US States News

EXPANDED LIST OF UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA EXPERTS AVAILABLE TO DISCUSS HURRICANE SEASON

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BY US STATES NEWS

GAINESVILLE— The University of Florida, a component of the Florida state university system, issued the following news release:

With this summer's hurricane season predicted to be another active one, the following University of Florida sources are available to speak to the news media about a variety of storm- and hurricane-related topics.

HURRICANE PREPARATIONS

Hurricane-proofing homes: Bob Stroh is a research professor in the Rinker School of Building Construction and director of the Shimberg Center for Affordable Housing in the College of Design, Construction & Planning. He specializes in techniques and materials that minimize hurricane damage in new and existing homes. 352- 273-1192, stroh@ufl.edu.

Hurricane-resistant building construction: Pierce Jones, professor of agricultural and biological engineering, has worked with builders specializing in hurricane-resistant homes, and can discuss construction methods that reduce wind damage. 352-392-5684, ez@energy.ufl.edu.

My Safe Florida Home program: Craig Miller, who coordinates educational programs for UF's Program for Resource-Efficient Communities, organizes training and testing for inspectors in the My Safe Florida Home program. The statewide effort helps residents enhance the hurricane resistance of their homes via inspections and matching grants for improvements. 352-392-5684, craig@energy.ufl.edu.

Water intrusion in homes: Wendell Porter, an assistant research scientist with the agricultural and biological engineering department, has expertise with hurricane-related water damage and its prevention. He can discuss water penetration of stucco, leaks in attic ventilation systems and mold growth related to flooding. 352-392-1864, ext. 271, waporter@ufl.edu.

HURRICANE SCIENCE

Frequency and intensity of hurricanes: Corene Matyas, an assistant professor of geography, investigates the frequency and intensity of hurricanes, their tendencies for certain landfall locations, their rainfall patterns, and the characteristics that affect hurricanes' formation and life cycle. 352-392-0494, matyas@ufl.edu.

El Ni?o, hurricanes and rainfall: Pete Waylen, professor and chairman of UF's geography

department, researches the causes of longer-term variability in climate, including El Ni?o, and their impacts on hurricanes and the rainfall and floods that they produce in and around the Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico. 352-392-4652, prwaylen@geog.ufl.edu.

Extreme wind effects and wind-driven rain: Forrest Masters, an assistant professor of civil and coastal engineering, can provide information on the hurricane wind field and damage to the building stock. Masters will have a mobile 2,800 horsepower hurricane simulator operational by summer. 352- 392-9537, ext. 1505, masters@ce.ufl.edu.

Wind speed, force and impact on buildings: Kurt Gurley, an associate professor of civil and coastal engineering, can provide information on ground-level hurricane wind speeds and wind forces on residential structures. 352-392-9537, ext. 1508, kgurl@ce.ufl.edu.

Predicting storm surge: Don Slinn, an associate professor of civil and coastal engineering, researches the coastal impact of waves and flooding from hurricanes. He has helped to develop computer models that predict likely storm surge for Atlantic storms and examine effects of waves and flooding on beaches and buildings. 352- 392-9537, ext. 1431, slinn@coastal.ufl.edu.

Hurricane-induced storm surge, wave, coastal inundation, and coastal erosion: Peter Sheng, a professor of civil and coastal engineering, is an expert in coastal hazard and coastal ecosystem restoration. He is also a national leader in the simulation and forecasting of hurricane-induced storm surge, wave, coastal inundation and coastal erosion. Among other efforts, he has produced a new methodology for developing a more accurate Flood Insurance Rate Map for U.S. coastal counties, and has been running a forecasting system for storm surge, wave, and inundation during the last two hurricane seasons. Sheng is a member of the National Academies' Committee on New Orleans Regional Hurricane Protection System and the National Academies' Committee on FEMA Flooding Mapping. 352-392-9537, ext. 1521, pete@coastal.ufl.edu.

IMPACT OF HURRICANES ON URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Wind damage to structures and utilities: Ron Cook, professor of civil engineering, can discuss wind damage to buildings, Florida's hurricane-related building codes and how hurricanes affect utilities. 352-392-9537, ext. 1507, rcook@ce.ufl.edu.

Utility outages and power distribution: Paul Sotkiewicz, director of energy studies at UF's **Public Utility Research Center,** has expertise in energy economics and electric utilities, and can answer questions about power distribution, regulatory matters, electricity restoration and underground utility lines. 352-392-7842, paul.sotkiewicz@cba.ufl.edu.

Hurricanes and the insurance industry: David Nye, a professor of finance and insurance, can answer questions related to hurricane damage and the insurance industry. 352-392-6649, dnye@ufl.edu.

Barge vs. bridge accidents: Gary Consolazio, an associate professor of civil engineering, has done extensive research on how to make bridges better able to withstand barge collisions while reducing their cost. 352-392-9537, ext. 1510, grc@ufl.edu.

IMPACT OF HURRICANES ON NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Hurricanes' impact on beaches: Bob Dean, a UF graduate research professor emeritus in civil and coastal engineering, is one of the nation's leading experts on beach erosion and has studied the

effects of several hurricanes on Florida's beaches. He is also knowledgeable about sea-level rise and hurricanes. 352-392-9537, ext. 1430, dean@coastal.ufl.edu.

Quantifying hurricane damage of beaches: Ramesh Shrestha, a professor of civil and coastal engineering, leads UF's participation in the National Center for Airborne Laser Mapping. The university owns and operates airborne and ground-based laser mapping units to quickly and accurately map hundreds of miles of beaches and coastal areas to obtain damage estimates following storms. 352-392-4999, rshre@ce.ufl.edu.

Tree recovery following hurricanes: Ralph E. Mitchell, a UF county extension director and horticulture agent in Charlotte County, heads a State Urban Forestry Grant-funded effort to provide trees and education to help Charlotte County recover from the 2004 hurricanes. 941- 764-4340, ralph.mitchell@charlottefl.com.

Tree protection: Ed Gilman, a professor with the environmental horticulture department, is an expert in tree health and storm damage to trees. He can address topics such as tree placement, pruning, maintenance, damage prevention and evaluation of tree health after hurricanes. (cell) 352-262-9165, egilman@ufl.edu.

Rebuilding/maintaining sand dunes: Deborah Miller, an associate professor of wildlife ecology and conservation based at UF's West Florida Research and Education Center in Milton, has studied the best ways to rebuild sand dunes destroyed by hurricanes. 850-983-5216, ext. 104, dlmi@ufl.edu.

HURRICANES AND PEOPLE

Demographic effects of hurricanes: Stan Smith and Chris McCarty, with UF's Bureau of Economic and Business Research, can discuss how hurricanes prompt people to relocate, both temporarily and permanently. Smith, director of the bureau, and McCarty, director of survey programs, did a study of the 2004 hurricanes that found nearly 4.5 million Floridians evacuated their homes at one time or another during the summer. The study also estimated that 2.6 million of Florida's 8.1 million housing units were damaged by the storms. The researchers co-authored a 1996 paper that found that Hurricane Andrew forced 353,000 Dade County residents from their homes temporarily and that almost 40,000 people left the county permanently as a result of the storm. McCarty can be reached 352-392-2908, ext. 101, ufchris@ufl.edu; Smith, 352-392-0171, ext. 210, sksmith@ufl.edu.

How hurricanes affect communities: Anthony Oliver-Smith, professor of anthropology, has spent three decades studying the social impacts of disasters and how communities re-emerge from destruction. 352-392-2253, ext. 251, aros@ufl.edu.

Psychological impacts of hurricanes: Brenda Wiens, a research assistant professor and psychologist in the Department of Clinical and Health Psychology and the National Rural Behavioral Health Center, can speak about the mental health effects of hurricanes and other natural disasters. 352-273-5120, wiens@ufl.edu.

Economic effects of hurricanes: David Denslow, director of the Economic Analysis Program at UF's Bureau of Business and Economic Research and distinguished service professor in economics, can provide information about how hurricanes affect the economy. 352-392-0171, ext. 340, denslow@ufl.edu.

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