

Hurricane Response Team (HRT): Venetian Golf and River Club

Developed by the VGRC Community Association (www.vgrcca.org)

in consultation with local safety officials

Updated: 6/12/2024

INTRODUCTION

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

In 2014, the Community Association of the Venetian Golf and River Club (VGRC) recognized a need for a team of people who could serve the VGRC community in the aftermath of a hurricane. The intent is to provide coverage after the management and security had left the premises in anticipation of and following a hurricane until the HRT services are no longer needed.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Hurricane Response Team (HRT) was created by the Community Association Board which oversees, funds and assumes the overall responsibility for the HRT. The Board selects a member of the community to lead the Hurricane Response Team. That member functions as a General Team Leader and coordinator charged with the training and oversight of the HRT members, communicating with the community, and working with the designated members of the POA, the CDD, and the Neighborhood Association.

The General Team Leader reports to a Board member designated by the President(s) of the Board. The General Team Leader may be invited from time to time to report to the Board on the activities of the HRT.

In addition to the General Team Leader, the Hurricane Response Team leadership is comprised of team leaders:

- (1) The Security Team Leader
- (2) The General Assessment Team Leader
- (3) The Reach-Out Team Leader
- (4) A Logistics Leader whose responsibilities include managing the supplies and equipment used by the team members.
- (5) A Data Specialist whose task is to collect and compile information about the HRT volunteers. It is from this data that team member assignments and schedules will be made if and when it becomes necessary to carry out this step.

TEAM COMPOSITION

The teams will consist of trained volunteers from the VGRC community who may serve on one of three primary teams:

- (1) Security
- (2) General Assessment
- (3) Reach-Out

All team members will receive annual training and will be crossed-trained for any role that might be needed when called upon (and as the need arises). The team members will be provided with written step-by-step instructions for carrying out their assigned duties. The team members may indicate their team preference in their application. All efforts will be made to assign the volunteer to their team of choice. However, it may become necessary to assign that member to another team or task where the need is greater. If he or she refuses the assignment, all reasonable efforts will be made to assign him or her to another team or to other duties.

The profile of those who could serve on the HRT include:

- Men and women who self-report their capabilities in serving on the HRT team, including being in good health and with reasonable physical stamina for tasks assigned to them.
- Who attend the annual and subsequent training for HRT members.
- Who have a willingness to work cooperatively in teams.
- Who have a willingness to be Good Will Ambassadors for the HRT and the community.

TEAM MEMBER SAFETY

The personal safety of the HRT team members is of paramount importance. No member will be asked or expected to perform tasks which are deemed to be unsafe in general, or for the individual specifically. The team member should report to their team leader if:

- (1) They do not feel comfortable undertaking a task.
- (2) It is one that has not been included in their training.
- (3) They are not comfortable taking any action that might be requested by a community resident.

PRE-HURRICANE DUTIES

Prior to an impending hurricane, the management and operation of the Venetian Golf & River Club (POA, VCDD) go through a “lock down procedure.” This includes closing the River Club and the security guard gate

house. When sustained wind speeds reach 35 mph, all POA and CDD employees leave the premises. At this point, the gate arms will be removed, and the gatehouse will be without contracted security guards.

If, in consultation with security team members, the Security Team leader believes that it is safe for the team to staff the guard house after the guards leave the premises and for a short period of time before the storm winds increase, willing volunteers may be asked to staff the gate house until they believe that it is unsafe to do so.

The Reach Out Team will make contact with residents who have indicated a desire to receive this service and who have completed a form or provided information for a form that will be used after a storm has passed.

THE HURRICANE RESPONSE TEAM: PURPOSE AND PROCESS

The primary focus of the Hurricane Response Team's (HRT) is two-fold:

- (1) Community education and communication.
- (2) Carrying out assigned duties after a hurricane has impacted the area.

Education

Beginning in June of each year, hurricane preparation information will be provided to the community. This can be achieved through:

- (1) An annual Community Association sponsored VGRC Community Hurricane Preparation seminar.
- (2) Community emails.
- (3) Information and hurricane preparation guides posted in the Hurricane Corner (<https://vgrcca.org/hurricane-corner>) located on the home page of the VGRC Community Association website.

Post-Hurricane Duties and Responsibilities

The main purpose of the HRT, post-hurricane, is to:

- Provide security coverage at the front gatehouse of the Venetian until the contracted security force returns. As long as it is safe to do so, members of the Hurricane Response Team Security Team may staff the gate house until the contracted security guards are able to return to the premises. The HRT security team members are not expected to staff the gate area during a storm and are only called out after the storm when it is deemed safe for them to assume their duties.

- Make a general assessment of and record the extent and nature of any damage to homes or properties in the community. These observations and assessments are made from a golf cart or from the sidewalk. HRT members are asked to refrain from going on to the property (for their safety and well-being).

The Assessment team will be divided up by geographic location and is responsible for:

- Assessing and evaluating the condition and damage of each area such as road blockage, downed wires, high water, damaged homes and possible personal injuries. They will also identify any streets that are impassable and notify the Security Team of the same. HRT members are to refrain from entering any hazardous areas.
- Attempt to determine, if it is evident, whether a home has been damaged and a description of the damage as viewed from the street. In addition, if possible, determine if the homeowner/occupant(s) is/are present and their condition(s).

HRT members do not perform the following tasks:

- Install hurricane shutters before a storm or remove them afterwards.
- Coordinate the evacuation and relocation of residents.
- Provide medical assessment or medical care for injured residents, except in life threatening or very unusual circumstances or when minor first aid is appropriate.

Each year, the HRT members will receive an email requesting the following information:

- Whether he or she has a golf cart that could be used in carrying out the HRT duties.
- Whether he or she has a home generator and whether members of the community would be allowed to charge their cell phones at their location.
- Whether he or she has a chain saw to remove tree limbs from the roads if necessary.
- Whether he or she is a ham radio operator.

Supplies and Equipment

Each year, at the conclusion of the hurricane season, an inventory of HRT supplies and equipment will be conducted. Used or non-functioning items should be replaced. At the beginning of the next hurricane season, battery operated equipment should be tested.

LEGAL PROTECTION FOR VOLUNTEERS

Members of the HRT who render first aid will be protected under Florida’s Good Samaritan Act.

i. Florida Statute 768.13 Good Samaritan Act; immunity from civil liability. —

(1) This act shall be known and cited as the “Good Samaritan Act.”

(2)(a) Any person, including those licensed to practice medicine, who gratuitously and in good faith renders emergency care or treatment either in direct response to emergency situations related to and arising out of a public health emergency declared pursuant to (s.381.00315), a state of emergency which has been declared pursuant to (s.252.36), or at the scene of an emergency outside of a hospital, doctor’s office, or other place having proper medical equipment, without objection of the injured victim or victims thereof, shall not be held liable for any civil damages as a result of such care or treatment or as a result of any act or failure to act in providing or arranging further medical treatment where the person acts as an ordinary reasonably prudent person would have acted under the same or similar circumstances.

Reviewed and revised: 6/10/2024 by Mary Rau-Foster