

SunSentinel LOCAL & STATE

Hurricane Melissa forecast to grow

Heading toward Jamaica for a landfall, storm is predicted to turn into a Category 5 storm

By David Schut, Robin Webb, Bill Kearney, Angie DiMichele and Shira Moolten
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Hurricane Melissa is forecast to be at Category 5 strength in the Caribbean within 24 hours as it heads for a Jamaica landfall — the first of what could be multi-

ple landfalls for the catastrophic storm, forecasters said.

The storm, which initially hit Category 4 strength Sunday morning, had already caused some deaths in the central Caribbean. The erratic and slow-moving storm has killed at least three people in Haiti and a fourth person in the Dominican Republic, where another person remains missing. Long-range models continue to

take Melissa on a track east of Florida. Even though they recommend remaining vigilant, the National Weather Service in Miami on Friday said no threat to South Florida is anticipated.

In the Caribbean, the National Hurricane Center is warning of extreme and prolonged amounts of rainfall that will result in numerous life-threatening flash floods, landslides and storm surge. Jamaica will likely take the brunt of Melissa's assault, but Haiti and the Dominican Republic are also at high risk.

"With the slow movement of this system, it doesn't allow you to recover. It's going to sit there, pouring water while it's barely moving and that is a significant challenge that we have to be aware of," warned Evan Thompson, principal director of the Meteorological Service of Jamaica.

"There is nowhere that will escape the wrath of this hurricane," Richard Thompson, acting director general of the Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management said.

On Sunday at 5 p.m., Melissa had

maximum sustained winds of 145 mph, barely drifting west about 115 miles south of Kingston, Jamaica, and 295 miles south-southwest of Guantanamo, Cuba. The National Hurricane Service advised residents of Jamaica to prepare for the worst as the storm's center moves over the island early this week, before moving near or over eastern Cuba by the midweek.

"By late Monday, Melissa's track will be influenced by the larger-scale pattern of the jet stream,

Turn to Melissa, Page 8



Ribbon cutting for 76 homes

Above: Habitat for Humanity of Broward team members, Pompano Beach elected officials, family members of the founders and residents gather for a ribbon cutting at Founders Park honoring Edmund Ansin, Rick Case and Bob Leider on Saturday. Some 76 homes are now complete at "A Rick Case Habitat Community" in Pompano Beach, comprising Broward County's largest affordable workforce housing neighborhood, home to 300 residents.

Right: A plaque at Founders Park honors Ansin, Case and Leider.

MIKE STOCKER/
SOUTH FLORIDA SUN SENTINEL PHOTOS



ASK A REAL ESTATE PRO

Do I pay for damage neighbor says is caused by root?



Gary Singer

Q: I live in a senior community HOA. My neighbor says the roots of my royal palm are lifting her pavers around her pool. The tree, planted by the developer on my property four years ago, is 10 feet from the property line. Since the tree was already mature, I find it unlikely its roots grew fast enough to cause the damage. The neighbor wants me to cover her repair costs.

What is my liability? — Gerry
As Generally, property owners are not responsible for nuisances caused by trees or other vegetation on their property.

The neighboring property owner is allowed to take self-help actions, like trimming roots or branches that encroach, to safeguard their property. The neighbor can do this, at their own expense, but cannot harm the tree itself.

This rule is based on the idea that it is more practical to let individuals protect their own property rather than forcing landowners into numerous legal disputes.

Further, the fact that the

developer planted the royal palm tree does not change the property owner's liability. The courts have consistently ruled that the landowner's duty does not include preventing the natural growth of tree roots, even if the tree was planted intentionally, as long as the tree is healthy and not inherently dangerous.

However, your community association and municipality may have different rules that affect your rights and responsibilities in this situation. To determine if this applies to you, review your community documents and contact code enforcement in your city.

Finally, it's important to remember that you will be living

next to this person for the foreseeable future, so you should address this issue with that in mind.

While I'm certainly not telling you to pay for something you are not required to, you should approach what must be a frustrating situation with an awareness that you're dealing with your next-door neighbor, whom you might very well see every day.

Board-certified real estate lawyer Gary Singer writes about industry legal matters and the housing market. To ask him a question, email him at gary@garysingerlaw.com, or go to SunSentinel.com/askpro.

RESTAURANT INSPECTIONS

State shuts 7 South Florida eateries

Issues: Rodent droppings in oven; liquid cement above cook line

By Kari Barnett
South Florida Sun Sentinel

Violations including 11 rodent droppings inside an oven and 10 live flies contaminating a pizza joint's meatballs and cheese prompted the temporary closure of seven South Florida restaurants during the week of Oct. 12. Inspections also found dozens of live and dead roaches infesting multiple kitchens.

The Sun Sentinel typically highlights restaurant inspections conducted by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation in Broward and Palm Beach counties. We cull through inspections that happen weekly and spotlight places ordered shut for "high-priority violations," such as improper food temperatures or dead cockroaches.

Any restaurant that fails a state inspection must stay closed until it passes a follow-up. If you spot a possible violation and wish to file a complaint, contact Florida DBPR. (But please don't contact us. The Sun Sentinel doesn't inspect restaurants.)

Broward County

The Hen and The Hog 380 N. Park Road, Hollywood
Ordered shut: Oct. 17

Why: 11 violations (four high-priority), including:

■ About 37 live roaches in areas such as "on ground behind two-door, glass-slider, reach-in cooler," "on front left wheel of two-door stainless reach-in cooler," "in control device located under two-door, glass-slider, reach-in cooler," "on ground in prep area" and "on wood board on wall behind right-side flat top on cook line."

■ About 27 dead roaches in areas such as "inside of control device located under two-door, glass-slider, reach-in cooler," "on top of sealed closed bag over potatoes located on side of two-door, glass-slider reach-in cooler," "on ground behind chest freezer," "on loose wrapped tape on electrical cord above chest freezer," "on ground in prep area" and "on hanging tape under front counter in front of cook line."

■ Stop sale ordered for cooked potatoes "due to temperature abuse."

■ "Hand wash sink plumbing on cook line in disrepair. Water draining directly from sink onto floor."

Status: Closed Oct. 18 after a reinspection found seven viola-

Turn to Inspections, Page 6

Deadline extended for nominations for South Florida Top Workplace awards

By Bob Helbig
Ennerage

There's still time to earn recognition as a Top Workplace in South Florida. For the 12th year, the Sun Sentinel will honor outstanding workplace culture in the three-county region. Any organization with 35 or more employees is eligible to compete for a Top Workplaces award. Standout companies will be



honor in May 2026. The nomination deadline has been extended to Dec. 5. Nominees can be public, private, nonprofit, a school, or even a government agency. To nominate an employer or for more information on the awards, just go to SunSentinel.com/nominate or call 954-666-0786.

There is no cost to participate. To qualify as a South Florida Top Workplace, employees evalu-

ate their workplace using a short 26-question survey that takes just a few minutes to complete. Companies will be surveyed through mid-January.

Ennerage, the Pennsylvania-based research partner for the project, conducts Top Workplaces surveys for media in 65 markets nationwide and surveyed more than 2 million employees at more than 8,000 organizations in the past year.

For the 2025 awards, 126 employers in South Florida earned

recognition as Top Workplaces. The top South Florida finishers in each of the three categories in 2025 were:

Large category (400+ employees):

Progressive, an insurance company founded in the 1930s, now has more than 60,000 employees nationwide. It's the second largest auto insurer in the country, and also sells commercial

auto, motorcycle, and boat insurance, and homeowne insurance. Its South Florida offices are located in West Palm Beach, Fort Lauderdale and Miramar.

Midsized category (125-399 employees):

Voloridge Investment Management, founded in 2009, is located in Jupiter. The hedge fund

Turn to Workplaces, Page 6