



The Leon County LINK

Connecting Citizens with Leon County Services

Weathering the Storms: Trim Trees for Hurricane Season



Leon County is known for its beautiful trees and greenways, but when severe weather comes our way, those trees can threaten our safety. County residents can help prevent property damage and personal injury by pruning ominous tree branches during hurricane season, June 1 through Nov. 30. Diseased and damaged tree limbs should be removed as well as limbs overhanging houses. Also, trees with sharp "V" shaped branches are more likely to snap in a storm than branches with the more structurally sound "U" shape. "V" shaped branches can be trimmed throughout a tree's growth to promote stronger branch development.

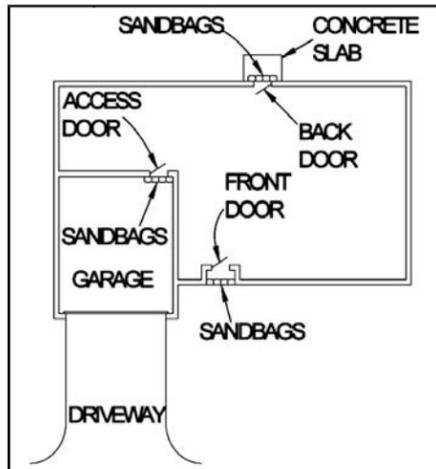
Before hiring a tree surgeon or arborist, keep these tips in mind:

- "Tree surgeon" is a title that requires no training; a certified arborist must earn continuing education.
- Proof of Liability and Worker's Compensation Insurance should be presented and can be verified by visiting the Florida Department of Financial Services webpage at www.fldfs.com.
- Get two or more free estimates for the work.
- Require a complete formal estimate sheet with details of all the work intended, including disposal of debris, cleaning work area, stump grinding, removal of wood, or the option of cutting stack firewood.
- Always have a signed contract with the total dollar amount and completion date of work to be performed.

For more tips on hurricane preparedness, visit www.leoncountyfl.gov.

Be Prepared for Flooding With Sandbags

With hurricane season comes heavy rainfall and rising waters. When that happens, Leon County Public Works is there to help, providing sandbags to residents in need. However, do you know what to do with the sandbags once you have them? Here are some tips: Place sandbags outside your home, directly against the doors where water might enter. If water is coming into your garage, place the sandbags against the door that leads to the interior of your home. Remember, water can seep through sandbags, so they should be wrapped in plastic, such as a garbage bag or a vinyl shower curtain. Use heavy wrapping or duct tape to seal the ends together.



When a storm is approaching, check the Leon County website at www.leoncountyfl.gov to see when and where sandbags will be available. If residents have previously picked up sandbags, they are encouraged to keep those bags for future use. For more information, please call Leon County Public Works at 488-8003.

Volunteers Needed to Serve as Wildlife Conservation Guides



If you love the outdoors and want to learn more about wildlife, you may be interested in participating in a new and exciting Environmental Service Learning project focusing on the Wakulla Springs Watershed. The Leon County Extension Office is taking applications for the Fall 2005 Master Wildlife Conservationist volunteer training course. Participants will learn about

the plants and wildlife of the Wakulla Springs Watershed, and will be trained to serve as volunteer guides for middle school student field trips.

The training course entails 88 contact hours of field, lab, and classroom instruction. Class will take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, beginning Sept. 1 and concluding Nov. 1. The training costs \$175 and requires a commitment to guide students for at least six full days during the 2005-06 school year.

For more information or to receive an application, please contact Genice Roberts at the Leon County Extension Office, 487-3004, or the Natural Resource Extension Agent and Course Instructor, Will Sheftall, at WLSheftall@ifas.ufl.edu.

County Provides Rides for Seniors



Seniors living in rural Leon County now have a fun and easy way to get to the grocery store. Thanks to funding from the Leon County Commission, monthly transit service is now available to a "super store" that offers groceries, a pharmacy, a hair salon, and other essential services and supplies. This service is open to all seniors living in rural Leon County, and it is

especially beneficial to those without transportation or who prefer not to drive.

The bus picks up seniors at a designated location at 10 a.m. and returns them at 12:30 p.m. First-time riders need to arrive by 9:30 a.m. to complete registration forms. The cost for each rider is \$2 round trip. The transportation schedule is as follows:

- First Friday of the month, Miccosukee Community Center
- Second Friday of the month, Ft. Braden Community Center
- Fourth Friday of the month, First Baptist Church of Woodville, Fellowship Hall

For more information, or if you need a ride to and from a pick-up location, please call Susan Davis at 891-4065.

Little Creatures Can Cause Big Problems

When you're enjoying outdoor activities in Leon County, especially in wooded areas, you can be exposed to ticks infected with Lyme disease, which can lead to serious illness. Typical symptoms include fever, headache, fatigue, and a characteristic "bull's-eye" rash.



If left untreated, infection can spread to joints, the heart, and the nervous system.

After spending time outdoors, check your body carefully for ticks. Prompt removal of ticks decreases the chances of contracting Lyme disease. The proper and easiest method is to grasp the tick with fine tweezers, and gently pull it straight out. Be careful not to squeeze the tick, remove the tick with your fingers, or attempt to remove with lighted cigarettes, matches, nail polish, or Vaseline. Once removed, save the tick for identification. Make a note of where on your body it was located. Also, watch for the symptoms of Lyme disease, and act quickly if any develop. For more information, visit <http://leon.ifas.ufl.edu> or www.cdc.gov.

Library Card a 'Must Have' for School

A library card is one of the best school supplies for students of any age. With a card from the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System, you can borrow books, magazines, CDs, DVDs, videos, and other materials; search for information on countless topics in more than 25 online databases; use full textbooks online; practice taking a variety of academic and professional exams (including portions of the FCAT and college entrance exams); and obtain free homework help online from trained tutors.



For information on how to sign up for a library card, visit any LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System location, a bookmobile stop, visit the library's website at www.leoncountylibrary.org, or call 487-2665. Make this your best school year yet with help from your public library!

August 2005

Board of County Commissioners Schedule

30 Commission Meeting 3 p.m. Public Hearings 6 p.m.
Leon County Courthouse, Commission Chambers

The Link is produced by Leon County Public Information, 488-9962.