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## **Hurricane Hunter aircraft kicks off storm season preparations**

With the hurricane season approaching on June 1, Ed McCrane, Sarasota County Emergency Management Chief, reminds residents to be prepared by knowing their evacuation zone, having a plan and deciding now whether to stay or go when a hurricane approaches.

Sarasota County school children and the public today got a chance to see the technology used in the Hurricane Hunter aircraft from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport.

The aircraft visited the airport for the last stop of the Gulf Coast Hurricane Awareness Tour designed to educate the public about storm threats and the importance of having a personal preparedness hurricane plan. The group included Bill Read, director of NOAA's National Hurricane Center, hurricane specialists Dan Brown and John Cagialosi, and storm surge specialist Jamie Rhome.

The NOAA WP-3 Orion turboprop aircraft is used by scientists to study elements of a hurricane by flying through the eye of a storm several times on each flight. The crew collects and transmits data by satellite to the National Hurricane Center so forecasters can analyze and predict the hurricane's path and strength.

Staff from emergency management offices, non-profit organizations such as the American Red Cross, and several local NOAA National Weather Service forecast offices will join the team at each stop.

Information about the NOAA Orion turboprop is available at [http://www.aoc.noaa.gov/aircraft\\_lockheed.htm](http://www.aoc.noaa.gov/aircraft_lockheed.htm)

For more information on all hazards preparation, visit the Sarasota County web site at [www.scgov.net](http://www.scgov.net) or contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 861-5000.

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