



## Tenant Severe Weather Guide 2026

This guide provides information, recommendations, and specific guidance about the distinct phases of activity that take place during Hurricane Season. Not every recommendation and action contained within this guide may be applicable to you, but there is certain key information that is relevant to everyone in the Port Canaveral community during Hurricane Season.

Hurricane Season activities are separated into three phases:

- **Seasonal Preparedness**
- **Pre-Storm Activities**
- **Post-Storm Activities**

The following sections detail these phases as well as activities, information sources, and recommended actions for each phase.

- I. **Seasonal Preparedness:** Each year, Hurricane Season officially begins on June 1st and ends on November 30th. Please review these steps to prepare for the season and to ensure your readiness.

1. **Important Contact Information:**

- a. For any emergency, call 911.
    - b. For non-emergency calls for Police, Fire, or Public Safety, contact the Port Communications Center:

**Port Communications Center: (321) 394-3281**

- c. For the latest port status, the Canaveral Port Authority has a recorded message with the latest information on port conditions, open/closed status, etc.:

**Port Status Hotline: (321) 394-3411**

- d. The Canaveral Port Authority's Department of Public Safety and Security is here to assist with any questions on this guide or to provide assistance with developing your plan. Contact our staff at:

**[PSS@PortCanaveral.com](mailto:PSS@PortCanaveral.com)**

2. **Getting Ready:**

- a. **You and Your Family First:** Get your personal plan together – take care of yourself and your family. Put together an emergency kit and include a Family Communication and Evacuation Plan. Go to [www.ready.gov/hurricanes](http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes) for detailed guidance on family preparation, checklists, and other weather-related information.



- b. **Get Your Facility Plan Ready:** Create/update your facility's specific Heavy Weather Plan. Walk through your facility and identify the potential issues that high winds, rain, and possible flooding can create for your facility. Address those issues within your plan, creating actions and checklists that you can later use for preparations.
- c. **Review the Rules for Vessels:** Port Canaveral is not a suitable vessel refuge for hurricanes or tropical storms. Guidance for vessel preparations and actions are based on two vessel categories:

- i. **Vessels over 500 Gross Tons:** Vessels greater than 500 gross tons desiring to remain in the Port during a hurricane or tropical storm must request and receive permission from the CPA and U.S. Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville by submitting a remain in port request within 6hrs prior to the issuance of Condition Whiskey. CPA may require vessels greater than 500 gross tons that have been approved by the U.S. Coast Guard to remain in Port to shift berths for operational or safety reasons.

- ii. **Vessels under 500 Gross Tons:** Made into effect July 1, 2021, vessels under 500 gross tons **may not** remain in Port, including in the waterways of marinas, and shall be promptly removed from the waters of the Port by the vessel owner(s) upon issuance of an evacuation order by CPA.

**NOTE:** The CPA may issue penalties to vessel owners or operators for violations of this Rule in an amount not to exceed the amount prescribed in Section 313.22(3), Florida Statutes. The owner or operator of any vessel that has not been removed from the waterway of the marina, pursuant to an order from CPA, after the hurricane watch has been issued, may be subject to a fine in an amount not exceeding three times the cost associated with removing the vessel from the waterway. Additionally, all tenants and users of Port Canaveral wharves and facilities shall be responsible for adequately securing all cargo, materials, and equipment that may cause personal injury and/or property damage in the event of a hurricane, tropical storm, or any other severe weather event. In the event any cargo, materials, or equipment are not stored and secured in accordance with requirements issued by the CPA, the CPA may take appropriate measures to secure the items and charge the tenant or user at cost plus 20%.

The CPA assumes no responsibility or liability for any injury or damage to persons, property, cargo, materials, or equipment resulting from hurricanes, tropical storms, or other severe weather events.

- 3. **Critical Return List:** Canaveral Port Authority maintains a Critical Return List of personnel needed in the port immediately after a storm has passed. The Critical Return List is reviewed and updated annually; however, please notify Public Safety and Security of any changes in staff members, business structure, or products held in the port that may impact your organization's inclusion on the list.

- II. **Pre-Storm Activities:** During Hurricane Season, many agencies and organizations at local, state, and federal levels will be actively monitoring storm activity. Those agencies each have a focus area, but they work in concert with each other to ensure preparations are coordinated here in Port Canaveral.



1. **Port-wide Focus:** Canaveral Port Authority will monitor both maritime and landside preparations within Port Canaveral and coordinate and communicate port-wide to all port partners through the Port Communications Center.
2. **Landside Focus:** Brevard County Emergency Management, in coordination with Canaveral Fire Rescue and the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office, will monitor storm activity for possibility of landfall, storm surge, and if an evacuation order of Port Canaveral is issued – as a part of a barrier island evacuation to the mainland.
3. **Maritime Focus:** Captain of the Port, USCG Sector Jacksonville, will increase Port Hurricane Conditions as required to ensure Port Canaveral’s storm readiness.

The following table discusses Port Conditions that may be issued during a storm event:

Port Hurricane Condition	When They’re Set	Port Status
<b>Condition Whiskey</b>	Sustained Gale Force winds* are <b>predicted</b> within 72 hours.	No Restrictions on Port. Open to all commercial and recreational traffic.
<b>Condition X-Ray</b>	Sustained Gale Force winds are <b>predicted</b> within 48 hours.	No Restrictions on Port. Open to all commercial and recreational traffic.
<b>Condition Yankee</b>	Sustained Gale Force winds are <b>predicted</b> within 24 hours.	Port Restricted. Vessel & Facility control measures in effect.
<b>Condition Zulu</b>	Sustained Gale Force winds are <b>predicted</b> within 12 hours.	Port Closed (except for COTP approved activities).

\*The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration defines Gale Force winds as sustained surface winds of 34 knots or 39 miles per hour.

#### 4. Planning Considerations for Vessels:

- a. **Canaveral Lock:** Vessels evacuating to the inland waterway should depart early to ensure passage and avoid potential weather or bridge closures as the storm approaches. The Canaveral Lock will cease operations once winds reach sustained 35mph, when there is lightning within 5 miles of the locks, or when Port Condition Zulu is set. Vessel operators should not expect the locks to be operational eight (8) hours prior to storm strike. The lock operates daily from 6am to 9:30pm daily and may be contacted on Marine VHF Channel 16 and/or by phone at (321) 783-5421.
- b. **Bridge (State Route 401):** While the drawbridge will not impede vessel traffic for vehicular traffic, mariners are reminded that State Route 401 is the southern evacuation route for Kennedy Space Center, the Canaveral Air Force Station, and the north side of Port Canaveral. The drawbridges at SR3 and SR401 will close eight (8) hours **before** gale force winds (39-54 mph or 34-47 knots) are present.



## **5. Preparations before Evacuation Orders:**

- a. Instructions will be issued by the Canaveral Port Authority to those personnel on the Critical Return Lists A, B and C.
- b. Facility owners and tenants should perform the actions listed in their Heavy Weather Plan, including any preparations necessary to safeguard property from potential torrential rain – and possibility of roof leaks, tidal surge and flooding, and outside fixtures and objects that can become airborne missile hazards during high winds.
- c. Vessel owners should follow guidance provided by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Canaveral Port Authority, specific to the weather event.

## **6. Evacuation orders:**

- a. Port Canaveral harbor evacuation orders will be issued by CPA and notifications given through social media, email, alert notifications, and/or site visits. As a rule, Port evacuation orders can be issued at any time, but primarily are issued prior to or once Port Condition Whiskey is set by the USCG.
- b. Landside evacuation orders will be promulgated by the Brevard County Office of Emergency Management and will be shared by CPA.

## **III. Post-Storm Activities:**

1. Canaveral Fire Rescue, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office, and the Canaveral Port Authority Damage Assessment Team will be the first to reenter the Port after a severe weather incident, to conduct assessments, and mitigate potential risks caused by the storm.
2. Persons not on the critical return list should contact the Port Status Hotline for current Port conditions.
3. Conditions posing an actual or potential threat to life should be reported immediately by calling 911. The Port Communications Center should be notified of non-emergency conditions posing a threat to property or the environment. Some disruptions to communications should be anticipated.
4. After the initial damage assessments are completed, all authorized personnel on "Critical Return List A" will be contacted with instructions and where the meeting location will be for escort into the Port. No vessel is permitted to enter the port unless authorized by the Captain of the Port in coordination with the Canaveral Port Authority.
5. When the port is safe for reentry and resumption of normal operations, that change in status will be promulgated by all available means, including television, email, notification alerts, and calls to personnel.