

HURRICANES

A hurricane is a type of tropical cyclone or severe tropical storm that forms in the southern Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Gulf of Mexico, and in the eastern Pacific Ocean. A typical cyclone is accompanied by thunderstorms, and in the Northern Hemisphere, a counterclockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface.

All Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas are subject to hurricanes. Parts of the Southwest United States and the Pacific Coast also experience heavy rains and floods each year from hurricanes spawned off Mexico. The Atlantic hurricane season lasts from June to November, with the peak season from mid-August to late October. The Eastern Pacific hurricane season begins May 15 and ends November 30.

Inspire others to act by being an example yourself,
Pledge to Prepare & tell others about it!

Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland. Hurricane can produce winds exceeding 155 miles per hour as well as tornadoes and microbursts. Additionally, hurricanes can create storm surges along the coast and cause extensive damage from heavy rainfall. Floods and flying debris from the excessive winds are often the deadly and destructive results of these weather events. Slow moving hurricanes traveling into mountainous regions tend to produce especially heavy rain. Excessive rain can trigger landslides or mud slides. Flash flooding can occur due to intense rainfall.

For disaster related information, visit www.FEMA.gov.

Before During After Training Resources

Before a Hurricane

To prepare for a hurricane, you should take the following measures:

- To begin preparing, you should build an emergency kit and make a family communications plan.
- Know your surroundings.
- Learn the elevation level of your property and whether the land is flood-prone. This will help you know how your property will be affected when storm surge or tidal flooding are forecasted.
- Identify levees and dams in your area and determine whether they pose a hazard to you.

- Learn community hurricane evacuation routes and how to find higher ground. Determine where you would go and how you would get there if you needed to evacuate.
- Make plans to secure your property:
 - Cover all of your home's windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8" marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install. Tape does not prevent windows from breaking.
 - Install straps or additional clips to securely fasten your roof to the frame structure. This will reduce roof damage.
 - Be sure trees and shrubs around your home are well trimmed so they are more wind resistant.
 - Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
 - Reinforce your garage doors; if wind enters a garage it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage.
 - Plan to bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans and anything else that is not tied down.
 - Determine how and where to secure your boat.
 - Install a generator for emergencies.
 - If in a high-rise building, be prepared to take shelter on or below the 10th floor.
 - Consider building a safe room.

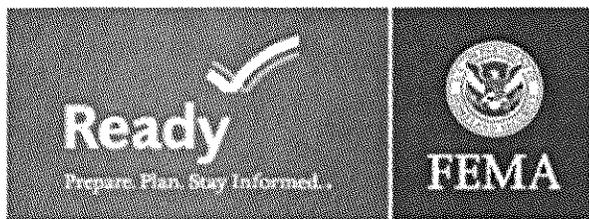
Hurricanes cause heavy rains that can cause extensive flood damage in coastal and inland areas. Everyone is at risk and should consider flood insurance protection. Flood insurance is the only way to financially protect your property or business from flood damage. To learn more about your flooding risk and how to protect yourself and your business, visit the Federal Insurance and Mitigation Administration (NFIP) Web site, www.floodsmart.gov or call 1-800-427-2419.

Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

Storm Surge

Know the Terms

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BASIC DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

[Recommended Supplies List \(PDF\)](#)
[Recommended Supplies List \(Text\)](#)

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger

Additional Emergency Supplies First Aid Kit Supplies for Unique Needs

Once you have gathered the supplies for a basic emergency kit, you may want to consider adding the following items:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Cash or traveler's checks and change

- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container. You can use the [Emergency Financial First Aid Kit - EFFAK](#) (PDF - 977Kb) developed by Operation Hope, FEMA and Citizen Corps to help you organize your information.
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or free information from this web site. (See [Publications](#))
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper – When diluted, nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates, paper towels and plastic utensils
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children

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