This map looks different

That’s because it’s an all new evacuation map for 2010. First, you’ll notice a new color scheme. This was done to standardize evacuation zone colors on a statewide basis. Also, a number of properties have changed evacuation levels.

New data about storm surge and land elevations have been used to create a more accurate map. Additionally, dangerous hurricanes such as 2005’s Hurricane Katrina and 2008’s Hurricane Ike brought storm surge far exceeding what was expected. Data from these unusual storms had to be considered when the new maps were drawn.

As a result, more than 73,000 properties have a new evacuation level this year. Even if you have lived in Pinellas County for a long time, it’s more important than ever to check your home’s evacuation level.

To find your level:

• Visit www.pinellascounty.org/emergency
• Call (727) 453-3150 and enter your 10-digit home phone number (does not work for cell phone numbers)
• Look on your Pinellas County Utility bill
• Look on your Truth in Millage (TRIM) notice
• Call (727) 464-3800 and speak with Emergency Management staff

Areas shown in white are non-evacuation zones.

Evacuate red areas and all mobile homes

Evacuate red and orange areas and all mobile homes

Evacuate red, orange and yellow areas and all mobile homes

Evacuate red, orange, yellow and green areas and all mobile homes

Evacuate red, orange, yellow, green and purple areas and all mobile homes

Areas shown in white are non-evacuation zones.

Potential Surge Heights (in feet)

4’ to 8’

8’ to 14’

14’ to 19’

19’ to 26’

26’ to 29’

EVACUATION ZONES

EVACUATION GUIDELINES

(mobile homes MUST always evacuate)
FLOOD ZONES AND EVACUATION ZONES DIFFER

Flood zones and evacuation zones differ. They measure different conditions that may not occur at the same time.

Flood zones are areas mapped by FEMA for use in the National Flood Insurance Program. Each flood zone designation, represented by a letter or letters, tells homeowners exactly what the risk is for flooding at their property over a period of years, regardless of the cause. By law, all homes in high-risk zones carrying a mortgage must be covered by flood insurance.

Evacuation zones, on the other hand, are based on hurricane storm surge zones determined by the National Hurricane Center using ground elevation and the area’s vulnerability to storm surge from a hurricane. The evacuation zones are marked from A through E, plus non-evacuation zones.

The flood zones and evacuation zones are determined by different methods and have different purposes. A home may be located in a non-evacuation zone, yet still be located in a flood zone because of a nearby stream or pond.

Residents must check both zones.

An important thing to remember is that flood losses are not covered by homeowners’ insurance policies. The National Flood Insurance Program makes federally backed flood insurance available to residents and business owners. Any flooding damage covered under the policy – whether or not a federal disaster declaration is made – will be reimbursed per the policy limits, which can include structural damage or the loss of contents.

For more information on flood zones, visit the National Flood Insurance Program at www.floodsmart.gov or call (888) CALL-FLOOD (225-5356). For more information on evacuation levels, check the map in this guide or visit www.pinellascounty.org/emergency.

MANDATORY AND RECOMMENDED EVACUATIONS

Should a hurricane threaten the Tampa Bay area, an evacuation order may be issued. What exactly does that mean?

An evacuation order is given to get people away from the deadliest part of a hurricane – storm surge. Evacuation levels are based on elevation above ground that could be inundated by the surge driven ashore during a storm. There is one notable exception to this: all mobile homes, regardless of their elevation, must be evacuated. They cannot withstand the high winds of a hurricane.

There are two types of evacuations that can be ordered. The first is a recommended evacuation. In the event of the approach of a tropical storm or a hurricane crossing the state and exiting over Pinellas, the potential for storm surge may not be as great. In these cases, emergency managers may recommend evacuating to higher ground and/or sturdier structures than they have available at home. This is done for the safety of those in areas we know to be vulnerable.

The second type is a mandatory evacuation. Mandatory evacuations are issued when the probability of storm surge is high, and loss of life could occur if residents don’t move. These evacuations will be ordered up to a certain letter zone and will always include mobile homes. It is incredibly important that if your home is in an evacuation level that you know your level, plan for a ‘stay’ and ‘go’ option, and if your level is ordered to go, move quickly but safely outside of the evacuation area.

It is illegal to stay in a home under a mandatory evacuation order. Under Florida Statutes 252.58, the local authority has the ability to take necessary steps to provide for the health and safety of people and property. Chapter 252.50 sets refusal to follow an evacuation order as a second-degree misdemeanor.

Does this mean the police will drag you out of your property? No. They will be too busy helping those who will be following the evacuation order. However, this does provide law enforcement the basis to remove anyone who is impeding the flow of an evacuation.

Remember, emergency managers are counting on you to be prepared and do the right thing and keep yourself and your family out of dangerous situations. Please know your evacuation zone and have a plan for where you will go should something happen this hurricane season.

We’re Tweeting:

www.twitter.com/pinellasEM

Follow us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/pages and search for Pinellas County Government

See our hurricane videos on YouTube:

www.youtube.com/user/pcctv1