

FLAGLER BOCC HEADLINES



A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER · OCTOBER 2024 · VOLUME 4 · ISSUE 1

FREE SKYWARN STORM SPOTTER CLASS OCTOBER 16 REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Emergency Management will host the National Weather Service's free Skywarn Storm Spotter class at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, October 16, at the county's Emergency Services Building.

A seasoned meteorologist with the National Weather Service will teach the class. It will provide attendees with the knowledge to become a part of a nationwide network of volunteers who support local emergency management and the National Weather Service by recognizing and reporting severe weather.

"It is so important for our community to have well-trained volunteers, because it helps improve weather reports and allows us to better prepare and protect our community," said Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord. "The class takes about two hours to complete."

Students will learn about storm formation and structure, as well as how to identify and report severe weather.

Registration can be done by visiting www.FlaglerCounty.gov/emergency and selecting "Volunteering and Training," from the menu then navigate to the National Weather Service Skywarn Training and click on the [link](#).

For more information about the Skywarn program, go to the website <https://www.weather.gov/skywarn/>.



FIRE RESCUE ADOPTS PROTOCOLS IN RESPONSE TO CRIMINAL ALLEGATIONS OF FORMER PARAMEDIC

Fire Rescue adopted new protocols in response to horrific sexual assault allegations that led to the arrest of a former paramedic that reportedly occurred while he was on duty.

Fire Rescue immediately implemented the following enhanced safety and security measures:

- Mandatory Two-Person Protocol – All ambulances will now have two personnel riding in the back when patients are considered vulnerable or underage to ensure additional oversight and support.
- Psychological Evaluations – Mandatory psychological evaluations will be conducted for all Fire Rescue new employees to support their mental health and professional conduct. This procedure was implemented before knowledge of this incident and will continue.
- Enhanced Surveillance – Current external 360-degree cameras used for driver awareness will have an additional camera installed in the back of all vehicles for awareness of activities in the patient compartment for additional safety.
- Rescue Supervisor on All Ambulances – In August, before awareness of this criminal allegation, Fire Rescue established the Rescue Supervisor position for all ambulances within the county to ensure oversight on all units.

"These actions reflect our unwavering commitment to the safety and well-being of the people we serve," said Fire Rescue Chief Michael Tucker. "We want to emphasize that the actions of one individual do not reflect the dedication and heroism of our entire team. The men and women of Flagler County Fire Rescue are life-saving heroes who work tirelessly to protect and serve our community. The arrest of this individual for his alleged depraved criminality does not diminish the exceptional and compassionate work performed by our entire team every day."

According to a news release issued by the Flagler County Sheriff's Office, James Tyler Melady, 37, "confessed to his crimes" of sexual battery and video voyeurism when interviewed by Major Case Unit detectives who coordinated with the Daytona Beach Police Department that found the evidence while investigating a separate crime.

'TUNE IN' TO MEETINGS

OCTOBER 7: BOCC REGULAR MEETING at 9 a.m.
OCTOBER 8: PLANNING AND ZONING at 6 p.m.
OCTOBER 16: TOURIST DEVELOPMENT at 9 a.m.
OCTOBER 21: BOCC REGULAR MEETING at 5 p.m.

LIVE STREAM

www.youtube.com/flaglercounty/live



GRANT MONEY WILL BE USED TO PURCHASE TWO PPE WASHERS-EXTRACTORS.

EACH MACHINE CAN WASH TWO SETS OF BUNKER GEAR AT A TIME.

GOAL = 1 MACHINE PER STATION

FIRE RESCUE RECEIVES \$30,000 STATE GRANT FOR CANCER DECONTAMINATION EQUIPMENT

Fire Rescue (FCFR) received a grant for nearly \$30,000 from the Florida State Fire Marshal's Office for cancer decontamination equipment, specifically for two personal protective equipment washers and extractors.

"When materials burn, they release carcinogens – cancer-causing agents – including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), which is a group of more than 100 chemicals," said Fire Chief Mike Tucker. "Exposure to some of them can cause cancer. We firefighters may also encounter other carcinogens such as asbestos. In short, it's a big deal to get a grant for decontamination equipment."

Clearly, being a firefighter is a job that comes with risks. The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society notes that personal protective equipment lessens exposure but "toxic chemicals can still penetrate the turnout gear and expose the skin to toxins," which are then absorbed.

"Members of FCFR willingly put their lives on the line daily, so we want to do everything we can to keep our team as safe as possible," Tucker said. "Firefighters are at a much greater risk for cancer."

Flagler County will be required to provide 25% non-state matching funds.

'DO DATE' EVENTS

10/12/24

Master Gardener Plant Clinic | 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

Flagler County Public Library -- Palm Coast

2500 Palm Coast Parkway NW

Presented through a partnership with the UF Extension Office in Flagler County

BREAKERS

STAFF DEPLOYED TO DIXIE COUNTY

Flagler County sent five team members – Emergency Management Director Jonathan Lord, Communications and Engagement Manager Karen Callahan, Emergency Management Specialist Lovie Haley, as well as Fire Rescue Lt. Tony Guerin and Firefighter Paramedic Savannah Loertscher – to one of the hardest hit areas, Dixie County.

"We are so sorry to hear of the devastation in the Big Bend region," said County Administrator Heidi Petito. "A few of our dedicated staff volunteered and will be temporarily deployed to assist in recovery efforts in Dixie County. I know their work will make a meaningful difference."

Dixie County, a small county of fewer than 20,000 that sits due west of Gainesville on the Gulf Coast of Florida, was hit by three hurricanes in a little more than a year. This includes two major storms – Idalia in 2023 and now Helene. Debby also hit the region this past August, and local news reports say Dixie County finished hurricane debris cleanup just days before Hurricane Helene hit.

OFFICE MANAGER DEPLOYED TO BRADENTON

Most days Flagler County Fire Rescue Office Manager Suzanne Eubanks goes about the routine tasks to ensure the department is on top of everything it needs to operate successfully and efficiently. When disaster strikes, she's a logistics specialist seeing that disaster recovery needs are met.

She is a key member of the Northeast Florida All Hazards Incident Management Team and is regularly called upon for her specialized training and experience in logistics. The team deployed Sunday (September 29) for Bradenton Beach.

"This community received significant damage," she said by way of text. "There is 5 to 8 feet of sand in roads and homes – 90% of homes have major damage or (were) destroyed."

Hurricane Helene is reported to be the most deadly hurricane in 50 years.

"We are fortunate to be able to help," said Flagler County Fire Rescue Chief Michael Tucker. "A day will come when we will need help, so we must do what we can to hold each other up."