

Prepare Fire Protection Systems for Hurricane Helene's Impact: USPA Fire Safety Expert Advice

Property managers in Tallahassee Florida should urgently check fire panels, suppression systems, and fire watch readiness as Hurricane Helene intensifies.

TALLAHASSEE, FL, UNITED STATES, September 26, 2024 / EINPresswire.com/ -- Hurricane Helene Threatens Florida: Fire System Preparations Critical for Property Managers

As Hurricane Helene rapidly approaches the Gulf Coast, property managers across Florida, particularly in cities like Tampa and Tallahassee, must take immediate action to ensure their fire protection systems are prepared for the storm's potential devastation.



Fire Watch in Tallahassee: Fire System Preparation for Hurricane Helene

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Ensure safety during Hurricane Helene! Call (800) 214-1448 for 24/7 emergency fire watch services in Tallahassee.”

Brian Fitzgibbons, Director of Fire Watch

With life-threatening conditions expected, including dangerous storm surge, high winds, and widespread power outages, the integrity of fire suppression systems and fire panels is critical to ensuring property and life safety during and after the storm.

Written by Fire Safety Expert: Brian Fitzgibbons, Director of Operations at USPA Nationwide Security, who leads elite global security operations. He is known for his hands-on approach, commanding teams of former special

operations veterans and law enforcement officers.

Fitzgibbons' expertise in fire safety, [fire watch services](#), and high-risk operations positions him as an authority on preparing fire systems for extreme weather events.

Fire Protection Systems at Risk in Extreme Weather Conditions

The massive wind field of Hurricane Helene is expected to impact Florida, with forecasts indicating the storm could bring one of the most dangerous storm surges in decades. Property managers need to be aware that fire panels, fire suppression systems, and other critical fire safety equipment are highly vulnerable to water damage, power loss, and wind-related impacts. Failure to properly secure or inspect these systems could leave buildings and occupants exposed to catastrophic fire risks during the storm.

Key Steps to Prepare Fire Suppression Systems Before the Storm Hits

Fire protection systems must be fully operational before Hurricane Helene's expected landfall. The following steps can help safeguard properties:

1. **Fire Panel Repair:** Ensure fire panels are inspected, functioning, and equipped with backup power.
2. **Fire Suppression System Repair:** Test sprinklers, fire alarms, and fire pumps, and ensure they are in good condition. Check for any outstanding maintenance needs.
3. **Fire Watch:** Deploy fire watch personnel to monitor the premises in the event that fire systems go offline due to power outages or other storm-related failures.
4. **Backup Power:** Ensure generators are tested and operational to power fire protection systems during potential blackouts.
5. **Flood Precautions:** Secure equipment from flood-prone areas. Consider elevating fire panels and fire pumps to reduce the risk of water damage.

Immediate Risks from Hurricane Helene for Fire Safety:

Fire Panel Damage and Failures

As Helene intensifies into a major hurricane, with sustained winds exceeding 100 mph, property managers should focus on the stability of fire panels. These critical components control alarms and automatic fire suppression systems. Flooding, electrical surges, and prolonged exposure to water can cause panels to malfunction or fail altogether. Immediate repair and waterproofing of panels are necessary to maintain a first line of defense against fire hazards.

Surge in Fire Watch Requirements

With Helene's strong winds and possible damage to power infrastructure, fire panels and suppression systems may fail, triggering the need for fire watch personnel. In Florida, particularly in major cities like Tampa and Tallahassee, the importance of having trained

professionals conducting fire watch patrols during hurricanes cannot be overstated. Property managers should coordinate with fire watch services to cover the duration of power outages or system impairments, ensuring constant vigilance during the storm.

Prepare for Post-Storm Fire Hazards

Fire Hazards from Flooding and Damaged Infrastructure

Hurricane Helene is forecasted to bring catastrophic storm surges, with water levels rising as high as 20 feet along Florida's Big Bend. Flooded electrical systems, gas leaks, and damaged appliances can pose significant fire risks even after the storm passes. Immediate post-storm recovery efforts should include:

1. **Assessing Water Damage:** Inspect fire protection components, especially those submerged during the storm, for damage and corrosion.
2. **Restoring Fire Panels and Suppression Systems:** Contact qualified professionals to restore fire systems to full functionality, ensuring they are safe to operate.
3. **Fire Watch During Recovery:** Continue fire watch services during post-storm recovery to mitigate risks while fire protection systems are inspected and repaired.

Widespread Power Outages and Fire Suppression

Power outages are expected to last days, potentially weeks, in some areas of Florida following Hurricane Helene's landfall. Without power, fire suppression systems may become inactive. Property managers must prepare for extended periods where fire safety systems are reliant on backup power or manual monitoring.

According to the National Weather Service, the hurricane's wind field could stretch from the Gulf Coast to well inland, creating widespread wind damage and downed power lines across the Southeast. It is imperative that fire systems have uninterrupted power supply during this period.

Power Loss Impacts Fire Systems

Hurricane Helene's projected path includes severe impacts on electrical infrastructure. Wind speeds of over 120 mph in some areas will likely topple power lines, affecting fire suppression systems that rely on consistent electricity. Backup generators must be fully operational to prevent system failures during these outages.

Importance of NFPA 1600 Guidelines

[NFPA 1600 standard emphasizes the importance of disaster preparedness](#), particularly for fire protection systems during emergencies. Following NFPA guidelines ensures that businesses remain compliant and reduces the likelihood of fire hazards during natural disasters like

Hurricane Helene.

Checklist for Property Managers

To mitigate [the risks associated with Hurricane Helene](#), property managers should:

- **Inspect and Test Fire Systems:** Schedule immediate inspections of fire suppression systems and panels before the storm arrives.
- **Secure Backup Power:** Test generators and other backup power supplies for fire protection systems.
- **Coordinate Fire Watch Services:** Hire fire watch professionals to patrol during and after the storm in case of system impairments.
- **Elevate Equipment:** Move vulnerable fire system components away from flood-prone areas.
- **Prepare for Recovery:** Plan for post-storm repairs and inspections of damaged fire systems to ensure they are safe and functional.

Protect Your Fire Protection Systems Ahead of Hurricane Helene

As Hurricane Helene barrels toward Florida, it is crucial for property managers to ensure their fire suppression systems, fire panels, and fire watch protocols are fully prepared for the storm's potentially devastating impacts. With expected storm surges, high winds, and power outages, failure to act now could result in catastrophic fire damage to property and endanger lives.

Helene's rapid intensification and widespread geographical reach make it a once-in-a-century storm. Property managers must heed warnings, prepare their buildings, and ensure all fire protection systems are functional and ready for the onslaught. By taking these proactive steps, businesses and residential complexes can mitigate the severe risks posed by the storm.

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