

Wind Retrofit Project Helps Local Government Maintain Business as Usual

INDIALANTIC, FL – Enhancements to an Indialantic government building’s storm resiliency have prevented interruptions to essential community services.

Residents of Indialantic made the decision to protect a key government building from potential damage from storms. Once the building—which houses official records—was made safe, they were able to conduct business with the mayor, deputy mayor, town council, police department, comptroller and town clerk without disruption in services.

The town of Indialantic—population approximately 2,720—is on a barrier island in Brevard County. Barrier islands are susceptible to the highest wave actions and strongest winds when hurricanes make landfall. Indialantic is no exception having experienced many storms.

Indialantic’s town hall and police department occupy the barrel-tile roof, masonry building. The structural integrity of the building was not a concern, but the windows and doors were not high-impact resistant.

Potential damage to the building from high-wind events could have disrupted town services, municipal elections and issuance of business tax receipts.

Police department duties could also have been affected, such as:

- General law enforcement and emergency dispatch
- Programs involving elderly well-being
- Neighborhood watch
- Vacation house checks
- Fingerprinting services
- Personal property identification and recording



Administrative Assistant Victoria Mercier demonstrates how the screen shutters are lowered in preparation for high wind events. **Photo by Bonnie Hanchett/FEMA.**

The Town of Indialantic applied for and received funding from FEMA’s Hazard Mitigation Grant Program for a wind-retrofit project to enhance the building. The project was approved in May 2006.

Florida’s Division of Emergency Management administered the grant funds for purchasing hurricane screens on all windows and doors. They were installed in compliance with Florida Building Code specifications and materials were certified to meet impact standards for winds up to 130 mph.

Success of the wind retrofit was validated in September 2017 when Hurricane Irma struck Brevard County, packing a wind gust between 75 and 94 mph. On the island, damage included flooding, downed tree branches, damaged roofs and broken glass from wind-blown debris. However, town hall remained unscathed.



“There was no damage sustained by town hall prior to the installation of the screens other than some roof tiles being blown off during extreme high wind events,” said Town Manager Chris Chinault. “We installed the hurricane screens because it is always better to anticipate a problem, address avoidance measures and not experience the problem.”

For additional information, visit:

- www.indialantic.com/departments/
- www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1400768443563-401e45bd0edf098a80105a736e896c16/Avoiding%20Hurricane%20Damage%202014.pdf
- www.fema.gov/media-library-data/20130726-1537-20490-6588/fema499_6_2.pdf
- <https://www.fema.gov/hazard-mitigation-assistance>



A view of some of the windows and doors in the conference room. **Photo by Bonnie Hanchett/FEMA.**