



Gardening Uncovered: Preparing Your Landscape for a Storm

By Martha Vaughn

On the heels of Tropical Storm Elsa threatening to tear its way across Central Florida, let's talk about preparing for storms. After all, it's only July and we still have 4 months left of hurricane season. Each home will have its own unique needs and depending on the eminent danger, some of these items will be modified to fit the situation at hand.

Here's Anson Nursery's Storm Preparation Guide:

- ✓ Stormwater Systems must be cleaned.
 - If you live in an area that has storm drains built into curbs or streets, inspect the ones in your area and keep them free of debris or grass clipping.
 - If the drain is clogged, you can report them by visiting Citizen Request Center (citrusbocc.com).
- ✓ Clean gutters ensuring they are free of debris such as branches, moss, or leaves.
- ✓ Make sure anything that is supposed to be attached to your home is attached. Gutters along the roof and drain spouts, shutters, signs, lighting, etc.
- ✓ Look for runoff areas, placing pavers can help reduce soil erosion.
- ✓ Prune trees, shrubs, or plants that are close to or touching structures.
- ✓ Remove broken, hanging or dead palm fronds, do not trim off fronds that are slightly brown on the tips or prune in a V-Shape.
- ✓ Remove debris from the yard, this includes lawn clippings, leaves, dead trees or shrubs, broken or hanging palm fronds.
- ✓ Secure fences and gates.
- ✓ Inspects sheds and greenhouses to make sure they are anchored securely and their windows and doors close tightly.
- ✓ Young or newly planted trees should be staked and tied to prevent them from blowing over in high winds.
- ✓ Hazardous chemicals such as fuels, insecticides, pesticides, fertilizer, motor oil, etc. should be stored high to prevent their contents from traveling during flooding.



Once a storm is predicted and warnings are issued, there are immediate, temporary things you should do.

- ✓ Board windows and close shutters.
- ✓ Move container plants, hanging baskets, yard art, patio furniture, bird baths and houses, and other loose items indoors.
- ✓ Anything too heavy to be moved, or too big to go inside, make sure it is sheltered by a hedge, close to the foundation, or laid flat.
- ✓ Turn irrigation systems off, even if it has a rain shut-off, turn the system off.
- ✓ Leave rain barrel spouts open or move them to a secure location, remove and hoses from exterior hose-bibs.
- ✓ Don't forget the grill, and your outdoor bar. Move grills, TV's and anything in the outdoor fridge inside. Turn off gas, propane tanks, and secure charcoal. Make sure cabinets and storage containers are secure and won't blow away.
- ✓ If you have enough warning, mow your lawn before the storm to allow for easy debris clean up.
- ✓ Be prepared to see insect, bugs, and snakes as these guys are moving to higher ground too.
- ✓ Harvest vegetables, between the winds and flood waters, odds are they won't be edible after the storm and if the power goes out, you have food ready.
- ✓ If you have aquatic gardens, bring in fish, any potted plants should be set on the bottom of the pond, fountains should be turned off and unplug electrical cords, roll them up and secure them if you can't remove or bring in the pumps.

Give Anson Nursery a call, we can help you identify areas of concern and help you keep your yard safe during a storm.

To help keep customers and staff safe and healthy Anson Nursery have hand washing stations, curb side pickup, and delivery and installation services. Open Monday - Friday from 9am - 5pm and on Saturday's from 9am - 4pm, make plans to visit Anson Nursery today. Conveniently located at 5296 West Homosassa Trail, Lecanto, FL 34461. For more information, you can call 352-628-4554, visit www.ansonnursery.net, or find us on Facebook. Be sure to watch for next month's Gardening Uncovered article.

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