

How ZooTampa Protected Its New Manatee Center from Florida's Storm Season

All South Lightning Protection installed systems at ZooTampa's new Florida Waters exhibit ahead of its spring 2026 opening.

TAMPA, FL, UNITED STATES, April 3, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ZooTampa at Lowry Park opened Florida Waters this spring, giving the public close access to rescued manatees, otters, and Florida native fish for the first time. All South Lightning Protection, Inc., a Tampa-based contractor, designed and installed the lightning protection systems for the new facilities before opening.

The project included the David A. Straz Jr. Manatee Critical Care Center, the otter habitat, Florida native fish exhibits, and surrounding guest areas. All systems were installed to NFPA 780 and UL 96A standards, the national codes governing commercial lightning protection in the United States.



All South Lightning Protection Installation Project Zoo Tampa

Florida's Lightning Exposure Shaped the Design

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Our mission is simple," Voight said. "Save lives and property."

Charles "Chuck" Voight

Florida leads the nation in lightning activity. Hillsborough County records more than 100 thunderstorm days per year, with over 1.4 million cloud-to-ground strikes statewide annually. For an open-air facility where visitors are outdoors throughout the day, and the manatee critical care center operates medical and life-support equipment,

reliable lightning protection is a baseline requirement for normal operations.

“Projects like Florida Waters matter to the Tampa Bay community because of what they do — rescuing and rehabilitating Florida’s wildlife,” said Charles Voight, Senior Executive Vice President of All South Lightning Protection. “Being part of the infrastructure that keeps the facility and the people inside it safe is what this work is about.”

About Florida Waters at ZooTampa

Florida Waters is ZooTampa’s largest single expansion project. The centerpiece is the David A. Straz Jr. Manatee Critical Care Center, where injured manatees undergo rehabilitation before returning to Florida waterways. The exhibit allows visitors to observe the recovery process at eye level. Florida Waters also added a new otter habitat, Florida native fish displays, and moon jellyfish exhibits.

ZooTampa at Lowry Park is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and is one of Florida’s major zoological institutions.

About All South Lightning Protection

All South Lightning Protection, Inc. is a Tampa-based contractor specializing in the design, installation, inspection, and UL certification of lightning protection and surge suppression systems for commercial, industrial, healthcare, and government facilities. Founded in 1996, the company operates three offices in Florida — Tampa, Sunrise (Broward County), and Jacksonville — and serves clients statewide. All South holds LPI certification through the Lightning Protection Institute and maintains UL Listed status.

Learn more: allsouthlightningprotection.com

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Reference: <https://zootampa.org/previews-of-zootampas-new-florida-waters-start-today/>

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