and responsibilities between county departments and the Staffing Unit.	Human Resources	County Departments, Emergency Management	October 2025
7.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider identifying both internal and external staffing solutions for all phases of disaster.	Emergency Management	Human Resources	December 2025

8.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider developing a process to include the Staffing Unit in the Mutual Aid resource request process.	Emergency Management	Human Resources	August 2025
9.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider creating an arrival packet for external Mutual Aid resources and expanding the orientation process.	Emergency Management	Human Resources, Communications	September 2025
10.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider creating a demobilization plan to include releasing EOC Staff as soon as reasonable.	Emergency Management, Human Resources	N/A	October 2025
11.	Planning	EOC Staffing	The County should consider evaluating the positions needed in the EOC for B-shift and reviewing the activities tasked to B-shift positions.	Emergency Management	Human Resources	September 2025
12.	Planning	Training	The County should consider providing WebEOC resource request training and allowing partners opportunities to practice using the system.	Emergency Management	Municipalities, County Departments	July 2025
13.	Planning	Training	The County should consider increasing the number of damage assessment meetings and training offered to municipalities.	Planning and Development Services	Municipalities, Emergency Management	September 2025
14.	Planning	Training	The County should consider finding additional ways to incorporate disaster-specific timekeeping into employee disaster training.	Office of Financial Management	Emergency Management	August 2025
15.	Planning	COOP	The County should consider reviewing Departmental COOP plans to ensure COOP locations will accommodate all departments and consider new county buildings.	County Departments	Emergency Management	June 2026
16.	Planning	COLT/ EOC Planning Section	The County should consider clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the EOC Planning Section vs COLT and identify ways to improve synergy.	Emergency Management	COLT	July 2025
17.	Planning	Pre-Disaster Contracts	The County should consider additional pre-positioned contracts for Category A and B work.	Office of Financial Management	Emergency Management	October 2025

18.	Planning	Air/Marine Ops	The County should consider finalizing draft framework for air/marine operations in coordination with local partners and FDEM.	Emergency Management	Fire/EMS, law enforcement partners	December 2025
19.	Public Information and Warning	Public Information, Alerts, and Warnings	The County should consider enhancing its public communications strategy for storm surge risk using NHC products and visual displays.	Emergency Management	Communications	September 2025
20.	Situational Assessment	Damage Assessment	The County should consider developing a process for a more coordinated data sharing process between TFIT, Emergency Services Branch, Infrastructure Branch, and Recovery Branch, and create a mapping system for broader situational awareness.	Emergency Management	PDS, Public Works, Fire, Law Enforcement, 911 Center, GIS	April 2026
21.	Situational Assessment	Damage Assessment	The County should consider assessing its current damage assessment tool and make recommendations for future damage assessment software.	Emergency Management/PDS	Public Works/Stormwater, General Services	December 2025
22.	Situational Assessment	EOC Schedule	The County should consider standardizing the EOC data collection schedule and display process.	Emergency Management	Planning Section	July 2025
23.	Situational Assessment	EOC Briefings	The County should consider further streamlining the EOC Briefing format.	Emergency Management	Planning Section	July 2025
24.	Operational Coordination	Volunteer and Donations (ESF 15)	The County should consider clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the Volunteers and the Donations/ESF 15 Unit.	Emergency Management	Human Resources	August 2025
25.	Operational Coordination	Volunteer and Donations (ESF 15)	The County should consider developing a process to gather information on ESF 15 agency activity and exchange situational awareness.	Emergency Management/ Human Resources	Mass Care Branch	August 2025

26.	Operational Coordination	Volunteer and Donations (ESF 15)	The County should consider creating a process to connect with non-profit and volunteer groups in the field.	Emergency Management/Human Resources	Mass Care Branch	October 2025
27.	Operational Coordination	Emergency Services Branch	The County should consider ensuring staff working in the EOC are aware of other operational teams that may be working within the building and clarifying roles and responsibilities	Sarasota County Fire	Emergency Management	August 2025
28.	Operational Coordination	Emergency Services Branch	The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities between the EOC Emergency Services Branch and the Regional Law Enforcement Coordination Team (RLECT) and law enforcement agencies.	Emergency Management	Sheriff's Office, FDLE	October 2025
29.	Operational Coordination	Barrier Island Closure/Re-entry Planning	The County should consider reviewing and updating the process for barrier island closure/re-entry.	Emergency Management/Public Works/Sheriff's Office	City of Sarasota, Florida Department of Transportation, City of Sarasota Police, Sarasota Fire	October 2025
30.	Operational Coordination	Coordination with Lodging and Tourism Industry	The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities regarding communication and coordination with lodging and tourism industry pre, during, and post-storm, to include home-sharing organizations (e.g., Airbnb, VRBO).	Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources; Governmental Relations; Emergency Management	Visit Sarasota, Chambers of Commerce, Small Business Roundtable	March 2026
31.	Operational Coordination	Departmental Coordination	The County should consider evaluating ways to enhance the reporting and tracking of Department Operations Center actions, needs, and status.	COLT	Emergency Management	August 2025
32.	Operational Coordination	Departmental Coordination	The County should consider providing training to departments on the damage reporting process.	OFM/HR (Risk)	COLT, Emergency Management	September 2025

33.	Operational Coordination	Debris Management	The County should consider reviewing traffic management mobility plans for post-storm disaster operations.	Emergency Management/Solid Waste	Law Enforcement	October 2025
34.	Operational Coordination	Debris Management	The County should consider reviewing and refining the Right of Entry (ROE) process, including receiving ROE forms pre-season, and developing a pre-season outreach plan.	Emergency Management/Solid Waste	PDS	January 2026
35.	Operational Coordination	Debris Management	The County should consider identifying additional land for debris management sites.	Emergency Management/Solid Waste	PDS	June 2026
36.	Operational Coordination	Debris Management	The County should consider developing a debris management strategy to shift the debris management responsibility from the department level to EOC operations to include all debris operations (i.e., waterway, county property, residential/commercial).	Emergency Management	Solid Waste; Public Works; Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources; PDS	September 2025
37.	Operational Coordination	EOC Facility	The County should consider evaluating additional space within the EOC for bunking.	Emergency Management	Communications	August 2025
38.	Operational Coordination	EOC Facility	The County should consider formalizing the room coordination and process for assignments with the EOC Check-In team.	Emergency Management	Public Safety Communications	July 2025
39.	Operational Coordination	EOC Facility	The County should consider revisiting the EOC parking plan to ensure parking availability for all EOC, 311, and 911 staff.	Emergency Management	General Services	June 2025
40.	Operational Coordination	EOC Facility	The County should consider evaluating ways to increase physical space for operational coordination at the EOC.	Emergency Management	Capital Projects	June 2029
41.	Mass Care	Evacuation Centers	The County should consider reviewing evacuation center operational plan for potential efficiencies.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch	December 2025

42.	Mass Care	Evacuation Centers	The County should consider developing a plan to accommodate sexual predators/offenders during evacuations.	Emergency Management	Sheriff's Office, Mass Care Branch	June 2026
43.	Mass Care	Evacuation Centers	The County should consider implementing meetings with county Evacuation Center vendors to determine staffing roles and responsibilities.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch	October 2025
44.	Mass Care	Evacuation Centers	The County should consider reviewing Rally Points and associated transportation services.	Breeze Transit	Emergency Management	July 2025
45.	Mass Care	Evacuation Centers	The County should consider refining plans for evacuation center operations based on lessons learned from the hurricane season, specifically related to staffing, equipment, coordination with the Logistics Section, and demobilization.	Emergency Management	Logistics Section, Mass Care Branch	August 2025
46.	Mass Care	Evacuation Centers	The County should consider developing plans to accommodate pre-disaster homeless individuals in evacuation centers.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch	September 2025
47.	Mass Care	Mass Care Branch	The County should consider clarifying roles and responsibilities for the Mass Care Branch, including establishing a mass feeding framework.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch	October 2025
48.	Mass Care	Post-Impact Shelters	The County should consider developing a plan to increase post-impact sheltering capability by coordinating with the Sarasota County Fire Marshal's Office to set capacity numbers.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch, Fire Marshall's Office	October 2025
49.	Mass Care	Post-Impact Shelters	The County should consider preparing a transitional shelter plan.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch	October 2025
50.	Mass Care	Post-Impact Shelters	The County should consider increasing the number of supply kits for transitional shelters.	Emergency Management	Mass Care Branch, Logistics Section	October 2025

51.	Infrastructure Systems	Stormwater	The County should consider adopting appropriate recommendations from the third-party storm system engineering report completed after Hurricane Debby and the recommendations provided by the more comprehensive evaluation of the entire stormwater system planned for FY26.	Public Works	N/A	FY26
52.	Infrastructure Systems	Stormwater/ Utilities	The County should consider increasing generator availability for wastewater systems and pump/generator availability for the stormwater system.	Utilities	N/A	September 2026
53.	Infrastructure Systems	Utilities	The County should consider opportunities to elevate lift stations' infrastructure in high-risk areas.	Utilities	N/A	December 2027
54.	Infrastructure Systems	Power Grid	The County should consider coordinating with FPL to develop a power meter inventory for key infrastructure.	Emergency Management	FPL	June 2026
55.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Training	The County should consider creating training focused on specific logistics EOC roles.	General Services/Emergency Management	Logistics Section	October 2025
56.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Resource Management	The County should consider creating a pre-scripted mission resource requests library/reference guide.	Emergency Management	Logistics Section	October 2025
57.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Resource Management	The County should consider clarifying the resource tracking process between the Planning Section and the Logistics Section.	Emergency Management	Planning Section, Logistics Section	July 2025
58.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	EOC Section Coordination	The County should consider increasing coordination between the Logistics and Finance/Administration Section.	Emergency Management	Logistics Section, Finance/Admin Section	August 2025

59.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	County Staging Area	The County should consider making improvements to and support documentation for Twin Lakes Park to allow for improved access and operations of the County Staging Area.	Parks and Recreation/Emergency Management	General Services	June 2026
60.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Warehouse Management	The County should consider reviewing options for additional warehouse space specific to disaster logistics operations.	General Services	Emergency Services	June 2025
61.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Property Management	The County should consider implementing a pre-disaster use-of-premise agreement program.	Emergency Management	PDS	October 2025
62.	Logistics and Supply Chain Management	Property Management	The County should consider creating a dedicated position within the Logistics Section for property management, responsible for assisting with and tracking disaster locations and the use of property.	Emergency Management	General Services, PDS	August 2025

