



CITY OF PUNTA GORDA

**POLICE**

A Florida Accredited **EXCELSIOR AGENCY**

1410 Tamiami Trail  
Punta Gorda, FL 33950  
941-639-4111  
www.puntagordapolice.com

**AFTER ACTION REPORT  
October 30, 2024**

**TYPE OF INCIDENT:**

Unusual Occurrence – Hurricane Milton

**INCIDENT NO.:**

24-03075

**DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT:**

Start: October 05, 2024 – 08:00 a.m.

End: October 14, 2024 – 08:00 a.m.

**INCIDENT LOCATION:**

Punta Gorda Police Department  
1410 Tamiami Trail  
Punta Gorda, Florida 33950

**SYNOPSIS/SUMMARY:**

October 05, 2024

- The Punta Gorda Police Department has been alerted to the potential threat Hurricane Milton poses, currently classified as a tropical storm.
- At 4:52 p.m., a briefing email was distributed to all police and dispatch personnel requesting that they review Standard Operating Procedure 242.00 (Unusual Occurrences) and Standard Operating Procedure 242.01 (Hurricane Plan) at their next roll call to ensure that each member was familiar with their responsibilities and that now was the time to activate your personal family plan.
- Officers were also advised to ensure that they are fueling their vehicles several times a day to ensure that they have plenty of fuel when mobilized.

**October 06, 2024**

- Tropical Storm Milton is upgraded to hurricane status and is projected to become a major hurricane.
- At 8:00 a.m., officers began relocating Police Department assets to the third floor of the parking garage, and the Carolina Skiff and Angler were pulled from the water.
- The first Emergency Operations Center (EOC) briefing was held at 9:00 a.m.
- At 9:29 a.m. EOC surveys are sent to personnel that will be staying at the EOC to fill out.
- At 11:25 a.m. Right of Way places road closure signs in the field in anticipation of road flooding.
- At 12:54 p.m., Hurricane Milton Update #2 was disseminated to personnel, advising them to secure their homes.
- School closures were announced, and city closures followed shortly thereafter.
- At this time the forecast shows Milton becoming a category 3 storm but the EOC has advised to prepare for a 4 or 5.
- Tires and plug kits are ordered and limits are removed from P cards.
- Members of the Leadership Team drafted an Incident Action Plan 24-10-08 detailing the Alpha/Bravo schedule for patrol and communications and plans for mobilization. All new vacation requests were being denied. All regular Volunteers in Policing operations were halted. The completed IAP was distributed to all personnel at 5:22 p.m.

**October 07, 2024**

- The EOC transitions to a Level 1 full-scale activation.
- Charlotte County Emergency Management issues Zone A and B evacuations at 9:00 a.m.
- The City declares a State of Emergency at an Emergency City Council meeting.
- Hurricane Milton Update #3 was sent to personnel, including information about potential sleeping arrangements at Florida Southwestern State College (FSW). Milton is now predicted to make landfall as a Category 4 hurricane.
- Officers begin announcing evacuation orders throughout the city.
- Contact is made with Homestead Police Department to have them on stand-by for post storm response.

**October 08, 2024**

- All sworn personnel and public safety dispatchers were required to begin deployment at 6:00 a.m. on October 08, 2024. Initially personnel were assigned to the Police Department for sleeping quarters, but had to be re-assigned to FSW due to a high anticipated storm surge.
- Alpha/Bravo shifts commence at 6:00 a.m.
- Key fobs (5) for fuel access were distributed to Captain Nagra, City Manager, Chief Gibbs, Rick Keeney, and Lieutenant Cochran.

- At 3:00 p.m., evacuations were executed from the Police Department to FSW and the EOC due to anticipated high storm surge.
- Hurricane Milton Update #4 sent out to personnel at 4:16 p.m.
- A Zone C evacuation order was announced.

**October 09, 2024**

- Hurricane Milton #5 update sent to personnel.
- Officers were instructed to double up on patrols and begin relocating assets from FSW to the airport.
- Officers continued to make announcements urging residents to evacuate.
- Several E.O.C. briefings were held throughout the day to prepare for deployment upon end of the storm.
- A curfew restricting travel in the city between the hours of 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. was enacted at 12:30 p.m. It was signed by City Manager Greg Murray.
- Residents are urged on social media to stay home and off the roadways.
- A second update IAP is issued by Command Staff at 1:03 p.m.
- Downtown roads began flooding at 1:21 p.m., leading to road closures.
- Emergency response operations were suspended at 5:20 p.m. due to unsafe weather conditions.
- FSW loses power at 9:40 p.m.
- Non-emergency phone lines went down at 10:00 p.m., prompting dispatch to switch to EOC lines, with a backup phone number shared on social media.
- Flooding reaches its peak at 11:00 p.m.

**October 10, 2024**

- At 1:00 a.m., flood waters begin to recede.
- Officers were deployed to begin assessing blocked roadways and damage at approximately 05:27 a.m.
- Officers began calling in hazards throughout the city and dispatchers added the hazards into Survey 123. This was done for several days.
- Several intersections with no stop signs or traffic signals. Public works were requested to place portable stop signs at these intersections.
- Dispatch begins to transition back to the Police Department at 12:00 p.m.

**October 13, 2024**

- Curfew is lifted.

**October 14, 2024**

- City Manager lifted the storm/emergency pay provision at 6:00 p.m. on October 14, 2024.

- Officers were advised that they would continue on Alpha/Bravo through the morning of October 12, 2024. However, several additional officers worked over the weekend to ensure businesses and flooded residential areas were patrolled.
- There were 229 calls placed into the CAD within 24 hours before the storm. This includes directed patrols and business checks.
- During the storm, there were 57 calls placed into the CAD. This includes 11 burglar alarms, 5 welfare checks, 1 vehicle fire, and 16 traffic other calls.
- There were 312 calls placed into the CAD within 24 hours after the storm passed. This includes 163 directed patrols, 26 community foot patrols, 14 marine, 9 burglar alarms, and 14 business checks.
- 13 calls for service were held while emergency services were suspended. Most of these calls were cleared up before emergency services resumed.
- Officers responded to 2 water rescue calls immediately upon the restoration of emergency services. One was at E. Marion/Cooper and the other on E. Charlotte. 3 people were taken to the emergency shelter.
- Officers conducted 24 welfare checks between October 09, 2024 and October 14, 2024.

### **DEBRIEFING:**

All squads were requested to conduct a debriefing at the squad level and that supervisors shall bring forth that information to the next leadership meeting.

On October 23, 2024, at approximately 3:00 pm, a debriefing was conducted in the Punta Gorda Police Department Training Room at the monthly leadership meeting. Attendees were Chief Pamela R. Davis, Captain Norman Nahra, Captain Dylan Renz, Lieutenant Martin Meddaugh, Lieutenant Chris Salsman, Lieutenant Justin Davoult, Lieutenant Kelvin Jimenez, Acting Lieutenant Taylor Smith, Acting Lieutenant Russell Fiorino, Administrative Services Supervisor Eric Burris, Employee Development Coordinator Glen Rita, Volunteer Coordinator Craig Robinson, Communications Supervisor Audrey Denis, Professional Standards Specialist Kaylee Licata and Senior Executive Assistant Kristin Parks.

### **DEBRIEFING CRITIQUE/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The overall consensus was that the incident was handled well by everyone involved. The agency as a whole was prepared and worked well together. It was also commented that many issues from Hurricane Helene were corrected and handled better for Hurricane Milton.

Some of the suggestions made are:

- EOC: Additional Representative at EOC. Possibly Corporal or professional staff member.
- EOC: Sleeping arrangements for Communications personnel. All Cots were taken upon their arrival. Had to utilize the server room for sleeping.

- EOC: Additional sleeping area for night shift EOC representative needed.
- EOC: Third radio needed for communications.
- Key cards requested for each dispatcher to get into the EOC.
- EOC: Second door to enter the Communications Center is a hazard as it hits the dispatcher sitting at the front desk. Secure that door and have other door utilized instead.
- Communications personnel are unable to see what has been entered into Survey123.
- Food: Only one cooked meal a day. Preferably dinner so all shifts have ability to eat.
- Mission requests: Only one person for the whole city entering mission requests at a time.
- FIT Team: Better organization with Fire Department.
- Shelter: Backup generator needs to be hooked up at FSW. Possible use of Airport if evacuation is needed. **This is still being worked on by the City Emergency Manager – Chief Holden Gibbs.**
- Cot for each officer – assign the cot number to the officer prior to the storm (See attached).
- Possible shelter location: PGMS (See attached).
- Radio etiquette was very poor (See attached).
- All patrol vehicle should be able to traverse through some level of high water. Recommendation to purchase Tahoes (or similar) or Police Equipped Pick-up Trucks in future vehicle purchases.
- Need for high water rescue vehicles (FEMA Grants).
- Sound barrier needed at EOC (Dispatch).
- Radio needed for PIO.
- Showers were not available at FSW **Shower stations were ordered prior to storm arrival. We will work with Procurement on trying to get a contract in place to have shower stations prior to storm.**
- I-Phones for Satellite communication if networks go down.
- EOC issues will have to be resolved by the County. **This has been an on-going issue due to limited space during emergencies. We will set up a meeting with the County EOC to determine resolutions.**

### **IMPROVEMENTS SINCE LAST STORM**

- Dispatch night and day supervisor
- FSW for sleeping
- Night and day shift rep at EOC
- More residents evacuated as a result of the aftermath of Hurricane Helene

### **SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITY**

- October 5<sup>th</sup>, Emergency Preparedness Tips from Charlotte County Emergency Management was shared
- October 5<sup>th</sup>, Charlotte County emergency Management updated regarding Milton Status was shared
- October 5<sup>th</sup>, notice from fire department regarding lithium battery safety shared
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, shared post from Charlotte County Emergency Management about prescription refills during state of emergency
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, shared US National Weather Service update on Milton Status
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, shared Charlotte County Flood Watch Status from Charlotte County Emergency Management
- October 6<sup>th</sup>, shared Know Your Zone from Charlotte County Emergency Management

- October 6<sup>th</sup>, posted the link to sign up for Alert Punta Gorda
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, shared post from Charlotte County Emergency Management showing Charlotte County under Hurricane, Storm Surge and Flood Watch
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, posted Evacuation of Zone A/Red Zones
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, shared emergency shelter information from Charlotte County Emergency Management
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, advised residents to removed boats from water
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, posted that City of Punta Gorda is under Hurricane Warning. Zones A and B under mandatory evacuation
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, advised residents that cross tying of boats in canals is now allowed
- October 7<sup>th</sup>, posted City of Punta Gorda under Storm Surge Warning
- Oct 8<sup>th</sup>, post showing earliest onset of storm effects
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, second post about emergency shelters
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, post to residents to bring in trash cans and secure items outdoors
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, post showing city personnel at work at the EOC
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, post about evacuation safety from FDLE
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, shared Charlotte County Emergency Management post for Yellow/Zone C evacuation
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, video from Chief Smith posted urging residents to evacuate now
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, third post about emergency shelters
- October 8<sup>th</sup>, shared information from ShorePoint regarding hospital closures
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, post urging residents to evacuate, still space at shelters
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, fourth post about emergency shelters
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, posted EOC phone number due to high volumes of calls into dispatch
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, curfew in effect post
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, first post about initial flooding effects. Urging residents to stay home
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, all emergency services suspended post
- October 9<sup>th</sup>, post about non-emergency lines being down. Back up phone number posted
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, post advising residents that roadways are still flooded
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, post that we are preparing to assess damage and roadway conditions. Officers will be responding to calls as conditions permit
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, post from Charlotte County Emergency Management regarding generator safety
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, post from Charlotte County Emergency Management urging residents to stay off the roads
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, post about treating intersections as 4-way stops
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, photo of officers in Fat Truck responding to vehicle fire
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, post that phone lines are back up
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, update to road closure list
- October 10<sup>th</sup>, curfew amendment announcement
- October 13<sup>th</sup>, curfew lifted announcement
- October 14<sup>th</sup>, fire safety shared from PGFD

**COMMAND STAFF REVIEW:**

Command staff has reviewed the information in this report and agrees with all the debriefing comments except where noted in red.

**REPORT COMPLETED BY:**

**DATE:**

Kaylee Licata

October 30, 2024

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Incident Report 24-03075  
Briefing Email Chain  
IAP 24-10-08  
Curfew Order

**APPROVED:**

**DATE:**

*Pamela R. Smith*  
Chief Pamela R. Smith

November 12, 2024

*Copy to Accreditation*