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The hurricane season is approaching and protecting one's assets is a concern. The Florida Swimming Pool Association (FSPA) has some tips for preparing your swimming pool for a storm. These common questions are thoroughly answered in the FSPA brochure *Swimming Pools and Storms*.

There are several things you should remember to do before a storm hits. The number one rule: Do not empty your pool. Sufficient water levels provide weight to hold a pool in place when heavy rains raise the local water table. When surrounding structures might be damaged by water before it can run off naturally, the experts recommend lowering the level by one to two feet. It is also recommended that you super chlorinate ("shock") the pool water. It is important that all electrical power be turned off at the circuit breakers before the storm hits.

Wind can be a very damaging part of a storm. Some damage to the frame of an enclosed screen may be avoided by removing panels to allow a "vent" for wind to escape through. It is best to remove loose objects such as chairs, pool equipment and toys. If you can't store items inside a building, carefully and gently place them in the pool. Be careful, and remember, pool chemicals may cause damage to items placed in the pool.

After a storm has passed, the pool will need to be returned to working order. Use nets or skimming devices to remove small debris that can clog the plumbing of your regular pool vacuum equipment. Be sure that everything is dry before dealing with electrical start-up. If electric motors have been exposed to water, they should be checked by a competent professional. The experts say it will probably be necessary to "shock" the pool water again. It is advisable to closely monitor the operating systems through their complete cycles after a storm.

For more details on these topics, visit www.floridapoolpro.com and click on maintenance and then hurricane preparation, or call 866-930-FSPA to obtain a copy of the brochure *Swimming Pools and Storms*.

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