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Hurricane season is here: Are you ready?

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Hurricane Frances approaching Florida, 2004

ST. PETERSBURG, FL (May 31, 2012) – Hurricane season has arrived and the University of South Florida St. Petersburg is ready.

Are you?

Because of our waterfront location, USFSP is vulnerable to potential hurricanes. Although history gives us hope – no hurricane has made a direct strike in Tampa Bay in more than 90 years – emergency planners urge all of us to be prepared.

Hurricane season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30. This season is expected to be about average for the number of storms, but even quiet seasons can produce devastating results, as Hurricane Andrew proved 20 years ago.

“In recent years, our state has been blessed to have dodged major hurricanes,” Gov. Rick Scott said recently. “While good for our state, it also means many of Florida’s citizens, visitors, and businesses may not fully appreciate the need to prepare for a storm.”

USF St. Petersburg officials will be paying close attention as the season progresses. If a hurricane threatens, emergency notices will be posted at usfsp.edu, through e-mail and MoBull text message alerts. If an evacuation is ordered, all buildings, including residence halls, will be closed. If you have not signed up for Mo-Bull alerts – emergency notifications sent to cell phones – sign up here: <http://www.mobull.usf.edu/>. (The service is free, though standard text messaging fees apply.) All students, faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to sign up.

“The university has an emergency operations and planning process that has been in place for several years to respond to any emergencies to respond in the most efficient manner,” said Ashok Dhingra, Regional Vice Chancellor for Administrative and Financial Services who serves as the emergency operations director.

Every Floridian should be prepared for hurricanes. The first step is to have some basic necessities on hand so you can make it through the first three days – water, non-perishable food, flashlights, batteries, first aid supplies. Try to arrange shelter ahead of time with friends or family in areas outside of evacuation zones. Emergency shelters are uncomfortable and should be used only as a last resort.

Be sure to review the USF System 2012 Hurricane Guide, which includes many useful tips to prepare and the USFSP Hurricane Preparedness page.