Hurricane Season Sprinkler & Lighting Checklist

June 1 to November 30 in Palm Beach County. What to do before a storm, and what to check after, for irrigation systems and low-voltage landscape lighting.

Before the season (June)

- [ ] Walk every zone and fix leaks, broken heads and stuck valves now - a weak system after a storm is hard to diagnose
- [ ] Confirm the rain sensor works; it will keep the system off during weeks of rain
- [ ] Note where the controller, pump breaker and main irrigation shutoff are, and show the family
- [ ] Photograph the controller program (or save it in the app) so it can be re-entered after a power loss
- [ ] Check that landscape lighting transformers are mounted above ground and GFCI-protected

When a storm is coming (48 hours out)

- [ ] Turn the controller OFF or set a rain delay of at least a week - the lawn will not need water
- [ ] Turn OFF the pump breaker on well, lake and canal systems so a flooded pump cannot run
- [ ] On city water, close the irrigation shutoff valve if flooding is expected around the backflow
- [ ] Turn OFF the landscape lighting transformer at the breaker
- [ ] Bring in or secure loose fixtures, hose timers and above-ground drip tubing
- [ ] Do not winterize, blow out, or drain lines - this is not a freeze; leave the system as is

After the storm

- [ ] Wait until standing water is gone before restoring power to the pump or transformer
- [ ] Look for a pump that sat under water: do not run it until it has been checked - a flooded motor can short
- [ ] Check the controller: if the display is blank or reset, re-enter the program from your photo
- [ ] Walk the yard for heads buried by debris, sheared by tree work, or sitting under a fallen limb
- [ ] Lake and canal intakes: check for weeds, silt and debris blocking the screen
- [ ] Coastal lots: rinse salt spray off fixtures and check wire splices in valve boxes that flooded
- [ ] Run each zone 2 minutes and look for new leaks, geysers and dead zones
- [ ] Lighting: check each fixture, reset the timer, replace lenses full of water

Call us if

The pump was submerged, the controller will not power up, a tree came down on a valve box or lighting run, or more than one zone is dead. Storm damage to irrigation is often covered under homeowner policies when it is caused by a fallen tree; we can provide an itemized invoice.

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