



Southeastern
Credit Union Foundation
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Contact:
Kim Gay – Director, Communications
850.558.1022
kim.gay@lscu.coop
[LSCU on Twitter](#)

The League of Southeastern Credit Unions and Southeastern Credit Union Foundation work to provide relief to credit unions impacted by Hurricane Irma

- More than 2 million in Florida still without power
- Credit union leaders support members and staff despite adverse conditions

BIRMINGHAM, AL/TALLAHASSEE, FL – September 15, 2017 – The aftermath of Hurricane Irma continues to take its toll on credit unions this week after the storm devastated much of Florida with flooding and extended power outages. More than 2 million residents are still without power and many without water. The most extensive damage occurred in south Florida with the hardest hit to the Keys. Monroe County News reported yesterday that the Key West airport would not begin commercial service until it has power and water. At this time, damage to the three credit unions operating in this area is still uncertain.

The LSCU continues to reach out daily to impacted credit unions, updating current conditions [online](#) and assessing needs. To provide status updates to the LSCU, click [here](#) and email to CUStatus@lscu.coop. The Southeastern Credit Union Foundation and the LSCU are coordinating efforts with multiple partners to provide communication and relief efforts to Florida credit unions. Donations may be made through the [SECUF](#) (<http://www.lscu.coop/foundation/disaster-relief/>), [CUAid](#) (<http://www.cuaid.coop/site/PageServer>) or email Juli.Lewis@lscu.coop.

The greatest challenge for the majority of Florida's credit unions has been power outages at both branches and employees' homes. GTE Financial Credit Union President/CEO Brian Best reported, "We have been helping our employees nightly with bringing hot meals for them as many don't have power still. Today, 162 employees do not have power. We continue to feed them and provide resources to make sure that they feel safe and respected at GTE."

Best is currently without power and water, as are many credit union leaders throughout the state. To boost morale for credit union employees working to serve members despite adverse conditions, many leaders are also providing such amenities as hotel rooms for staff to take hot showers.



Credit unions that are open for business with power, internet service, and other resources have reached out to the credit union community to help with recovery efforts.

“We see the true cooperative spirit and resiliency of credit unions at work during this time,” said LSCU’s President/CEO Patrick La Pine. “Despite still having some challenges themselves, the leaders and staff of the credit unions that are operational are extending offers of assistance to their members and their fellow credit unions. Seeing this generosity in action reinforces our sense of pride in being part of the credit union movement.”

The tremendous amount of traffic throughout the state has caused shortages of cash in some areas and employees at some branches are using their personal cell phones as hot spots to help with transactions in areas with no internet service. Generators have kept many branches open, focusing on the most necessary services for members. Other issues reported include roof leaks, burned out ATMs, computer problems, structural damage to branches, and flooding causing road closures in some areas. Some credit unions have been unable to reach staff and are making trips to check on their status.

Shared branching locations offered some relief to credit unions, allowing those affected by the storms to continue delivering services to members.

“While shared branching is extremely convenient to members for routine access to their credit union, members in hard hit areas of Florida are realizing the benefit shared branching offers during times of disaster,” said La Pine. “The network also benefits members that are displaced or needing to travel during this difficult time. We were pleased to see so many credit unions alerting their members to shared branching locations to enable them to access their funds.”

The League of Southeastern Credit Unions represents more than 250 credit unions in Alabama and Florida with a combined total of \$83 billion in assets and more than 7 million members. LSCU provides advocacy and regulatory information; education and training; cooperative initiatives (including financial education outreach); media relations and information; and business solutions. For more information, visit www.lscu.coop. Follow the League on Twitter at twitter.com/LeagueofSECUs or Facebook at facebook.com/LeagueofSoutheasternCreditUnions.

The Southeastern Credit Union Foundation serves credit unions and communities in Alabama and Florida. Its mission is to be a catalyst for credit unions to collectively effect change through charitable giving and education. The foundation offers professional development scholarships to credit unions, promotes financial education and offers disaster relief to credit unions as well as their staff in times of need. Find out more at <http://www.lscu.coop/foundation/>

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