



**Tourism Crisis
Management Institute**

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**“Get Ready a Hurricane is Coming and You are on
Vacation”
Important things the Industry Should Provide for their
Visitors**

Tourism **Crisis Management Institute**
White Paper

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Introduction

Hurricanes strike Florida more than other states. Each Florida County has been affected by the hurricane impacts. Given the plausible impacts of hurricanes, effective hurricane risk communication is important to save lives. The hurricane season in Florida collides with the high season for tourists. Therefore, it is crucial to effectively inform tourists about hurricane risks. Tourists may lack the knowledge about the risks presented by hurricanes despite vacation destinations in Florida being in hurricane-prone areas, which may lead to misconceptions about hurricanes and the evacuation.

Problem Statement

How can the Florida tourism industry communicate hurricane risks and evacuation to tourists while traveling in Florida?

Solution

The Florida tourism industry should prepare effective communication procedures to communicate hurricane risks and evacuation procedures to tourists in Florida.

Implementation

1) Set aside funds and resources. During off hurricane season, the tourism industry should set aside fund that can be accessed during the hurricane season, who can access the fund, and the procedures to access the fund. In addition, the tourism industry needs to allocate resources to meet tourists' need. This may include but not limited to train the employees and staff to be ready through drills, mock evacuations, and design a shelter in the property or locate nearest shelters for the tourists and guests.

2) Establish collaboration and mutual agreements with the Emergency Agency, DMOs, and partners. Communicating hurricane risks to tourists is often overwhelming, especially for small organizations that may not have adequate

resources. Setting up collaboration and mutual agreement with other organizations allows tourism organizations to gain access to resources that may not be available in their inventory. Tourism organizations also need to communicate regularly with the Emergency Agency, especially in the county level to get an update of the situation. Assistance from local emergency agency may be needed if the situations worsen, and guests and tourists need to be evacuated.

3) The tourism industry needs to develop guidelines to accommodate tourists. This may include the refund policy, assistance to locate nearest shelters, and so forth. In addition, the tourism industry needs to provide mechanisms to inform hurricane risks to guests and tourists. These mechanisms can be in the form of hurricane brochures that can be placed in several major locations such as airports, rest services on the Florida Turnpike, Florida Welcome Centers and so forth. The accommodation industry can provide hurricane brochures on the hotel lobby or in the room.

Benefit 1

By having reserved funds and resources, the tourism organizations will be able to provide faster responses to meet the need of tourists. It is very challenging to address tourists' need in the event of a crisis without sufficient funds and resources.

Benefit 2

Collaboration with other organizations is crucial to allow resource sharing and speedy information flows.

Benefit 3

The adequate information about hurricane risks will help guests and tourists to make a well-informed decision and help to alleviate their perception of risks. In addition, the guidelines will help to ensure tourists' need and their safety as well as send a signal of caring hosts to tourists.

Summary

Communicating hurricane risks is often challenging as it may foster perception of risks. However, effective communication to tourists is crucial to ensure tourist's safety in the event of hurricanes. These can be done by allocating adequate funds and resources, establishing collaboration, and mutual agreements with other organizations, as well as developing guidelines as to what and how to communicate hurricane risks appropriately to alleviate the perception of risks.