

Update October 8

Access to the Town is reopening at 7 a.m. on Sunday, Oct. 9, 2022

The Town of Fort Myers Beach is reopening access to the town beginning Sunday morning, October 9, for residents, property owners, business owners and insurance adjusters now that the responsibility of controlling access to the town is transitioning from the Fire District to the Town Government of Fort Myers Beach.

“Since the storm, the effort to save lives and recover the remains of lost loved ones has been the top priority,” said Fort Myers Beach Mayor Ray Murphy. “We are now ready to move to the next step in the recovery process.”

Most residents of Fort Myers Beach have been off the island since they evacuated prior to the storm and are ready to get home to assess their property, take actions to protect their property and begin the insurance claims process.

Beginning Sunday morning, October 9, at 7 a.m. access to the Town of Fort Myers Beach will open to residents, property owners and business owners, claims adjusters and others that need to be on the island.

Residents and property owners should bring ID with them or proof of residency to be allowed on the island.

To minimize traffic congestion, the following plan will be used:

- Property owners between the Big Carlos Pass Bridge and Beach Theater on the south end of the island, or between Times Square and Bowditch Point Park on the north end of the island can enter beginning at 7 am.
- Properties between the Beach Theater and Publix can enter after 8 am.
- Properties between Publix and Town Hall can enter after 9 am.
- Properties between Town Hall and Times Square can enter after 10 am.

Everyone who wants to come to the island needs to know several things:

There is no power, no water or wastewater service and no trash pickup. Internet and cellular service is not at full strength. Many structures are destroyed, and almost all are unsafe to enter. There is no food or water available on the island, and no businesses are open. Big Carlos Pass Bridge remains closed. A curfew at 7 pm remains in place and those that come to check on their properties should plan to leave the island before 7 pm.

The island was covered in 12-18 feet of salt water from the storm surge. The structural integrity of many homes and buildings is compromised. The electrical systems of most structures on the island are damaged.

Permits and inspections will be required before power will be turned back on to individual structures. The town recommends property owners use locally licensed contractors.

Disaster Survivor Assistance Teams from FEMA will be on the island in the coming days to help people register for federal disaster assistance. Residents can also register online at disasterassistance.gov or on the phone at 1-800-621-3362.

An interim Town Hall has been set up beside the damaged Town Hall. Details on required permits and inspections will be made available on the Town's website and social media channels.

It's critical that personal vehicles on the island do not block streets, or hinder operations like debris removal.

Representatives from the Florida Division of Emergency Management, Lee County Public Safety, incident management teams and others are assisting the Town in moving forward through the recovery process.

The Town will be providing regular updates on storm recovery via news releases, the Town website and social media.