



## Message From The Mayor

Melissa Holland



Our beautiful Palm Coast paradise got way too wet last fall. A hurricane and nor'easter dumped more than 30 inches of rain on us in such a short period of time. We all need to know that our City crews did a yeoman's job preventing floodwaters and wastewater from damaging our 35,000 households (see page four's article on Irma). For those of you who are new to Palm Coast, and also to remind everyone else, it's important for you to better understand how we cope with flooding in our community.

Swales serve as the core of our drainage system. Everything rain-related in Palm Coast begins with swales, those 'ditches' you see in your front yard that run parallel to your street. Swales keep stormwater from flooding the roads and your homes. They hold and slow the rain to allow it to soak into the ground and replenish the aquifer. They also clean the water's pollutants before it flows out to canals, the Intracoastal Waterway and the ocean.

Swales can usually hold several inches of rain during normal rainfall (up to around 12 inches in 24 hours). Because of all the rain this past fall, saturated conditions caused the system to back up first into our natural swamps and creeks and then into our streets. This is normal after a major rainfall - swale water is designed to back up into streets when necessary and not into our homes. Your street actually acts as a secondary drainage system. Both the swale and the streets drain pretty quickly once the rain stops.

We realize that street flooding is concerning and can be frightening during heavy rains. The City continues to maintain our drainage system to its designed capacity to help avoid structural flooding. Each year we replace pipes and water control structures and regrade ditches and swales. We have plans for additional stormwater capacity improvements in our neighborhoods.

If you're interested in a more detailed explanation of our drainage systems, please register to join Palm Coast's free Citizen's Academy class, offered three times a year. Drainage, city government, our local economy, utility systems, fire department, code enforcement, public works and finance are also covered.

Go to [www.palmcoastgov.com](http://www.palmcoastgov.com)



## A Little of This, A Little of That

**Citizen's Academy Online:** Have you always wanted to attend the Palm Coast Citizen's Academy, but you haven't had a chance to register? We have a new Virtual Citizen's Academy where you can learn about City operations online - on your own schedule. Classes include an overview of City government and modules about each of the City's nine departments. Check it out at [www.palmcoastgov.com/palm-coasters/citizens-academy](http://www.palmcoastgov.com/palm-coasters/citizens-academy). Remember that the in-person Citizen's Academy is always a great choice, too. Register online or call 386-986-3708.

**Wanted:** The City of Palm Coast is gearing up for next summer's paid internship program. Our Intern Experience encourages college students to utilize their skills, assisting various departments with a variety of tasks relevant to their chosen professions. It was designed to help Matanzas and Flagler Palm Coast High School graduates make a credible transition from classroom to career, right here in their hometown. Last summer, 17 interns worked on a variety of City initiatives -- from creating a virtual Citizens' Academy to developing a program for maintenance of City fields. The program is a win-win for both the students and the City: Palm Coast provides both real world experience and industry contacts essential for future career positions. Students bring us an influx of fresh knowledge and outlooks. If you are interested in applying, more information is available at [www.palmcoastgov.com/internships](http://www.palmcoastgov.com/internships)

**Here are a few flooding tips:** We had SO MUCH rain in 2017, we thought we should share these helpful suggestions with you:

1. Test and prep your generator all year, not just in hurricane season.
2. Register now for CodeRED to receive instant weather emergency alert notifications: [www.palmcoastgov.com](http://www.palmcoastgov.com)
3. Consider purchasing flood insurance, even if you don't live close to water.
4. Contact the City of Palm Coast Floodplain Manager to determine your flood zone: 386-986-2458 or learn more at <http://www.palmcoastgov.com/emergency/hurricane-flood-preparedness>.

## CITY DESK

### About Upcoming Community Events:

**Starlight Parade and Holiday Event** - Saturday, Dec. 9: Everyone loves Santa, games, music, refreshments and Palm Coast's community holiday parade! Join us for this memorable annual event, beginning at 4pm in Central Park at Town Center. The Parade kicks off at 7pm.

**Jack Frost-ivities Holiday Break Camp** - Kids, grades K-6, will enjoy games, crafts and hiking at this camp held during the school holiday break. Choose Dec. 27-29 and/or Jan. 2-5 for only \$25 per day. Extended Care before and after camp is available for an additional fee. Go to [www.palmcoastgov.com/camps](http://www.palmcoastgov.com/camps)

**Winter Break Tennis Camp** - Your kids, ages 6-14, will love playing games, learning skills and sharing activities with friends at our Winter Break Tennis Camp at the Tennis Center. Dates are Dec. 26-29 and Jan. 2-5. Register at [www.palmcoastgov.com/camps](http://www.palmcoastgov.com/camps)

**Christmas Tree Recycling Event** - Recycle your Christmas tree, free of charge at the City's Utility Department Depot on Sat., Jan. 6. You can also recycle your old electronics such as DVD and CD players, keyboards, cell phones, used gift wrap, Styrofoam and monitors (no TV's, microwaves, computer monitors please). Stop by 22 Utility Dr. from 8am and 1pm. Your tree will be recycled into reusable mulch to use for landscaping across Palm Coast. Paper shredding is also available.



**Men's Futures Tennis Tournament** - The Palm Coast Tennis Center will once again host this prestigious tournament showcasing professional tennis stars of the future. Competition opens on Thurs., Jan. 25 with the qualifying rounds and ends on Sun., Feb. 4 with singles finals. During the event's daily activities, fans can join Kids Day or a ProAm event to meet and play with pros. More information is available at [www.palmcoastgov.com](http://www.palmcoastgov.com)

**About Paying Your Utility Bill Online:** Palm Coast has introduced a more convenient utility billing system to help you quickly customize how you want to pay your bill. You can choose from a variety of flexible options available at your own personal customer portal at the City's website, [www.palmcoastgov.com](http://www.palmcoastgov.com). Once you set up access and your personal profile, your paperless choices will include one-time payments, automatic bank deductions, paying by text or your own secure e-bill account. You can also elect to use a notification option to receive a reminder call, text or email when your payment is about to be drafted. You'll be able to pay your bill on a tablet, smart phone or home computer. Real-time account information is available to you any time, as your payments will be posted immediately. Call 386-986-2360 for assistance.

**About Holiday Trash Pick-Up:** Trash pickup schedules will be altered to accommodate the up-coming holidays. Waste Pro will collect trash one day later than normal during the entire holiday period. There's no pick-up on Mon., Dec. 25 so the Mon. schedule will be picked up on Tues., and so on. There's also no pick-up on Mon., Jan. 1 and the rest of the week's collection will be pushed forward each day.

Visit [www.palmcoastgov.com](http://www.palmcoastgov.com) for more information







## Contact Information

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## Council Members

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## City Manager's Office

**386-986-3702**

**Jim Landon** . . . . . City Manager  
jlandon@palmcoastgov.com

## Customer Service

**386-986-2360**

Utility billing, garbage pick-up, streets, maintenance for city signs, street lights, sidewalks, potholes; swales and drainage, driveways/culverts, resurfacing; Code Enforcement, mowing, tree/fire mitigation, property maintenance, vehicle parking, trash on private property, irrigation ordinance, noise/pet issues.

## Community Development

Planning. . . . . 386-986-3736  
Building Permits. . . 386-986-3780

**Fire & Rescue . . . . 386-986-2300**

**Parks & Recreation.386-986-2323**

**Finance/Budget . . .386-986-3723**

**City Clerk. . . . .386-986-3713**

**Communications/  
Newsletter. . . . . 386-986-3708**

**www.palmcoastgov.com**

Published by the City of Palm Coast  
Design by CurleyTailDesign.com



# IRKSOME IRMA

Palm Coast was strangely eerie when Mon., Sept. 11th dawned the night after a major blow from Hurricane Irma. Power was out, trees were down and roads were flooded. The hurricane's wind and rain caused havoc mostly with swales, wastewater and trees. Following Irma, we lived through days of more rain from a poorly timed Nor'easter. In total, Palm Coast received an unprecedented 30+ inches of rain.

We normally receive 52 inches in a year and over 60 inches have already deluged our City in 2017. Every weather event is a new experience, so we'd like to share with you some of the things we've learned:

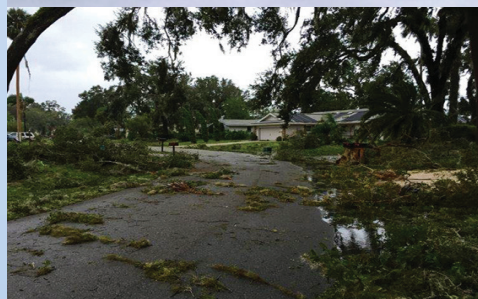
**Swales, Sewers and PEPs:** The goal of our swale system (those ditches in your front yard) is to prevent water from getting into any of our homes. The entire system was way over capacity in Sept/Oct, including the entire natural system that our stormwater flows into -- creeks, swamps and waterways -- were full and overflowed their banks. This prevented the rainwater in our drainage system from flowing quickly out of our neighborhoods.

To mitigate flooding, the City utilized our water control structures to lower our fresh-water canals to the lowest levels ever in our history. However, canals and ditches still filled up quickly. Our streets served as a secondary drainage system and, in some areas, we also experienced temporary street-flooding.

Because of the stormwater flooding and power outages at lift stations, our gravity sewer and PEP systems were also overwhelmed. Palm Coast's systems usually processes about 5 million gallons of wastewater per day. During Sept/Oct, they took in 13 million gallons each day. It's difficult for any sewer system to absorb three times the amount of water than their average flow.

It took 15 tanker trucks to continuously draw out excess water and non-stop utility crews to recover and repair our systems. Crews did everything possible to minimize the flooding, and we took the appropriate cleanup steps as necessary and required. To help us alleviate these problems in the future, please remember:

- **During flooding rains and power outages, prioritize your water usage. Don't do as much laundry or dishwashing; limit your showers and baths.**
- **Keep your swales and driveway culverts clear from debris or garbage. Make sure nothing is blocking the cylinders that cross under your driveway.**
- **Don't park any vehicles near your swales.**
- **Don't fill in your swale with any landscape design.**

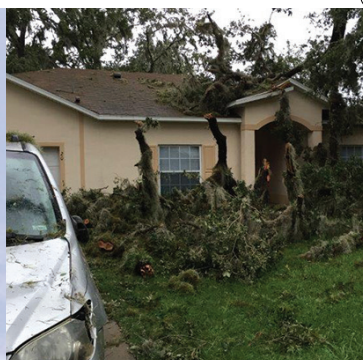


City and code officers, contractors and our Urban Forestry Division have been working double shifts to respond. Here's what you can do to help save trees before next year's hurricane season:

**If you see any problems with any of your trees - no matter what time of year - don't wait for a weather emergency to call us. When in doubt, call Urban Forestry a 386-986-3758. If your house is being endangered by a dead, dying or diseased tree from a neighboring property or public right-of-way, call Urban Forestry. An inspector will be sent out to determine the action to be taken.**

**Tumbling Trees:** Irma cost Palm Coast over 10,000 beautiful trees across every section of town. We would have lost more, but 2016's Hurricane Matthew already destroyed many of our trees. Even healthy trees were uprooted because of oversaturation of the ground.

Staff received over 800 tree phone calls from distressed residents during the weather emergency. There are still issues across the



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# The Palm Coaster

Milissa Holland - Mayor • Steve Nobile - Vice Mayor • Heidi Shipley • Robert Cuff • Nick Klufas

Palm Coast, FL Dec./Jan.2018

# A Feather In Our Cap

Palm Coast can wear many hats but the one that fits the best is the one we validate when we are rooted in nature. Residents regularly celebrate our trees, estuaries and trails. Next month, we're going to pay homage to birds.

Because the sheer variety of birds here is awesome, hosting a Birding Fest fits perfectly with our community. Palm Coast's Birds of a Feather Fest has been welcoming expert and novice birders for four years, offering a weekend of hands-on presentations and tours. It's been broadly acclaimed in this region, certainly a feather in our cap.

Just a few years ago, Jason Giraulo, the City's Digital Communications Coordinator and Flagler Audubon Society President, visualized hosting a Birding Fest as the ultimate event to showcase Palm Coast to birders. He and his wife, Mary, traveled to many festivals across Florida and realized that we had more species (over 280) and a more centralized location. Together, they hatched our first Fest in 2015.

Attendance at the event keeps growing over the years. Maralee Walsh-McDaniel and Thea Hein-Mathen are both Flagler County Rotary and Audubon Society members who've bonded over their passion for birds and photography. They've attended several Bird Fests together and they're both thrilled they can stay right here in Palm Coast to indulge in their infatuation.

"I love our Bird Fest because it gives us simple access to so many species, it's affordable, it provides a variety of educational activities and it's so close to home," Maralee says. She chuckles when she thinks back to last year's tour in Linear Park when the guide pursed his lips to call out to a whippoorwill and one automatically flew out of the trees and stayed with them for a while. "It just kept talking back to us," she recalls. "Really cool."

"I was in awe when I realized how many birds hang out around Palm Coast," Thea adds. "Now I can drive down just about any street and recognize all kinds of birds. The Bird Fest just adds to my knowledge about the nature that's always been a symbol of our community."

Birds of a Feather Fest 2018 will be held from Fri-Sun, Feb. 9-11. Focusing on education and observation for people of all ages and all experiences, this year's Fest will highlight nature walks, nine field trips, workshops and a PeaCee's Big Backyard event in Central Park - a family-friendly activity for everyone. Moose Peterson, legendary wildlife photographer, lecturer and author of 28 books, will be the featured Fest guest this year. He will be sharing stories and photos about conservation at a free public presentation at the Flagler Auditorium on Saturday evening, February 10.

**Birders believe if you're close to a bird, you are never far from nature. That's why we're rooted in Palm Coast. Go to [www.birdingfest.com](http://www.birdingfest.com).**

Photo by Lucy Nabico

