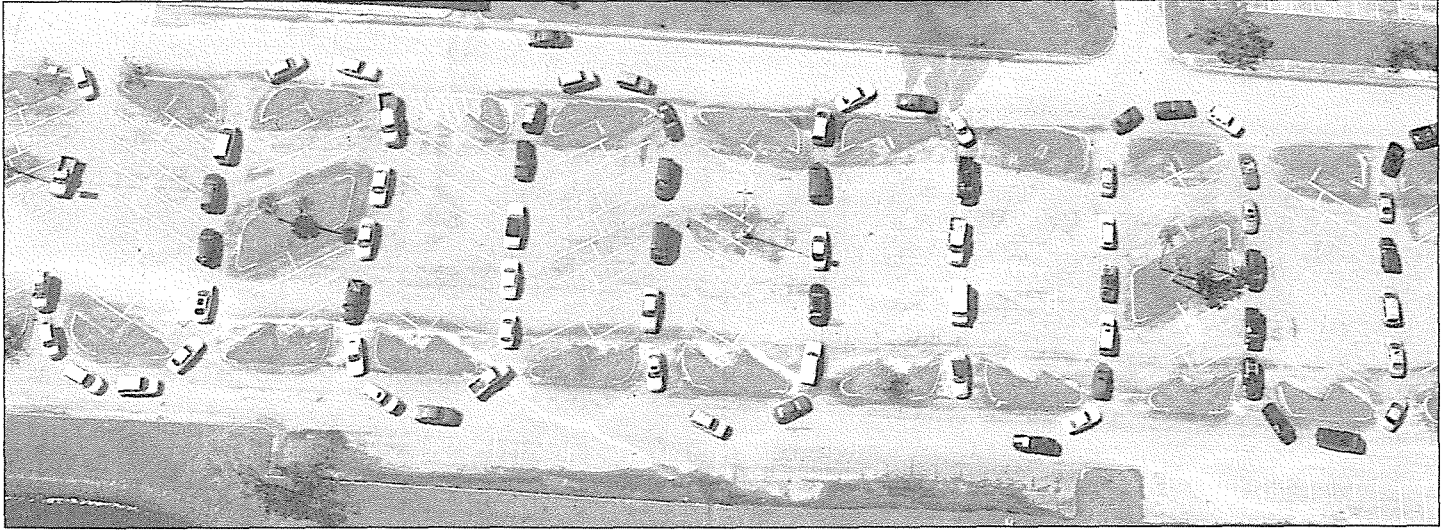


BEFORE THE STORM *Water and ice*

RICHARD GRAULICH/2005 staff file photo

LONG AND WINDING ROAD: Cars last October snake around Port St. Lucie's City Center, at U.S. 1 and Walton Road, the main Federal Emergency Management Agency distribution site for ice and water, which hadn't yet arrived.

Avoid the lines! Stock up now on water, ice

Palm Beach County now urges residents to keep a five- to seven-day supply of water and ice and experts recommend a two-week stockpile.

Last year, thousands who were not prepared were in lines for hours.

WATER

Basics: Enough for 1 gallon of drinking water per person per day, for 1 week minimum; 2 weeks, ideally. Figure 1 gallon per person per day of regular tap water for washing hands, flushing toilets and for pets.

Special needs: Without air conditioning, the body is susceptible to heat stroke and dehydration. Have extra water for infants, youngsters and the elderly.

Water in bulk: You can buy 5- and 10-gallon water bottles, but they're hard to lift or move. Another idea: Sanitize a large garbage can with lid to store drinking water. Pour 1 cup of regular, unscented household bleach to a full 30 gallons of water; let stand overnight, drain and rinse well. Fill with tap water and replace

the lid. Buy a long-handled ladle, keep paper cups nearby, and keep clean.

For washing and household needs, sanitize the bathtub by scrubbing well, then rinsing with 1 cup bleach to a tub of water. Let stand overnight; drain and refill. Use for bathing or washing. You also can drain the water out of the hot-water heater; this is drinkable if needed.

Keep water clean! Contaminated water can cause diarrhea, leading to dehydration. If drinking water is compromised, use it for washing up or flushing toilets.

Note: After a storm, do not use tap water for drinking unless you boil it for 3 minutes first or use purifying methods (see the "After the Storm" food section).

ICE

Freezing water jugs: Buy 1-gallon containers of drinking water (2½ gallons, if your freezer will accommodate them), drain out about ½ cup to leave room for expansion, seal tightly, and freeze.

Keep the jugs in the freezer even after the power goes out; they last longer than in coolers. Once thawed, the water is drinkable. Re-bottle it into smaller bottles to carry, or use it from the larger jugs, but keep it clean and uncontaminated.

Buy block ice if possible (available from most ice

companies, boating supply stores and some grocery stores). It lasts up to three times as long as bagged, cubed ice.

Make your own blocks. When a storm approaches, clean the freezer and fill it with stackable containers of water. Large mixing bowls or small buckets will work. Freeze, and when frozen, transfer ice blocks to sealable bags.

Try the bathtub. If you're not using it for water, use it for ice. Buy huge blocks and load up the tub. Cover with a tarp.

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More on food, water and ice preparations

Access tips, resources and Web sites with the **PalmBeachPost.com** hurricane preparedness guide:

Storm2006.com