

Weekly Highlights Report October 4, 2024

City Manager

- As we begin yet another disaster recover cycle I'd like to thank our staff members who worked through the storm and will continue to work on recovery. We also thank the North Port Police Department, DeSoto County Fire Department, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Charlotte County Fire Department, Supertrak and Charlotte County Transit. The impact of the collective efforts the night of the flood was profound. The storm surge in the City of Punta Gorda was far beyond what was predicted and the efforts of our emergency response team saved lives.



As we move into recovery mode, the most frequent questions coming through the City Manager's office are where to go for help, how to file for building permits, and how to get rid of flood-damaged debris and construction materials. For help with storm recovery tasks like mucking out, debris removal, tree clearing, and more, Crisis Cleanup can help. Call 844-965-1386 to request assistance. The hotline is open through October 11. Services are free, but please note that they are not guaranteed due to high demand. Residents affected by Hurricane Helene may be eligible for FEMA assistance. FEMA may provide financial help to assist you with home repairs, temporary housing, or property damage (appliances, furniture, vehicle, etc). You may also qualify for help with childcare, medical, lodging, moving, and funeral expenses. Fill out an application at [Individual Assistance | FEMA.gov](#) or call the FEMA Helpline 1-800-621-3362, 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week. Help is available in many languages. Don't wait to apply for FEMA assistance and, if you do have insurance, do not wait to file an insurance claim for damage caused by the disaster.

For building permits the building department has developed a Helene Storm Damage Application. Residents and property owners impacted by recent storm damage can now access the application form through the City's website. To obtain the Helene application, please visit www.cityofpuntagordafl.com, hover over the "Government" tab, click on "Building," and then select "Building Forms." The Helene Storm Damage Application is the top form listed. It is crucial for applicants to complete the form accurately, particularly regarding the questions in the middle of the application concerning any additions, extensions, or deletions to electrical, plumbing, or mechanical systems. Please ensure that all answers to these questions are marked "no." If any question is answered "yes," the project will be classified as an alteration or remodel, requiring a standard building application and the associated approval process. When completed correctly, we aim to process Helene applications within 24 to 48 hours. Applicants are

encouraged to email their completed forms to the address provided at the top of the application; however, paper copies are also accepted. For further assistance, residents can contact the City's Building Department at 941-575-3324 or visit the City's website.

For debris pickup, it is the property owners' responsibility to bring the debris to the curb. Residents should properly sort the storm debris into the following six categories and place the piles in the City maintained right-of-way, ensuring they are off the road and not on private property. Do not place debris in the following locations: under overhead utilities, near fire hydrants, near mailboxes, or on driveways. Items need to be sorted into the following piles: vegetative debris, construction and demolition debris (this includes furniture), electronic waste, and appliances. It is important not to use black bags for construction materials; only clear bags are used. We anticipate the hauler beginning collections in the middle of October because we have to allow time for the majority of residents to have their storm debris brought out. *If you have questions about the storm recovery process please call the City Manager's Office at (941) 575-3302.* We are with you during this recovery effort.

- **Master Pumping Facility** —The 1.6M gallons indicated in the DEP report form was neither straight raw sewage nor into the harbor. This was strictly Helene related. It was not an infrastructure failure, not a capacity issue, not a failure of the City. We had 60 pumping stations and 1293 manholes under water from storm surge. The master pumping stations on Henry Street was pumping full capacity for days. No failure. The amount of water inundating the system simply overcame what it can handle. The overflow was very dilute primarily harbor and rainwater, not "raw sewage" as would be pumped on a normal day. The storm surge in the harbor impacted us. The system is not designed nor allowed to pump stormwater. It is a sanitary sewer system, not a combined/stormwater sewer system. The City is closely monitoring the situation to ensure public and environmental safety. Sampling will be conducted in accordance with applicable state statutes, and updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

- **Flood Clean up tips from the CDC**

- Get the right safety gear.
- Hard hats
- Goggles
- N95 masks (or a respirator with a higher protection level)
- Heavy work gloves
- Waterproof boots with steel toe and insole (not just steel shank)
- Earplugs or protective headphones (if you're working with noisy equipment)
- At least two fire extinguishers (each with a UL rating of at least 10A)
- Is sewage involved?
- Make sure to wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, and goggles if sewage is involved.
- Use teams to move heavy or bulky objects.



- Have teams of at least two people work together to move heavy or bulky objects.
- Avoid lifting anything that weighs more than 50 pounds (per person).
- Pace yourself.
- Cleaning up your home can be a big job. Be sure to take care of yourself:
- Rest when you need to.
- Decide which cleanup tasks are most important, and focus on those first. That way, you're less likely to be overwhelmed.
- Get help lifting heavy or bulky objects. If you lift too much on your own, you could hurt yourself.
- Try to work with other people, so you aren't alone.
- Get support from family members, friends, counselors, or therapists.
- **Relocation** — Due to damage from Hurricane Helene, the City Clerk's Office has relocated to the third floor of the City Hall Annex at 126 Harvey Street.
- **Closures** — The following areas remain temporarily closed due to Hurricane Helene damages until further notice. These closures are required to ensure the safety of our residents and visitors.
 - Hounds on Henry
 - Gilchrist Park restrooms
 - Ponce De Leon Park
 - Elevator at Herald Court Center
 - Elevator at City Hall Annex Building
 - Pickle Ball courts
- **City Council Meeting** — City Council will meet at 9 a.m. on October 16 at Military Heritage Museum, 900 W Marion Avenue. Here are a few items of discussion:
 - Adoption of Amendments to Chapter 20A, "Subdivisions".
 - Amending Punta Gorda Code Chapter 15, "Offenses and Miscellaneous Provisions", Section 15-1,
 - Council discussion for Helene damages and repairs

Human Resources

- **Open Positions** — The City of Punta Gorda offers a very generous benefit package to include medical, dental, vision, life insurance, and a defined contribution retirement plan with matching contributions [Employment Opportunities | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://punta-gorda.fl.us) Currently hiring for the following professional position:
 - **Utility Engineer — Utilities.** A professional position responsible for Utilities Engineering and providing technical engineering services for City utilities construction and improvement projects.
 - **Senior Accountant, Finance** — A professional position responsible for applying the principles of accounting to analyze financial information and prepare financial reports by compiling information, preparing profit and loss statements, and utilizing appropriate accounting control procedures.
 - **Utilities Maintenance Worker II —Wastewater Collection, Utilities.** A skilled laborer position responsible for the construction, maintenance and repair of wastewater collection facilities and systems.
 - **Crew Chief — Water Distribution.** An entry level supervisory position responsible for the construction, maintenance, and repair of water distribution facilities and systems.



- **Maintenance Worker I — Right of Way, Public Works** - An entry level laborer position responsible for laboring tasks and a wide variety of road construction maintenance operations work.
- **Urban Design Manager — Urban Design.** A professional managerial position responsible for all City planning and zoning activities, including community development and land use.
- **Planning Director — Planning.** A professional position responsible for the administrative, supervision and technical work regarding the City of Punta Gorda's current and long- and short-range planning programs and development services divisions, specifically related to the development and implementation of land use and related municipal plans and policies.

Urban Design

Upcoming Events

- Charlotte Harbor Event Center, 75 Taylor St. For additional information, visit charlotteharborecc.com/events
- Fishermen's Village events can be accessed at [EVENTS | Fishermen's Village | Punta Gorda \(fishermensvillage.com\)](http://EVENTS | Fishermen's Village | Punta Gorda (fishermensvillage.com))
- Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at Community Events – Punta Gorda Chamber of Commerce
- Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce events can be accessed at Event Calendar | Charlotte County Chamber of Commerce, Inc.
- Military Heritage Museum events can be accessed at Upcoming Events - Military Heritage Museum
- Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, 2001 Shreve Street; for all community events and class information, visit [Home - Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, Inc. \(pgica.org\)](http://Home - Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, Inc. (pgica.org))
- The Visual Arts Center events can be accessed at [Welcome to the Visual Arts Center of Punta Gorda, FL \(visualartcenter.org\)](http://Welcome to the Visual Arts Center of Punta Gorda, FL (visualartcenter.org))
- October 19, Petoer Fest, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, for more information contact: [Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County | Shelter \(awlshelter.org\)](http://Animal Welfare League of Charlotte County | Shelter (awlshelter.org))
- October 26, Neighborhood Fall Festival, Cooper St Rec Center, 650 Mary St, for more information contact pgclerk@cityofpuntagordafl.com
- October 26, Skippy Dee Doo Dah, Gilchrist Park, 400 W Retta Esplanade, for more information contact: angela@skippydeedoodah.com
- October 26, Walk the rounds for nursing, Laishley Park, 96 Nesbit St, for more information contact: anthonybethelstmark@gmail.com
- October 31, Halloween Food Truck, 507 W Marion Ave, for more information contact: becca@newlifeforall.church
- October 31, Downtown Halloween for more information contact jdavoult@cityofpuntagordafl.com

Lot Mowing Program

- The City has completed mowing the following areas on September 30.
- Burnt Store Isles (Monaco Dr, Tripoli Blvd, Madrid Blvd, and Macedonia Dr)
Burnt Store Meadows (Areas of Tamiami Tr, N. Blue Sage, S. Blue Sage, Royal Poinciana, and Gold Tree)

The contractor is working on completing the rest of the areas this week due to Hurricane Helene.

- PGI (Bal Harbor Boulevard, Deborah Drive, Ryan Boulevard, Suzi Street, and Casey Key Drive)
- PGI Bird Section (Almar Drive, Albatross Drive, Whippoorwill Boulevard, and Turtle Dove Boulevard)

- Colony Point (Colony Point Drive, West Marion Avenue, Socorro Drive, and Coronado Drive)
- PGI (Magdalena Drive, Via Vento, W Henry Street, Appian Drive, and Columbian Drive)
- Downtown and Historic District (W. Marion Ave., W. Olympia Ave., Shreve St., and Harvey St.)
- The Historic District East of 41 and the area behind Dunkin Donuts (E. Marion Ave., E Olympia Ave., Narranja St., E Henry St., and Cooper St.)
- The next mowing cycle will start on October 7, weather permitting.

Planning Corner

- In the wake of Hurricane Helene, Urban Design has received an abundance of inquiries from property owners interested in demolishing their historic structure. Certificate of appropriateness (CA) applications for demolitions are reviewed by the Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB) on a case-by-case basis. Structures contained in the Local Register of Historic Places are considered historic and require a CA. The Local Register of Historic Places list can be found here: [Local Register of Historic Places | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](https://www.punta-gorda.fl.us/local-register-of-historic-places).



As the name implies, the duty of the HPAB is to implement historic preservation regulations, which: protect and conserve the heritage of the city; safeguard the character and heritage of the districts and individual historic landmarks by preserving their character-defining elements; promote the conservation of the districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure, and enrichment of the city’s residents; foster civic beauty and pride in local culture and heritage; and stabilize and enhance property values within historic and neighborhood conservation districts, thus contributing to the improvement of the general health and welfare of the city and its residents.

There are many options available to property owners to preserve historic structures, including the waiver of the FEMA 50% Rule. Owners of historic structures are encouraged to preserve, rehabilitate, restore, and reconstruct their properties. The Secretary of the Interior has published standards for flood adaptation for historic structures, which can be found here: [Guidelines On Flood Adaptation For Rehabilitating Historic Buildings \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/learn/plan/assess/flood-adaptation-for-historic-buildings). Recommended adaptation treatments for flood-prone historic structures are: planning and assessment for flood risk reduction, temporary protective measures, site and landscape adaptations, dry floodproofing, wet floodproofing, elevation of the building, abandoning the lower floor, and relocation of the building.

Demolition of historic structures should be avoided at all costs because you cannot preserve what no longer exists. All CAs for demolition of a historic structure must include a structural engineer’s analysis of the structure. The duty of the HPAB is to preserve the history of our city, as recorded in its structures, forming the lens through which all applications are reviewed.

- **Building Division** Allowing an unlicensed person to perform work on your property puts you, as the owner, at risk. Unlicensed contractors are unable to obtain workers’ compensation coverage, general liability insurance, or the proper permits for the work they are doing. Should injuries occur at the site, the owner may be liable. Any work performed without the proper permits may not be covered by the home or business owner’s insurance company in the event of future claims.

Per *Florida Statutes* § 489.127(2)(c) (2022); “Any unlicensed person who commits a violation of subsection (1) during the existence of a State of Emergency declared by executive order of the Governor commits a felony of the third degree”. The city remains in

a state of emergency as a result of Hurricane Helene. Therefore, any person who does work without the correct licensure during a state of emergency may be charged with a felony. This applies to all types of construction and not just that which is associated with repairs as a result of a tropical storm or hurricane.

For more information about whether a person is licensed and registered as a contractor in the City of Punta Gorda, or to notify us of possible unlicensed activity, please contact the City Building Department at (941)575-3324, or visit www.myfloridalicense.com, or Business Tax Receipt/Contractor Competency Registration (www.aspgov.com)

Public Works

Administration

- Beginning October 1, the registration for Citizen’s Academy opens for all Punta Gorda Citizens to register. The program provides insight into city government. These informational sessions provide information regarding the roles and responsibilities of our city-wide departments. The program runs biweekly from January 21 through April 29. Information regarding Citizen’s Academy may be found at [Citizens Academy | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://CitizensAcademy|CityofPuntaGorda,FL(punta-gorda.fl.us)). Those interested will need to complete the registration form at [Citizens Academy | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://CitizensAcademy|CityofPuntaGorda,FL(punta-gorda.fl.us)). For additional questions, please call the Public Works Administration office at 941-575-5050.

Canal Maintenance

- **Canal Maintenance Production** – Canal Maintenance crews manufactured 36 sea wall panels, and filled depressions at 10 residences before focusing on Hurricane Helene preparations procedures. Crews worked on collecting debris from roadways and clearing storm debris. Once the storm surge subsided Crews assisted with cleaning parks and the Right of way.
- **BSI Lock Navigational Lights** - Hurricane Helene severely damaged the B.S.I. Lock Navigational lights. Some solar replacement lights have been installed. Additional lights will be replaced in the next few weeks. Please use caution in the area.
- **Dockside Dredging** – Property owners that are listed on the Hurricane Ian Seawall Damage list will not be allowed to have dockside dredging performed adjacent to the seawall until the seawall has been repaired. Any dredging along the damaged seawall may cause damage.
- **Stabilizing Erosion** – Just a friendly reminder for property owners to regularly check the condition of their tarps or plastic that is protecting the eroded areas. Tarps and plastic tend to become brittle in the sun and may start falling apart. Utilizing plastic during a rain event will help keep the soil in place preventing further erosion.
- **Canal Maintenance Seawall Failure Update** – Construction schedules have been updated and are posted on the Canal Maintenance website for the next six months look ahead. There are 20 projects in Punta Gorda Isles under construction with 113 projects completed. All 30 seawall projects in Burnt Store Isles have been completed. There are two staging sites pending rehab approval from the Code Enforcement Department. Hurricane Ian Related Seawall Failures | [Hurricane Ian Related Seawall Failures | City of Punta Gorda, FL \(punta-gorda.fl.us\)](http://HurricaneIanRelatedSeawallFailures|CityofPuntaGorda,FL(punta-gorda.fl.us))
- **Establishing sod after seawall replacement** – Placing the sod is the final phase of seawall replacement construction. As per the City ordinance, property owners are responsible for



establishing the sod after it has been placed and the City will not reimburse the owners for their water usage.

- **Vessel Speeds** – Canal Maintenance is asking people to be mindful of the current situation in the canals with seawalls being damaged. City code states that the operation of vessels in the canals shall be Slow Speed Minimum Wake in the waterways within the City limits. The speed and operation in the Ponce Inlet, Pompano Inlet, Bass, and Snook Inlet are Idle Speed and No Wake. Wakes from watercraft can cause additional erosion and damage to seawalls already compromised.
- **Dock Match Program** – The Punta Gorda and Charlotte Harbor Boaters Alliance has created a program that connects boat owners who need a temporary relocation of their boats with owners that have available dock space. This information can be found at Punta Gorda Boaters Alliance (boat2puntagorda.org) click on the Dock Match button for information.

Engineering

- **Bayfront Center Demolition** - The abatement is underway and is scheduled to be completed by October 4. The contractor will begin the actual building demolition on October 9. Please be advised to take extra caution in the area during the demolition and follow all detours for bicycle/walking paths.
- **Laishley Splash Pad** - Construction continues at the Interactive Fountain area in Laishley Park. This work includes rehabilitation and upgrades to the splash pad/play area. Play equipment installation is nearing completion.



Please use extra caution while driving or walking through the park due to construction personnel and equipment. To the highest extent possible the restroom facilities will remain open to the public. The access to the restrooms will be from the marina side of the building. There will be periodic temporary sidewalk closures immediately adjacent to the construction area as required for public safety. The construction area will be closed to the public at all times during this period. The enhanced fountain area is scheduled to reopen in late 2024. If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 during the hours of 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

- **Fiber Optic Internet Network** - The fiber optic internet provider HyperFiber has been issued permits for a portion of the construction project to install a citywide fiber optic internet network within the city right of ways. This project will be under construction during the next several months as they install the network citywide. They are currently permitted to work in the areas highlighted in red below. The green areas are where the work is completed and their permit has been inspected for final by the engineering department. Additional areas are scheduled to be final in the next several weeks. The blue areas are where installation will be taking place as the project progresses. Construction is beginning in Burnt Store Isles and Burnt Store Meadows



Initially you will see utility markings within the city right of way, followed by the directional drilling of the fiber optic conduit. Fiber optic boxes will be installed in the right of way or easement at the edge of your property. Once the installation of the underground and service points has been completed for the entire sector, crews will then return to individual locations for the restoration of sod. This will take place at the end of construction in each sector. Please be patient and allow time for the restoration. The city engineering department will be performing spot inspections during construction as well as a final inspection when restoration is complete to ensure the contractor's restoration meets the city's requirements.



HyperFiber has provided a telephone number to call if citizens have questions or concerns about the project and installation. Please contact HyperFiber's Lori Haight at (501) 844-6340. Please use extra caution while driving through the project area due to construction personnel and equipment.

- **Peace River Wildlife Center** Construction has begun for the Peace River Wildlife Center located next to the Hounds on Henry Dog Park! This work includes the development of the wildlife center and the expansion and reconstruction of the parking lot for the Hounds on Henry Dog Park.

A temporary entrance to the dog park has been constructed and will be opened soon. The existing entrance will only serve as construction access to the Peace River Wildlife Center development area.

Please use extra caution while driving or walking near this area due to construction personnel and equipment. Please obey the newly installed stop signs as dump trucks are delivering fill dirt at the rate of approximately (30) loads per day. These trucks require a wide turn area, and vehicles should give them plenty of room to maneuver. The fenced construction area will be closed to the public at all times during this period.



If you have any questions, please contact the Public Works Department at (941) 575-5050 during the hours of 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

The paving program has temporarily been delayed due to Hurricane Helene. The program will commence once the ground is less saturated.

Parks and Grounds

- Due to flooding and standing water Hounds on Henry remains closed until further notice.
- Gilchrist Park restrooms are currently closed due to flooding which compromised the restroom lighting. We are working on a solution to reopen the restrooms soon.
- Ponce De Leon Park is currently closed to all visitors due to hurricane Helene damage until further notice.

Right of Way

- Crews worked on storm cleanup, and removed debris from roadways, and parks, throughout the city.
- Crews are working on cleaning storm pipes throughout the city due to hurricane debris.
- Due to the contamination of equipment (Heavy, Cones, Barriers, etc.) Crews are working on cleaning and disaffecting contaminated equipment.

Sanitation

- Recovery efforts are underway in response to Hurricane Helene in the City of Punta Gorda. Clearing and removing storm debris is a major part of the recovery effort. The City of Punta Gorda Public Works asks for residents' cooperation to make this debris removal operation proceed smoothly and to ensure the community recovers as quickly as possible.
At this time Commercial and multi-family properties are not eligible for debris removal.
- The property owners are responsible for bringing the debris to the curb. Residents should properly sort the storm debris into the following six categories and place the piles in the City maintained right-of-way, ensuring they are off the road and not on private property: Do not place debris in the following locations: under overhead utilities, near fire hydrants, near mailboxes or on driveways.

Construction and Demolition Materials

- Non-recyclable building materials (e.g., drywall, asphalt shingles, plastic sinks/tubs, floor tiles, etc.)
- Non-recyclable building contents and personal items (e.g., carpeting, rugs, furniture, clothing, etc.)
- Do NOT use black plastic bags, use clear plastic bags or pile the loose debris.

Electronic Waste (E-Waste)

- Discarded electrical or electronic devices intended for refurbishment, reuse, resale, or recycling through material recovery.

Household Hazardous Waste

- Items such as paints, cleaners, oils, batteries, and pesticides must be taken to one of Charlotte County's mini-transfer stations for safe and proper disposal. Both facilities are open Tuesday through Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.
- West Charlotte: 7070 Environmental Way, Port Charlotte
- Mid-County: 19765 Kenilworth Blvd., Port Charlotte

White Goods

- Large household appliances such as stoves, refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, and dryers. Please ensure refrigerators are free of all food waste and the doors are removed when placed curbside.

Vegetation

- Includes trees, limbs, brush, and leaves. Please note crews will not enter private property to collect or remove debris.
- Place debris in one large pile and do NOT spread out across the right-of-way.
- Do NOT use plastic bags. **Material placed in plastic bags cannot be collected.**

Regular Household Garbage

- Normal household waste, recyclables, and bagged debris will not be collected with storm debris. Please do not attempt to place garbage or other household refuse with storm debris, as it will not be accepted, and will delay your debris collection. Please continue to follow your regular curbside collection schedule.
- **Improper Disposal Dangers** – As a friendly reminder, please do not place chemicals inside the regular trash. Sanitation was forced to dump a load of trash in a grassy area after collecting trash from a resident who started to smoke inside the hopper area. Hazardous products must be disposed of properly to reduce environmental impact and safety hazards. Toxic products tossed in the trash, may injure sanitation workers, damage collection vehicles, or leak into the environment. Dumping or illicitly household hazardous waste down the drain, on the ground, or in stormwater drains will cause water pollution, and damage plumbing, and septic systems.
- **Hazardous Products** – A product is considered hazardous if it is corrosive, toxic, flammable, or reacts or explodes when mixed with other substances. Watch out for signal words on labels such as poison, danger, warning, and caution. These include everyday items such as paint, insecticides, cleaners, automotive products, and unused medications. Please do not place it inside the trash, recycling, or dumpster containers. These items must be disposed of properly.
- **Improper Disposal of Batteries** – Batteries, like the ones found in many rechargeable electronic devices, computers, and cell phones are prohibited from being placed inside the trash, recycling, or dumpster containers. These batteries easily rupture, catch fire, and cause the trash to smolder when compacted in the refuse truck hopper. The toxic fumes, smoke, and fire impose a huge safety risk for the sanitation workers.
- **How to Properly Dispose of Hazardous Products** – See the complete list and instructions [Household Hazardous Waste | Charlotte County, FL \(charlottecountyfl.gov\)](https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/hazardous-waste)
 - Residents can bring their household hazardous waste to the [Mini-Transfer & Recycling Facilities | Charlotte County, FL \(charlottecountyfl.gov\)](https://www.charlottecountyfl.gov/mini-transfer-recycling) residents are allowed 12 free trips per fiscal year (October 1-September 30). Recycling and household hazardous waste do not count towards the 12 trips. Proof of county residency is required. Residents need to bring a valid form of identification to include name, photo, and local address. Photo identification from other areas must be accompanied by a current utility bill or document showing proof of residency at a Charlotte County residential address. P.O. Box addresses are not accepted as proof of residency.



Police

- **Promotions** — Senior Dispatcher Julia Tremblay has been promoted to Assistant Communications Supervisor. Julia has been with the Police Department since September 2022. Congratulations Julia!
- **Hurricane Helene Response** — The Punta Gorda Police and Fire Departments received help from several other agencies and businesses to respond to Hurricane Helene's flooding. The Police Department was highly grateful for the help from the following agencies, organizations, and businesses:



- City of Punta Gorda Public Works Department
- Northport Police Department
- Desoto County Fire Department
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
- Charlotte County Fire Department
- Supertrak Equipment
- Charlotte County Transit.

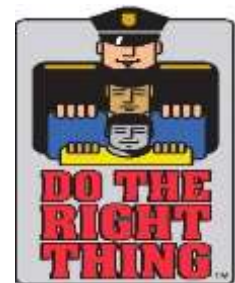


With the assistance and equipment of these partners, we responded to a total of 77 rescue calls; nine of those rescues were from vehicles, 121 people and 30 pets were safely rescued.

- **Do the Right Thing** — October's Do the Right Thing ceremony was held Thursday afternoon at the



FSW campus on Airport Road. Do the Right Thing of Charlotte County was founded in 1995 by the late Captain Don Cerbone with the Punta Gorda Police Department. In the last 29 years, over 1,000 students in Charlotte County have been recognized for their academic achievements, athletics, acts of heroism, community service, and for doing the right thing. The program's goal is the same as in 1995: to instill positive attitudes and self-esteem and recognize students for their achievements publicly.



OPEN POSITIONS

- **Police Officer Testing** — The Punta Gorda Police Department is currently accepting applications for the position of Police Officer. A virtual testing process will take place in November. Applications must be received by October 25. The written exam will be completed online between November 1 and November 8, and virtual oral board exams will be conducted via Zoom on November 21. The department is accepting applications from certified and non-certified candidates.
- **Public Safety Dispatcher Testing** — The police department continually conducts new hire testing to prepare for future openings. Currently, the department is accepting applications for the position of Public Safety Dispatcher. The exam will be held virtually between November 8 and 15. Applications must be received by November 1.
- **Internship Program** — The police department is currently accepting internship applications for the Spring Semester of 2025. Our program is open to college students and high school seniors interested in gaining educational experience in law enforcement, criminal justice, and small government administration. Spots fill up quickly, and the selection process can be competitive, so we encourage potential interns to apply today! **To apply for employment or more information, please visit www.pgpdjobs.com or contact our Employee Development Coordinator at (941) 575-5571 or by email at employeedevelopment@pgorda.us.**

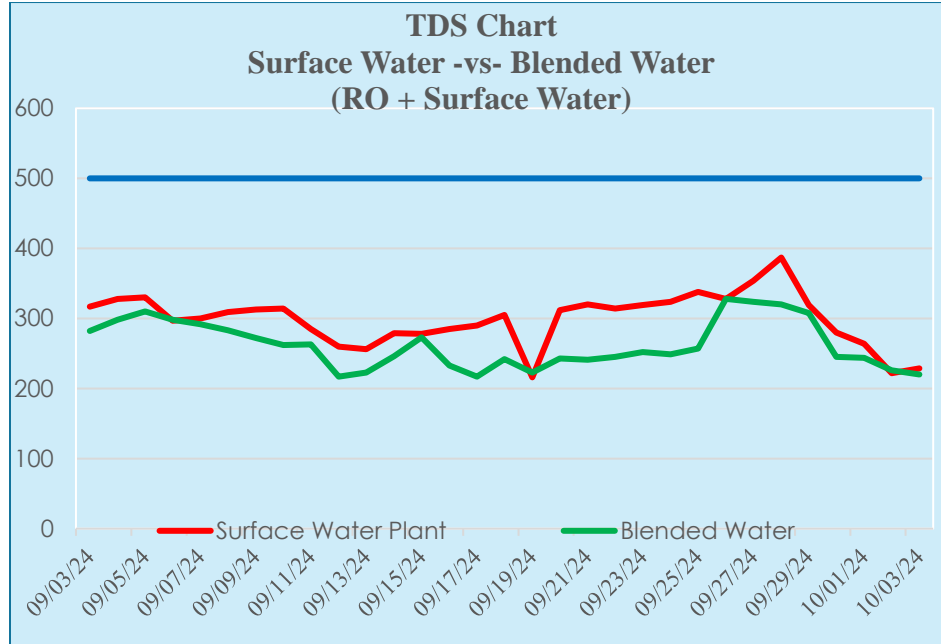
Fire

- **Fifth Grade CPR at Sallie Jones Elementary** – The fire department spent the week over at Sallie Jones Elementary school teaching the fifth graders CPR. The students learned when and how to do CPR. Each of the students were given the opportunity to test their new skills on manikins as well. After the CPR course each student was given a quick class on AED use as well as a Stop the Bleed course. While we hope there are some future firefighters in some of those classes, we know they will all be prepared to save a life if needed. Great job SJE 5th graders!



Utilities

- **R.O. + Surface Water**



Administration

- **Leaks** – If you notice a water or sewer leak outside of normal business hours please call the after-hours number (941) 575-5070 or the Water Treatment Plant at (941) 639-2057.
- **Water Treatment Plant Operations** – 43.7 MG delivered to the distribution system during the last seven days with 6.2 MG daily average.
- **Peace River Manasota Regional Water Supply Authority Emergency Interconnect** – Receiving 800 gallons per minute from the new Interconnect (Phase 1 Pipeline). Sending 1400 gallons per minute from the tank on 17 (Phase 1A Pipeline).
- Rainfall October 2023 – 1.96" October 2024 – 6.15"
- Hardness is a measurement of calcium and magnesium ions naturally occurring in the raw water. Currently "hard" – Grains of Hardness 5 –Total hardness 80 ppm
- T.D.S. – Current 220 ppm. Low – 191 ppm, High 415 ppm, 14-year average 292 ppm.
- Reservoir October 3 – Current 6.56, Record Low 4.98, Record High, 7.08' 58 Year Average 5.60'

City Clerk

- **Relocation** – Due to damage from Hurricane Helene, the City Clerk's Office has relocated to the third floor of the City Hall Annex at 126 Harvey Street.
- **Elections** – The seats for Districts 1, 2, and 4 are scheduled for election this year. A general election will take place on November 5, as two candidates qualified for each district. Qualified candidates are listed on the City's website.
 - Subscribe to the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections' monthly newsletter to stay up to date on elections news.
 - Did you know your signature can change over the years? Ensure the Charlotte County Supervisor of Elections has an up-to-date record of your signature on file for the upcoming election. Stop by their office at 226 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, Florida, 33982, to update yours during regular business hours.

- In order to vote by mail, you must have a valid request on file with the Supervisor of Elections Office. Requests for vote-by-mail ballots can be made in person, by calling (941)833-5400, or by visiting the Supervisor of Elections website.
- **Business Tax Receipt Renewals** – The renewal period for the City’s business tax receipts for Fiscal Year 2024/2025 has been extended to October 14, due to Hurricane Helene. Business tax receipts not renewed prior to the end of the extended deadline will be assessed a late fee.
 - Beginning October 15, a 10% late fee will be assessed for businesses which have not renewed their tax receipt, with a 5% late fee added each month beyond October.
 - Failure to renew a business tax receipt may result in code enforcement action including a citation or an appearance before the Code Enforcement Board, which could result in additional fines.
- **Current Board and Committee Vacancies** – If you are interested in serving on a board or committee, please visit our online portal to complete an online application at City of Punta Gorda, FL: Board Application (granicus.com). Unless otherwise noted, all boards meet in in Council Chambers, which is currently located in the Military Heritage Museum at 900 West Marion Avenue.
- **Building Board** (one consumer advocate and one alternate) – Meets the fourth Tuesday at 9 a.m. Board of seven members with two alternates; four members must be involved with building industry and three members must never have been involved in the building industry. City residency not required. Term period is three years with a limit of three terms. Financial disclosure required. Reviews enforcement of all codes related to construction standards and acts as condemnation board in matters of violation of minimum standards. Hears alleged complaints against contractors.
- **Code Enforcement Board** (two regular) – Meets the fourth Wednesday at 9 a.m. Board of seven members with two alternates; a background in architecture, business, engineering, contracting, or realty is preferred but not required. City residency required. Term period is three years with a limit of three terms. Financial disclosure required. Hears and decides alleged violations of the City Code of Ordinances, requests for fine reductions, and contests of revocation of lot mowing exemptions.
- **Donation Review Committee** (one historic non-profit representative) – Meets the fourth Thursday of January, April, July and October, or as needed, at 10 a.m. or immediately following the Historic Preservation Advisory Board (HPAB). Board of five members; chair of the HPAB, two HPAB members, one local historic non-profit representative, and one local arts organization representative. Term period for Council appointees is three years with a limit of three terms. Charged with review of all non-monetary gift donation proposals/letters of intent received by the City, in accordance with the review process and established criteria identified in the Non-Monetary Donation Policy. Makes recommendations to the City Council for the acceptance or rejection of non-monetary gift donations.
- **Historic Preservation Advisory Board** (one alternate) – Meets the fourth Thursday at 9 a.m. Board of seven members with two alternates; members must be residents, property owners, or business owners of the City, except one member may be a resident, property owner, or business owner of Charlotte County. Term period is three years with a limit of three terms. Identifies for the Council historically significant structures and sites that should be considered for designation as a “Local Historic Landmark” or be nominated for listing on the Florida Master Site File and the National Register of Historic Places. Makes recommendations of the policies for the protection of historically significant structures and sites. Makes recommendations to staff with regard to certificates of appropriateness for any

demolition, variance, sign, or relocation of structures. Promotes public awareness of historic archaeological preservation and its community benefits.

- **Police Officers' Pension Board** (one resident representative) – Meets quarterly and as called. Board of five members; two City residents at-large, two pension plan members, and one board-appointed member. Term period is four years with no term limit. Financial disclosure required.
- **Punta Gorda Isles Canal Advisory Committee** (one regular) - Meets the third Monday at 1:30 p.m. Board of seven members who reside in Punta Gorda Isles Canal Maintenance Assessment District. Term period is three years with a limit of three terms. Financial disclosure required. Makes recommendations to City Council on effective maintenance of existing canals, waterways and navigable channels within the district, together with the maintenance and reconstruction of seawalls. Holds public hearings and makes final decision on petitions for canal construction special permits.
- **Utility Advisory Board** (two regular) –Meets the fourth Monday at 9 a.m. Board of seven members. Term period is three years with a limit of three terms. Makes recommendations to City Council regarding revisions to the utility construction standards, alleged billing discrepancies, and review of utility drawings and specifications.
- **New Businesses** – All persons, firms or corporations engaging in business or occupation within the City of Punta Gorda are required to obtain a local business tax receipt in accordance with Chapter 12 of the Punta Gorda City Code. As part of our effort to promote economic development and vitality in our area, we offer the following list of new or transferred business within our community this week:
 - No new businesses to report this week.