

## Steady progress on Hurricane Ian recovery

By Hector Flores

More than three weeks after Hurricane Ian, we're seeing steady progress toward recovery, but we know there is a long way to go. Our top priorities are to assist those who have lost their homes and to clear the millions of cubic yards of debris.

We're currently housing dozens of families at the Ann and Chuck Dever Regional Park recreation center and working on a plan to allow homeowners to park recreational vehicles on their property while they make repairs.

We urge anyone who was impacted by the hurricane to sign up for Federal Emergency Management Agency individual assistance. You can register in person at the Tringali Park recreation center off State Road 776 in Englewood or at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center in Punta Gorda. You can also sign up online at [DisasterRecovery.gov](https://DisasterRecovery.gov) or by calling 800-621-3362.

On the debris front, our collection contractor is nearing the half-million cubic yards mark, picking up more than 12,000 loads of vegetative waste. For the latest debris information, we have created a debris dashboard that includes a heat map of collection areas. Visit [CharlotteCountyFL.gov/debris](https://CharlotteCountyFL.gov/debris). We estimate there is more than 2 million cubic yards of vegetative, construction and demolition debris across the county. It won't happen overnight, but we will pick up all the debris and appreciate your patience.

If you want to clear debris yourself, we have opened two temporary drop-off sites two temporary drop-off sites, one at 7000 Florida St. east of Punta Gorda and another next to the Placida West Boat Ramp. You can also use the mini-transfer facilities on 19765 Kenilworth Blvd., in Port Charlotte and 7070 Environmental Way in Englewood.

We were able to open many of our parks this week, although we remind users to be cautious as downed trees and limbs still need to be cleared. Some parks that are open have limited amenities. The Punta Gorda Charlotte Library, 401 Shreve St. Punta Gorda, and the Englewood Charlotte Library, 3450 N Access Rd., Englewood, are open daily from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. All other libraries are closed. For a complete list, visit [CharlotteCountyFL.gov](https://CharlotteCountyFL.gov) and click the Hurricane Ian Recovery banner at the top of the page.

Our call center is still operating from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekdays. Call 941-833-4000 and 941-743-1320 for response and recovery information.

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