

HURRICANE MILTON AFTER ACTION REPORT



Greater Naples Fire District
Report, Response & Recommendations

November 27, 2024

The After-Action Report is a process used by emergency responders to capture the lessons learned from past successes and failures, with the goal of improving future performances. This is an opportunity for reflection on the event, its successes and failures, so that ultimately improvements can be made. The After-Action Report has been compiled based upon feedback from staff employees, Operations staff, and Section Leaders who played key roles during the response and recovery efforts of Hurricane Milton.

On October 9, 2024, Greater Naples Fire District, and Collier County as a whole, experienced the effects of Hurricane Milton, a major hurricane that made a direct landfall in Siesta Key, Florida. Many areas of the Greater Naples Fire District response area experienced tropical storm force winds, storm surge, and flooding.

This After-Action Report is submitted for review to determine administrative, operational and budgetary priorities for consideration and implementation. Part of the information contained herein was compiled from NWS Miami's Post Tropical Cyclone Report as reported under the Collier County Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan.

Hurricane Milton Incident Command and General Staff

Fire Chief Chris Wolfe: Incident Commander

Deputy Chief Josh Bauer: Deputy Incident Commander

Assistant Chief Forrest Campbell: Deputy Incident Commander

Battalion Chief Chris Diaz: Operations Section Chief

Battalion Chief Chris Rossi: Deputy Operations Section Chief

Assistant Chief Andy Krajewski: Safety Officer

Lieutenant Matt Donovan: Assistant Safety Officer

Division Chief Dennis DiSarro: Medical Unit Leader

Assistant Chief Shawn Hanson: Planning Section Chief

Captain Mike Cruz: Deputy Planning Section Chief

Assistant Chief Mark Stirns: Logistics Section Chief

Finance Director Jeff Newman: Finance Section Chief

Tiffany Wood: Public Information Officer

Fleet Director Mark Records: Fleet Support

Captain Rusty Godette: ESF 4 GNFD Liaison Officer

Battalion Chief Aaron Fly: GNFD Liaison Officer to CCSO ROC

PREPARATION

In preparation for the storm and its impact several steps were taken to ensure the safety of personnel and security of the stations. Administration participated in daily conference call briefings with Emergency Management. This information was passed on to all personnel. Two days before the storm crews removed all loose debris from around the stations. Storm shutters were checked for working condition. A Liaison was assigned to Emergency Management to staff the ESF4 desk. Two days before the storm's arrival crews were advised of who would be called back and the date/time to report to duty. All crews being recalled to up-staff additional apparatus were advised to bring in provisions for three days. Administration made decisions ahead of time on stations that may need to be evacuated. These stations included 60, 61, 23, 90 and 22.

THE HURRICANE

Moderate to major coastal flooding along most of the Collier County coast was observed, mainly on October 9th from late morning through the overnight. Inundation above ground was in the 2-4 foot range across much of the beach and bayfront locations across the county, with a maximum estimated inundation of near five (5) feet in Chokoloskee. General tree and power line damage was observed across a good portion of the county. One tornado skirted the far northeast corner of the county just south of Big Cypress Seminole Reservation with isolated damage along Alligator Alley. The tornado was given a rating of EFU – unknown – as it began three miles south of Miccosukee Indian Reservation and ended its path 4 miles east-northeast of Big Cypress Seminole near the Collier/Hendry county line. This tornado was seen on the I-75 traffic camera.

Highest 10 Land Winds (kts)*

<i>Station</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Sustained</i>	<i>Gust</i>
FSWN Glades Alvin Ward Park	FL	WEATHERSTE	44	49
US Sugar 4 - 4 SE Clewiston	FL	CCU	43	
US Sugar 5 - 12 E Pahokee	FL	CCU	40	
US Sugar 6 - 5 ENE Belle Glade	FL	CCU	40	
FSWN Collier County EOC	FL	WEATHERSTE	39	51
US Sugar 3 - 13 SE LaBelle	FL	CCU	38	
S75WX - Brighton	FL	SFWMD	36	
FSWN Glades Muse EMS 3	FL	WEATHERSTE	36	50
Turkey Point	FL	WxFlow	35	48
GW1630 NAPLES	FL	APRSWXNET/	35	56

Highest 10 Marine Winds (kts)*

<i>Station</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Sustained</i>	<i>Gust</i>
USACE S273 Lake Okeechobee	CCU	49.0000	
Lake Okeechobee North	SFWMD	44.0000	52
Lake Okeechobee South	SFWMD	44.0000	53

Lake Okeechobee Center			
FSWN Lake Okeechobee Lock 7	WEATHERSTE	42.0000	57
Juno Beach Pier	WxFlow	40.0000	53
FSWN Delray Beach North	WEATHERSTE	40.0000	47
Lake Worth Pier	NOS	38.0000	46
Navsea 1 - Dania Beach	CCU	37.0000	
U of Miami Rosenstiel School	WEATHERSTE	37.0000	52

Highest 10 Rainfall Totals

<i>Station</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Inches</i>
FSWN Collier County EOC	FL	WeatherSTE	2.16
Lakeport 2E	FL	UCOOP	2.04
2 NE Big Cypress Reservation	FL	SFWMD	1.60
Royal Palm Beach	FL	APRSWXNET/	1.45
Homestead General Airport	FL	SCAN	1.42
11 W Coral Springs	FL	SFWMD	1.01

Highest NOAA Tide Gage Observations

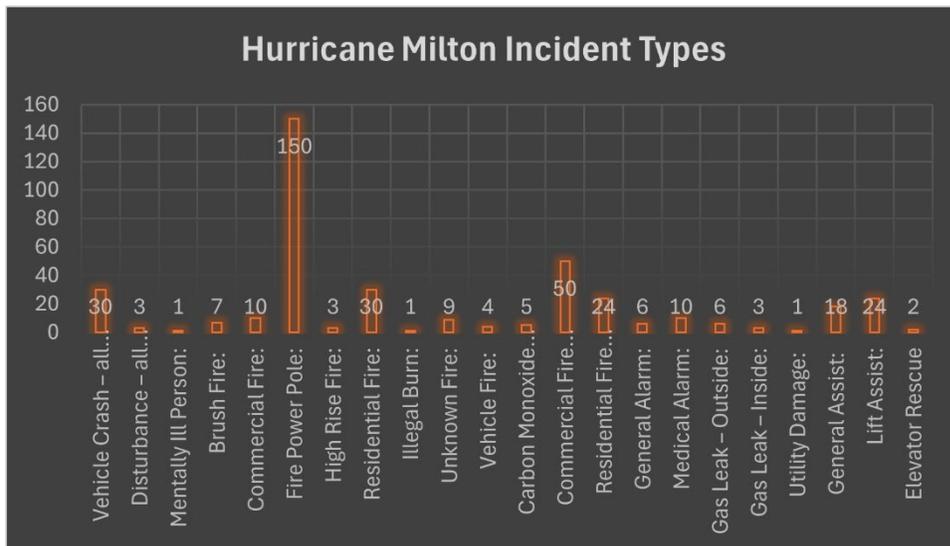
<i>Station</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Datum</i>	<i>Water Level (ft)</i>
Naples Bay North	FL	MHHW	5.08
Virginia Key	FL	MHHW	1.34
South Port Everglades	FL	MHHW	1.11
Lake Worth Pier	FL	MHHW	1.02

Lowest 10 Pressures

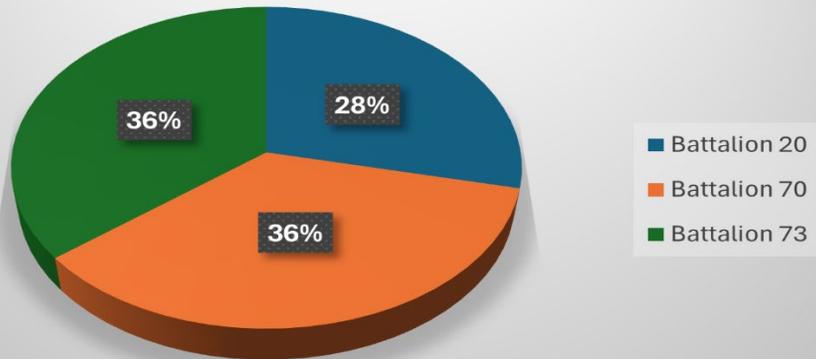
<i>Station</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Millibars</i>
Naples Municipal Airport	FL	ASOS	995.4
Palm Beach International Airport	FL	ASOS	999.0
Lake Worth Pier		NOS	1000.0
Ft Laud/Hollywood Intl Airport	FL	ASOS	1000.5
South Port Everglades		NOS-NTC	1000.6
Pompano Beach Airpark	FL	ASOS	1000.7
Ft Lauderdale Executive Airport	FL	ASOS	1000.8
Hollywood North Perry Airport	FL	ASOS	1001.1
Miami-Tamiami Executive Airport	FL	ASOS	1001.1
Miami Opa Locka Airport	FL	ASOS	1001.2

According to Collier County Sheriff's Office CAD, Greater Naples ran 557 incidents between 08:00 October 9, 2024 and 08:00 October 12, 2024. Of these incidents 159 incidents were in Battalion 20, 199 incidents in Battalion 70, and 199 incidents in Battalion 73.

Incident Type	# of Incidents
Vehicle Crash – all types:	30
Disturbance – all types:	3
Mentally Ill Person:	1
Brush Fire:	7
Commercial Fire:	10
Fire Power Pole:	150
High Rise Fire:	3
Residential Fire:	30
Illegal Burn:	1
Unknown Fire:	9
Vehicle Fire:	4
Carbon Monoxide Alarm:	5
Commercial Fire Alarm:	50
Residential Fire Alarm:	24
General Alarm:	6
Medical Alarm:	10
Gas Leak – Outside:	6
Gas Leak – Inside:	3
Utility Damage:	1
General Assist:	18
Lift Assist:	24
Elevator Rescue	2



Incidents per Battalion Oct 9 - Oct 12 (8:00-8:00)



IMPACTS TO THE DISTRICT

The District sustained damage to Station 60 due to salt water intrusion and EN 903 due to salt water. Due to the distance the storm center was away from Collier County we did not sustain significant storm surge impacts throughout the southern and eastern parts of our District as we suffered in Hurricane Ian. There were several apparatus that sustained cosmetic damage due to salt water rain.

ISSUES AND RECOMMENDED SOLUTIONS

In reviewing plans, preparations and response for Hurricane Milton, the following issues and recommendations have been identified. While everything went generally well, this does not mean that everything went perfect or as necessarily planned. To develop these issues and recommended solutions, Administration sought feedback and constructive criticism from District employees as well as holding a Post Incident Analysis by Command Staff. The issues and solutions presented should in no way be deemed as the only solutions to address these issues and the overall answers to the issues may require additional brainstorming. Moreover, it is not anticipated that every solution listed will be financially or functionally practicable, nor that it can be achieved in a short timeframe.

Issue: Not all Greater Naples Facilities are structurally built to withstand all hurricane force winds and/or flood waters from storm surge. Station 60, again, sustained damage due to flood waters.

Solutions:

- ❖ Seek grant funds to build stations that meet current hurricane code requirements
 - ❖ Continued talks with the City of Ochopee and Collier County to build appropriate facilities within the Ochopee area
 - This has been accomplished for ST60 and the new facility will meet current codes related to hurricane structural compliance
 - The attempt was made by the District to have Tiger Dams installed around the current facility – this was rejected by State authorities
 - ❖ The District has compiled a capital facilities project list which will address some of the issues in regards to hardening our facilities for storm readiness
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Issue: District Communications Procedures

Solutions:

- ❖ Develop a Communications SOG related specifically to natural disasters that impact the District
 - This could then be trained on and make for a simple implementation within an IAP
 - Determine a meeting place within each field Division where the Division Supervisor can meet with the leaders within the respective Divisions
 - ❖ Complete the All-Hazards SOG
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Issue: District Command Procedures need to be updated

Solutions:

- ❖ Develop position specific taskbooks for internal personnel
- ❖ Identify personnel to fill General and Deputy positions so as to conduct training on the positions that would be filled – this would fulfill our lack of depth
- ❖ Set up COMMAND room as a true ICS – F.L.O.P. – I.
- ❖ Have a person with a direct link to Dispatch to sit in the District EOC – assist in prioritizing incoming incidents
- ❖ Place an Assistant Safety Officer within each Division
- ❖ Forecast when to switch to Alpha/Bravo work schedules for all personnel
- ❖ Conduct another training day for completing 214's
- ❖ Have all 214's turned into the Division Supervisor by the end of EACH Operational Period

- ❖ Make planning for an event a practice – use the events at Paradise Coast Sports Complex, the Everglades Seafood Festival, etc. as practice
 - Get personnel prepared and accustomed to being in these positions
 - ❖ Weather Stem Grant
 - Some sort of weather monitoring should be placed at each Division Supervisor station
 - ❖ ALL injuries MUST be reported to the Safety Officer and IC
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Issue: ESF4 Desk Staffing

Solutions:

- ❖ Identify and build bench for this position
 - ❖ ALL requests for resources need to be run through ESF4 and EM – NIMS requirement and makes for easier management of resources being reassigned or demobilized
 - ❖ Make all requests very detailed and specific
 - ❖ Develop a tasking document for the ESF4 desk position
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Issue: Housing of Personnel from Evacuated Station(s)

Solutions:

- ❖ Prior to any storm coming in contract with FSW
 - ❖ Prior to any storm coming in contract with a local hotel – State pricing
 - ❖ House at another Station – depending on intensity of storm and recall of personnel
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Issue: Support Staff Communications and Needs

Solutions:

- ❖ Develop relationships with food suppliers prior to event for any long-term events
 - ❖ Identify when Support Staff need to be recalled and who specifically that is
 - ❖ Develop burn rates for District generators
 - ❖ Service all Stations/Facilities prior to seasons approaching
 - ❖ Ensure photos have been taken of all stations and apparatus pre-storm/event
 - ❖ Establish contracts with vendors and identify when to pull the trigger on any specific contract
 - Will be addressed in the All-Hazards SOG
 - ❖ Develop pre-identified sleeping areas/accommodations at each station
 - Coincides with the work/rest schedule and determination of Alpha/Bravo's
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Issue: Financial Constraints and Needs

Solutions:

- ❖ Finance Director and Chief of Staff to develop a strategy to have cash on-hand, how much, and when to secure it
 - ❖ Have a means to secure the cash once taken out of the bank
 - ❖ Develop a Food Log to show who had meals for reimbursement purposes should the District be in a long term event
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Issue: Equipment Gaps

Solutions:

- ❖ Purchase a set of chaps for every response capable apparatus
 - This still has not happened since Ian
 - ❖ Purchase additional Hotsticks for deployment during disasters
 - Training is conducting a demo of a replacement for the current Hotstick on our apparatus since they are no longer made
 - ❖ Purchase additional shallow water boats
 - Can be used on flooded roads
 - ❖ Review the cache of the District's Technical Rescue Team and make appropriate equipment purchases
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Issue: Salt water damage to apparatus

Solutions:

- ❖ Include in the All-Hazards SOG what needs to be done and when regarding the rinsing of District apparatus after being exposed to salt water
 - ❖ Construct additional McLaughlin devices to rinse the undercarriage of District apparatus
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Issue: Communication Across Divisions/Sections

Solutions:

- ❖ Communicate when different phases of the All-Hazards Plan are going into effect
 - ❖ Address issue of Station Officers not reading their emails so they are up to date on information being pushed out
 - Monitor TEAMS if this is the route that will be used
 - ❖ Maintain current situation status on the information boards (TV's)
 - ❖ Standardize the 214 to be used for the District
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Issue: Mental Health of Our Personnel

Solutions:

- ❖ Develop a District CISM/Peer Support Team
- ❖ Pre-event (do this now for daily activities) hand out information on mental health resources
- ❖ Establish a list of local mental health practitioners who have been vetted and understand the culture and work life of 1st Responders

CONCLUSION

Hurricane Milton did not impact the District nearly as much as past storm systems however, there were some impacts and lessons to be learned from our preparations, response, and recovery. Issues have been identified with Command Procedures, Operational constraints, Communications and Communications Procedures, Liaison and Logistical needs, financial constraints, and the mental health of our personnel. Possible solutions to the issues have been suggested. Based on input from our members, it is felt that the District improved communications with all staff, in particular by holding nightly TEAMS meetings. Throughout this event the personnel of the Greater Naples Fire District were the consummate professionals and responded to the needs and requests for service from the community we serve. The response was completed with the utmost dedication of the men and women in the field. The overall assessment of the Greater Naples Fire District to coordinate, respond to and recover from the storm seemed to be positive and meet the needs of the citizens of our District.

The Greater Naples Fire District recognizes that it must continue to enhance its plans, strategies, capabilities, and communication process to prepare for another potentially more impactful natural disaster. The issues and recommended solutions within this After-Action Report will help to further enhance the preparedness and continuous improvement for future emergency events. Our commitment to the learning process and the development and implementation of the recommendations to identified issues will allow us to better serve our community.