



Social Media Post (2025-2026)

Category Description

Submit a single, graphically designed social media post with caption if applicable.

Submissions will be judged on criteria such as visual creativity, originality, aesthetics and relevance.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION SUGGESTIONS: Post analytics, screenshots of engagement, etc.

Name of Individual Submitting Entry

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Entry Title

Hurricane Preparedness: Tornadoes

Social Media

@CityofSarasota - Facebook, Instagram, X, LinkedIn, Nextdoor

Video Link (YouTube or Vimeo)

Supporting Documentation

City of Sarasota - Hurricane Preparedness - Tornadoes2.png

City of Sarasota - Hurricane Preparedness - Tornadoes.png

What are the goals and objectives of the social media post (include target audience)?

The City of Sarasota is a growing city with new residents, business owners and visitors who may not be familiar with a very dangerous aspect of hurricanes: they can spawn tornadoes which can be destructive and even deadly.

During the unprecedented 2024 hurricane season, Sarasota experienced two major storms in 13 days, including a direct hit by Hurricane Milton, which produced 126 tornado warnings – the second largest number of tornado warnings issued by the National Weather Service in a state in one day.

In the months leading up to the next hurricane season in 2025, the National Hurricane Center Deputy Director offered a webinar during which he shared the NHC is experiencing difficulty educating the public about specific hurricane dangers, including tornadoes. In discussing the tremendous number of potentially life-threatening tornadoes created by Hurricane Milton, he showed a colorful graphic which illustrated the location of the warnings and risks. In working on the City of Sarasota's annual hurricane preparedness messaging, the Communications Office saw the tornado danger and the extraordinary number of tornado warnings associated with Milton as a significant opportunity to educate the public.

The goal was to highlight tornadoes and educate the public that hurricanes can spawn dangerous tornadoes – and to encourage the public to be prepared. The Communications Office coordinated with the NHC to share messaging on July 11, 2025 on social media platforms showing a visual of the 126 tornado warnings associated with Hurricane Milton, which hit Sarasota less than one year prior. With residents still recovering from Milton, the storm was very fresh in people's minds. In the post caption, resources and links were shared where the public can receive critical weather alerts and be prepared. The NHC was grateful the City of Sarasota, which was so impacted by Milton, was interested in helping with public outreach.

Describe the supporting documentation submitted with this entry.

The July 11, 2025 tornado hurricane preparedness message on Facebook resulted in 613, 847 views and 2,624 interactions. For perspective, that is over three times as many views as the City's top Facebook post in 2024 shortly after Hurricane Milton. The tornado post was shared 446 times. Perhaps most importantly, the links provided in the post caption for residents to register to receive alerts and other information was clicked 1,241 times – an impressive and significant reach for hurricane preparedness. An additional 602 followers were gained as a direct result of that one post. Typically, it would take 2-3 months for the City to gain that many followers.

Out of 352 Facebook posts in 2025, this was the City of Sarasota's top post and experienced remarkable engagement. It is a testament to the public's interest in obtaining critical weather-related information as the community geared up for another hurricane season coming off the heels of an extraordinarily active and destructive 2024. The public was encouraged to be prepared for whatever Mother Nature may bring, including tornadoes – and they engaged and responded in a very positive manner.

The Facebook post can be viewed at:

<https://www.facebook.com/CityofSarasota/posts/pfbid0383VzLUshSocHQdRBD1XspWaN5C5kBWx6ia7ZvYmwuhSAXoN1Ht1Zw3HPVeZQyZshl>

What is new, innovative or creative about this social media post?

Previously, tornadoes had not been highlighted by the City of Sarasota as part of hurricane preparedness.

In the months leading up to the 2025 hurricane season, the National Hurricane Center Deputy Director offered a webinar in which he shared the NHC is experiencing difficulty educating the public about specific hurricane dangers, including tornadoes. In discussing the tremendous number of hurricanes created by Hurricane Milton in 2024, which made landfall in Sarasota, he showed a colorful graphic that depicted the location of the tornado warnings and risks in our region.

In working on our annual hurricane preparedness messaging, the Communications Office saw the tornado danger as a significant opportunity to educate the public. We coordinated with the NHC, which was grateful the City of Sarasota was interested in helping with public outreach.

Describe how this social media post was successful (include your evaluation process and metrics).

The post was successful by the sheer amount of engagement, especially with link clicks for more information. The links in the caption, which directed people to register to receive alerts and other critical information, were clicked 1,241 times – an impressive and significant reach for hurricane preparedness.

An additional 602 followers were gained as a direct result of that one post. Typically, it would take 2-3 months for the City to gain that many followers. These new followers will be poised to receive consistent, reliable, trustworthy information from the City of Sarasota during an emergency situation.

Recognizing the diversity of our communication departments across the state, in the space below, discuss the factors that set your community and submission apart i.e, department size, overall budget spend, innovative and creative techniques utilized, impact on community and size of city/county as examples.

While the City of Sarasota has a population of 55,000, this popular coastal community can easily double with part-time residents and visitors. The City has an extraordinary number of large-scale, high profile projects and initiatives underway, the likes of which typically would occur in a much larger city with a large Communications team. Yet, just two fulltime employees comprise the City of Sarasota Communications Office.

Coming off the heels of the extraordinarily active 2024 hurricane season for Sarasota, which included three hurricanes in 65 days and two major storms in 13 days with Hurricane Milton making landfall in Sarasota and devastating the area, residents were still in recovery mode and the upcoming hurricane season was top of mind.

When the National Hurricane Center expressed concern about the public not fully understanding all the dangers associated with hurricanes and shared a graphic illustrating the near record breaking number of tornado warnings associated with Milton, the Communications team viewed it as a tremendous opportunity to partner with the NHC to educate the community about the dangers of hurricane-related tornadoes as part of the City's monthly hurricane preparedness messaging.

The budget was staff time only.

The result was outstanding public education as shown through analytics with click rates, views, shares and a spike in the number of social media followers. They will be poised to receive critical emergency information from the City of Sarasota.