

GOOD MORNING EVERYONE.

LET ME BEGIN BY THANKING THE VICE CHAIRMAN OF OUR BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, MR. ESTEBAN BOVO FOR BEING HERE WITH US AS WELL AS THE OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIRECTOR, MR. CURT SOMMERHOFF.

ALSO JOINING US THIS MORNING IS MIAMI-DADE FIRE RESCUE CHIEF DAVE DOWNEY, AND AMERICAN RED CROSS BOARD MEMBER MARIALENA VIAMEL.

THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR COMMITMENT TO PROMOTING PREPAREDNESS DURING NATIONAL HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS WEEK AND THROUGHOUT THE ENTIRE HURRICANE SEASON.

AS PUBLIC SERVANTS AND FOR ME PERSONALLY AS A FORMER FIRST RESPONDER AND FIRE CHIEF, IT IS ALWAYS OUR PRIORITY TO KEEP MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S RESIDENTS AND VISITORS SAFE IN THE EVENT OF A NATURAL DISASTER.

THE 2015 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON BEGINS ON MONDAY.

ALL OF US KNOW IT ONLY TAKES ONE HURRICANE OR TROPICAL STORM IN OUR COMMUNITY TO SIGNIFICANTLY DISRUPT OUR DAILY LIVES.

AS MATTER OF FACT, IT DOESN'T TAKE A TROPICAL

PHENOMENON TO CREATE DAMAGE AND DESTRUCTION, JUST LOOK AT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN PARTS OF TEXAS RIGHT NOW, LIVES HAVE BEEN LOST, STREETS HAVE TURNED INTO RIVERS, HOMES HAVE BEEN SWEEP AWAY, AND THE UNPREDICTABILITY OF THESE NATURAL DISASTERS IS THE REASON WHY WE NEED MIAMI-DADE COUNTY RESIDENTS TO ALWAYS BE PREPARED.

AS WE START THE 2015 HURRICANE SEASON, WE MUST ALL BE READY IN THE EVENT OUR COMMUNITY IS THREATENED BY A MAJOR STORM.

IF YOU AREN'T PREPARED TO CARE FOR YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY WITHIN THE FIRST 72 HOURS OF A STORM HITTING, THEN YOU SIMPLY AREN'T SAFE.

SELF-SUFFICIENCY IS THE KEY.

2014 BROUGHT US THE FEWEST NUMBER OF NAMED STORMS SINCE 1997, AND THIS SEASON IS FORECASTED TO BE BELOW-NORMAL AS WELL.

HOWEVER, THE SIMILARITIES BETWEEN 2014 AND 2015 DO NOT SUGGEST THAT STORMS WILL DEVELOP IN THE SAME SPOTS AS LAST YEAR.

IN FACT, THIS YEAR WE ALREADY HAD TROPICAL STORM ANA, THAT FORMED WEEKS BEFORE HURRICANE SEASON EVEN BEGAN, AND LET'S NOT FORGET THAT IN 2005 HURRICANE KATRINA HIT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY BEFORE MAKING LANDFALL AGAIN IN THE GULF COAST, AND THAT HURRICANES RITA AND WILMA FOLLOWED THAT SAME YEAR.

IN OTHER WORDS, WE MUST STAY ALERT, AND BE PREPARED.

FOR THE 2015 ATLANTIC HURRICANE SEASON, THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION IS PREDICTING 6 TO 11 NAMED STORMS OF WHICH 3 TO 6 COULD BECOME HURRICANES INCLUDING UP TO 2 MAJOR HURRICANES.

THE COMBINATION OF COOLER THAN AVERAGE WATERS, AS WELL AS A DEVELOPING "EL NIÑO", FACTORS IN THIS FORECAST.

HOWEVER, WE MUST ALL KNOW THAT BELOW-NORMAL SEASONS CAN STILL HAVE CATASTROPHIC IMPACTS TO COMMUNITIES. IN THE 1992 SEASON, ONLY SEVEN NAMED STORMS

FORMED, YET THE FIRST OF THOSE WAS ANDREW – A CATEGORY 5 HURRICANE THAT AS OF THOSE OF US WHO WERE HERE REMEMBER, DEVASTATED OUR COMMUNITY.

SO FOLKS, NEXT TIME YOU GO TO THE GROCERY STORE, BE SURE TO PICK UP EXTRA CANS OF NON PERISHABLE GOODS AND START STORING TAP WATER IN PLASTIC JUGS, OR PURCHASE BOTTLED WATER.

ONE THING THAT I WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT IS THAT IT IS SAFE FOR OUR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO DRINK MIAMI-DADE COUNTY WATER DURING AN EMERGENCY ACTIVATION, IF THERE IS NO BOIL WATER ALERT IN PLACE.

ALSO, KEEP IN MIND THAT IN ORDER TO AVOID LONG LINES AT GAS STATIONS EVERYONE NEEDS TO FILL UP THEIR GAS TANKS IN THEIR VEHICLES WITH FUEL PRIOR TO A STORM. THE SAME APPLIES IF YOU OWN A GENERATOR, WHICH NO ONE SHOULD EVER HAVE INSIDE THE HOUSE. YOU WILL NEED TO BUY FUEL FOR THOSE AS WELL.

IN ADDITION TO THIS, START MAKING YOUR EMERGENCY PLANS NOW.

FIRST, DECIDE HOW YOU WILL SECURE YOUR HOME

AND CARE FOR YOUR LOVED ONES. HAVE A PLAN FOR THE OLDER MEMBERS OF YOUR HOUSEHOLD AND YOUR PETS. OUR ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT HAS MADE AVAILABLE FOR PET OWNERS, DISASTER PREPAREDNESS TIPS ON THEIR WEBSITE

WWW.MIAMIDADE.GOV/ANIMALS/DISASTER-

PREPAREDNESS IN ENGLISH, SPANISH AND CREOLE, AS WELL AS PET-FRIENDLY EVACUATION CENTERS FOR PET OWNERS RESIDING IN QUALIFIED EVACUATION ZONES.

HISTORY HAS SHOWN THAT WHEN AN EVACUATION IS ORDERED, PETS ARE A MAJOR REASON WHY RESIDENTS REFUSE TO EVACUATE.

SO TO REGISTER YOUR PET FOR ADMITTANCE TO A PET-FRIENDLY HURRICANE EVACUATION CENTER, JUST CONTACT OUR ANIMAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT, OR CALL 3-1-1.

SECOND, LEARN THE NEW EVACUATION ZONES, AND IF YOU LIVE IN AN EVACUATION ZONE DETERMINE WHERE YOU WILL GO IF AN EVACUATION ORDER IS ISSUED.

ALSO, DISABLED PERSONS OR THOSE REQUIRING EVACUATION ASSISTANCE, CAN REGISTER FOR THE COUNTY'S EMERGENCY & EVACUATION

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BY CALLING 3-1-1.

AND LAST BUT NOT LEAST, THE COUNTY PROVIDES HURRICANE EVACUATION CENTERS AND HURRICANE BUS PICK UP POINTS FOR PEOPLE WHO MAY NEED A SAFE PLACE TO EVACUATE TO OR TRANSPORTATION TO GET THERE.

IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION ON THE NEW ZONES, SPECIAL NEEDS SHELTERS, POINTS OF DISTRIBUTION, MIAMI-DADE.GOV AND 3-1-1 WILL PROVIDE THE MOST CURRENT AND ACCURATE INFORMATION REGARDING ACTIONS THAT THE COUNTY IS TAKING AS WELL AS EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT WEB-BASED TOOL THAT WILL HELP YOU PREPARE FOR THIS SEASON, AND OTHER IMPORTANT FACTS.

IN ADDITION, MIAMI-DADE COUNTY IS WORKING MORE CLOSELY THAN EVER WITH OUR TOURISM INDUSTRY TO BE PREPARED TO ASSIST OUR GROWING NUMBER OF VISITORS DURING WEATHER EMERGENCIES.

LASTLY, WE HAVE MIAMI-DADE ALERTS, WHICH PROVIDE FREE TEXT ALERTS TO CELL PHONES OR OTHER MOBILE DEVICES ABOUT SEVERE WEATHER AND OTHER EMERGENCY EVENTS. WITH THIS

TOOL, RESIDENTS AND VISITORS HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO TAKE SNAPSHOTS OF POSSIBLE DAMAGE IN THE VICINITY OF THEIR HOME. TO REGISTER FOR MIAMI-DADE ALERTS VISIT WWW.MIAMIDADE.GOV/ALERTS

ANOTHER USEFUL TOOL THAT MIAMI-DADE COUNTY HAS THAT CAN HELP KEEP YOUR FAMILY INFORMED AND PREPARED, IS OUR FREE HURRICANE GUIDE DISTRIBUTED AT YOUR COMMISSIONER'S OFFICES OR YOU CAN CALL 3-1-1 TO FIND ALL THE LOCATIONS.

FINALLY, I CAN'T EMPHASIZE ENOUGH THAT ALL PREPAREDNESS ACTIVITIES NEED TO BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF TROPICAL STORM FORCE WINDS. NO ONE CAN PREDICT WITH ABSOLUTE CERTAINTY WHERE THE HURRICANES THAT FORM THIS SEASON WILL STRIKE, BUT WE CAN GET READY NOW.

IF ASKED TO EVACUATE ALLOW YOURSELF ENOUGH TIME TO GET TO YOUR DESTINATION SAFE AND SOUND.

GET A KIT, MAKE A PLAN AND STAY INFORMED.

DON'T WAIT UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE – YOUR FAMILY IS DEPENDING ON YOU!

NOW I WILL REPEAT MY REMARKS IN SPANISH BEFORE HANDING IT OVER TO THE VICE CHAIRMAN. THANK YOU!

COMO TODOS SABEMOS EL LUNES INICIA OFICIALMENTE LA TEMPORADA DE HURACANES 2015, Y HOY ESTAMOS AQUÍ PARA DECIRLE A NUESTROS RESIDENTES QUE TENEMOS QUE ESTAR LO MÁS PREPARADOS POSIBLE EN CASO DE QUE LLEGUE UNA TORMENTA.

SI USTED Y SU FAMILIA NO ESTÁN LISTOS PARA ENFRENTAR UNA EMERGENCIA POR AL MENOS LAS PRIMERAS 72 HORAS DESPUÉS DE QUE LLEGUE UNA TORMENTA TROPICAL SIMPLEMENTE NO ESTÁN SEGUROS.

PARA LA TEMPORADA 2015 SE DICE QUE PUEDEN HABER DE 6 A 11 TORMENTAS DE LAS CUALES HASTA 6 PUEDEN LLEGAR A SER HURACANES, 2 DE ELLOS DE GRAN INTENSIDAD.

RECUERDEN 1992 LA PRIMERA TORMENTA FUE ANDREW QUE HIZO MUCHO DAÑO A NUESTRA COMUNIDAD.

EL CONDADO TIENE COMO AYUDAR A NUESTROS RESIDENTES Y VISITANTES A QUE SE PREPAREN.

LE PEDIMOS QUE EMPIEZE A COMPRAR ALIMENTOS QUE SE PUEDAN CONSERVAR POR UN LARGO TIEMPO.

DEBEMOS GUARDAR AGUA EN BOTELLAS. NO OLVIDE QUE NUESTRA AGUA ES SEGURA PARA TOMAR, EXCEPTO CUANDO EXISTAN ALERTAS DE HERVIR EL AGUA.

TAMBIEN RECOMENDAMOS SIEMPRE LLENAR SUS TANQUES DE GASOLINA.

COMIENZE AHORA MISMO SU PLAN DE EMERGENCIA ANTES DE UNA AMENAZA DE HURACANES. TENGA EN CUENTA A LAS PERSONAS DE MAYORES, LAS PERSONAS DISCAPACITADAS, LOS NIÑOS Y SUS MASCOTAS.

RECUERDE QUE EL CONDADO TIENE DOS CENTROS DE EVACUACIÓN DONDE SE ACEPTAN MASCOTAS. LLAME AL 3-1-1 PARA SABER DONDE ESTAN ESTOS CENTROS.

SI TIENE ALGÚN TIPO DE DISCAPACIDAD, TAMBIÉN TENEMOS UN PROGRAMA DE ASISTENCIA DE EVACUACIÓN. HAY AUTO-BUSES QUE LO PUEDEN LLEVAR A ESTOS SITIOS.

POR OTRA PARTE, INFÓRMESE ACERCA DE LAS NUEVAS ZONAS DE EVACUACIÓN Y SI USTED VIVE EN UNA DE ELLAS.

RECUERDE QUE SIEMPRE PUEDE LLAMAR 3-1-1 PARA MAS INFORMACIÓN Ó VISITAR LA PÁGINA WEB WWW.MIAMIDADE.GOV

LES PEDIMOS QUE TAMBIÉN SE REGISTREN PARA RECIBIR ALERTAS DE EMERGENCIA. ESTO LO PUEDE HACER VISITANDO LA PAGINA DE WWW.MIAMIDADE.GOV/ALERTS

ADEMÁS, TENEMOS NUESTRA GUÍA DE HURACANES, QUE ES GRATIS Y ESTA EN LAS OFICINAS DE CADA COMISIONADO O LLAMANDO AL 3-1-1 PARA SABER DONDE LA PUEDE CONSEGUIR.

LES PIDO A TODOS NUESTROS RESIDENTES QUE SE TOMEN EL TIEMPO NECESARIO AHORA PARA REVISAR SUS PLANES DE EMERGENCIA Y PARA ESTAR MEJOR PREPARADOS.

MUCHAS GRACIAS!