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Major debris removal efforts continue in Lee County

Fort Myers, FL, Oct. 21, 2022 – Hurricane Ian made landfall just 23 days ago as a Category 4 storm, causing catastrophic damage to houses, businesses, and communities along the entire Lee County coastline and inland communities.

Lee County has more than 1,000 people working on debris and waste recovery. About 200 local residents, many who lost their jobs due to the hurricane, have found new employment as debris monitors. The county's contracted waste haulers, Waste Pro and WM (Waste Management), have 285 drivers, assistants, and administrative workers ensuring that regular garbage is pulled from curbs and businesses. Additionally, there are 325 people working in private construction and demolition recycling businesses – all aimed at helping the county recover.

Lee County has worked around the clock to ensure CrowderGulf, has access to many nearby debris management and collection sites that provide shorter travel time for collection trucks and allow for more round trips. CrowderGulf has 100 trucks with trailers servicing the unincorporated areas of Lee County. The debris collected to date would fill roughly 122 football fields three feet high. Multiple debris collection passes will continue over the next months.

“This recovery effort is a major improvement in turnaround time from that of Hurricane Irma in 2017,” stated Cecil Pendergrass, Chairman of the Lee Board of County Commissioners. “So far, we’ve collected debris five times faster than the amount of time it took to collect in 2017. It’s going to take all of us working together to get through this, and together we can, so we ask that everyone please be patient and we will get to your area.”

As Lee County works to communicate with residents about the cleanup efforts, information can be found on the new debris removal information page on the county's website, along with a Debris Removal Information Dashboard. The dashboard provides an up-to-date debris removal map.

Here's what you can do to help:

- Be sure to separate your debris for service, and keep it away from powerlines, storm drains, utilities, and mailboxes.
- Take debris on your own to public drop off sites.
- Help your family, friends, and neighbors.
- Share helpful information to those who need it.
- Stay positive. Be kind. Sunshine is around the corner.

For more information, visit leegov.com/hurricane/storm/debris, and follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.