



Personal Adaptation Strategies

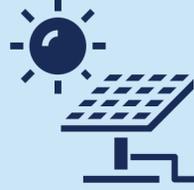
Home and business owners have many actions they can take to make their properties more resilient to extreme weather and climate. Adapting your home or business can reduce damages from extreme events, save you money on utility bills, increase flood and heat protection, among other benefits. Below are examples of personal adaptation strategies you may try.

Flood Protection



Investing in household flood protection systems can greatly reduce the impact of flood events. Dry flood-proofing is an example of modifying existing buildings or building new structures, such as elevating properties or utilities, that prevent water from entering a specific area. This requires construction and is a permanent solution. Installing other permanent features like flood walls, or utilizing temporary flood barriers and sand bags, also provide protection and prevent water from entering your property. Be sure to check your flood insurance requirements and speak with an engineer before installing any systems.

Solar Panels



Solar panels are an effective renewable energy technology that utilize rays directly transmitted from sunlight and convert those rays into electricity that can power homes, including lighting, appliances, and air conditioning, as well as electric vehicles. Solar panels may translate to lowered bills by producing energy on-site. Instead of relying on the energy grid, household solar panel systems can leverage so-called net metering credits that can be bought or sold to an energy utility. Importantly, homeowners need to consider the self-financing aspect of the installment and supportive materials, such as storage systems, for supplying self-sustaining energy even when the grid is down.

Resilience is the ability to recover as quickly as possible after an event, such as a hurricane.

Wind Resilience



South Florida communities are no strangers to hurricanes and strong winds. Advancing wind resilience in your property can greatly decrease potential damages to your property. One way would be to install shutters on windows. Shutters are secured onto your window and provide several benefits – shutters guard your windows from strong winds and flying debris, and are relatively easy to install. Impact windows are another option, but can be more expensive than shutters. They also provide a sense of security against theft and serve as a form of energy reduction due to their ability to keep your home cool, leaving you not only protected from extreme weather events, but also catalyzing cost savings year-round.

Energy and Water Conservation



Energy and water conservation reduces greenhouse gas emissions, protects against drought, and helps ensure resilient natural ecosystems. High-impact energy conservation actions include insulating the attic, setting the AC at 78 degrees or higher, and purchasing high-efficiency (Energy Star) AC units, hot water heaters, and other household appliances. High-impact water conservation actions include following local irrigation ordinances, maintaining sprinkler systems, detecting and fixing leaks, and installing rain barrels. There are many actions and habits you can adopt both inside and outside the home to create your personal strategy to reduce energy and water consumption.

Resilient Landscaping



Leveraging nature's innate processes in water management is crucial in personal adaptation. Incorporating rain gardens and native plants, increasing tree shade, and maintaining swales around your property are resilient strategies that have accruing benefits. The benefits are far and wide, ranging from natural water retention and stormwater management, improving water quality and soil health, reducing the severity of flooding and heat, and increasing pleasurable aesthetics. It is important to take advantage of naturally occurring systems and mimicking their processes to both increase sustainability and mental health. Surrounding your home with resilient plants will induce a strong ecosystem able to mitigate wind, flood, and heat threats.

