

## Farmers(R) Group, Inc. and Subsidiaries Foremost and Bristol West Prepare for Tropical Storm Ida Heading for Florida Panhandle, Offer Tips to Customers to be Prepared

PRNewswire

Tropical Storm Ida, bearing down on the Florida panhandle, will bring heavy rain and high winds from the coast inland. "The message we have for all of our customers is to be prepared and follow instructions if you are asked to evacuate," explains Foremost Catastrophe Manager Michael Steele. "We have deployed claims adjusters to the area and they are prepared to help our customers immediately after Ida hits land."

(Logo: <http://www.newscom.com/cgi-bin/prnh/20080605/LATH062>)

Farmers Insurance customers and Bristol West Insurance customers with damage should immediately contact their agent or call Farmers' 24-hour-claims hotline, 800-HelpPoint (1-800-435-7764) for immediate assistance.

Flood victims who have flood insurance should contact the National Flood Program at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

Foremost Insurance customers should file their claim by calling: 800-527-3907.

"We ask our customers who are following Ida's projected path to pay close attention to the latest weather reports," Steele adds, "and begin making necessary preparations."

- Create a Home Inventory. Have an up-to-date inventory of all of your personal property. Take pictures and then email them to relatives living out of state. A home inventory will help you replace your belongings faster.
- Prepare an Evacuation Plan. Plan ahead and map out a safe and smooth evacuation route, and please follow any evacuation orders. Things can be replaced; nothing is worth putting yourself or your family in harm's way. Steele also recommends having all prescriptions and important paper work at the ready in case you have to leave your home on short notice. It is also a good idea to have emergency supplies such as flashlights, radio, batteries and water on hand if you live in a hurricane prone area.
- Hurricane-Proof Your Home. "We recommend installing storm shutters to protect your windows, or nailing plywood panels to your window frames when a storm approaches," said Steele. "It is also a good idea to cover your sliding doors with plywood, and to replace old garage doors and tracks with a door that is approved for both wind pressure and impact protection. If wind comes into your home through a large opening, it increases your chances of major damage to the rest of your home, especially your roof."

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