



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Gov. Scott to Visit Tampa Today in Preparation for Tropical Depression**

**ORLANDO, Fla. –** Today, after speaking with the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) regarding Tropical Depression 9, Governor Rick Scott will be visiting Tampa's Emergency Operations Center to be briefed on the storm's potential impacts to the area. This morning, the State Emergency Operations Center elevated its status to Level Two in preparation for potential impacts from Tropical Depression 9. The National Hurricane Center (NHC) is forecasting the storm to enter the Big Bend, Nature Coast and the Tampa Bay areas within the next 48 hours. The NHC expects the storm to strengthen to a tropical storm today. The system will have the potential to produce widespread coastal and inland flooding, storm surge and gusty winds along the Florida Gulf Coast. In addition, a strong threat of rip currents exists along Atlantic and Gulf Coast beaches and the risk may remain into the weekend. **A media availability with Governor Scott on the storm's potential impact will be at 5:00pm tonight at the Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center, 2711 E. Hanna Ave. Tampa, FL 33610.**

Governor Scott said, "Later today I will be at the Emergency Operations Center in Tampa to continue to monitor the storm since this area might have tropical storm impacts beginning Thursday. Florida families on the Gulf Coast and in the Tampa Bay Area need to prepare for five to ten inches of heavy rainfall as well as potential tornados. Floridians should always remember to never drive on flooded roadways, seek shelter in the event of severe weather and always have a plan in place to keep your family safe. We must also dump standing water around homes and businesses to eliminate breeding grounds for mosquitoes since we are aggressively fighting the Zika virus in our state. We will continue to keep all Floridians updated as we get new information."

FDEM Director Bryan Koon said, "Whether this is your first tropical storm or you're a seasoned veteran of past hurricanes, you need to take this storm seriously and be prepared for the very real threats it could produce. Make sure your disaster supply kit is fully stocked and you have a safety plan for yourself, your family and for your workplace or business."

**Potential impacts include:**

- Rainfall totals of 5 to 10 inches are possible over the Florida Peninsula through Thursday.
- Strong, life-threatening rip currents and other coastal hazards are possible along all East Coast and Gulf Coast beaches throughout week.
- Specific Florida Gulf Coast impacts associated with Tropical Depression 9 could include damaging winds, storm surge, flooding and tornadoes.
- Gulf Coast impacts to Florida will likely begin Wednesday night and last through Friday.
- Tropical storm watches for Florida may be issued later this afternoon.
- Hurricane Gaston and Tropical Depression 8 do not pose a threat to Florida.

**If severe weather is forecast in your area, be sure to follow these important safety tips:**

- Ensure your NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio is on and programmed for your area or stay tuned to a trusted local media outlet for the most current weather situation. Ensure your disaster supply kit is prepared and heed all instructions from local officials.
- Know what you would do in the event of a severe thunderstorm or tornado watch or warning. If a tornado warning is issued for your area, seek shelter immediately in an interior room, away from windows.
- NEVER drive through flooded roadways as road beds may be washed out under flood waters, and just one foot of fast-moving flood water can move most cars off the road.
- If thunder roars, go indoors. If you can hear thunder, you are close enough to be struck by lightning and should seek shelter.

**If flooding is likely in your area, you should:**

- If you see a flooded roadway, remember the phrase *Turn Around, Don't Drown* and always take your time when traveling.
- Be aware that flash flooding can occur. If there is any possibility of a flash flood, move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
- Be aware of stream, drainage channels, canals and other areas known to flood suddenly. Flash floods can occur in these areas with little or no warning.

The SEOC is the operational and logistical coordination headquarters for the State Emergency Response Team and is located in Tallahassee. The SEOC has three activation levels, with Level 1 being the highest:

- **Level 3:** Normal daily active monitoring
- **Level 2:** Activation of mission-specific emergency support and planning functions
- **Level 1:** Full activation of all emergency support functions

For more information on severe weather resources, or to create an emergency plan for your family, please visit [FLGetAPlan.com](http://FLGetAPlan.com).

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The Florida Division of Emergency Management is the state agency charged with preparing for all types of disasters in Florida. The Division is the state's disaster liaison with federal and local agencies, and is the lead consequence management agency for the State Emergency Response Team (SERT). The Division maintains the State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC) in Tallahassee and the State Watch Office, the 24-hour communications and command center for response coordination. Follow the Division on social media at [facebook.com/FloridaSERT](https://facebook.com/FloridaSERT) or on Twitter @FLSERT.

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