

Information Please

# 411



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VOL. 17 NO. 05

## IT'S HURRICANE SEASON ARE YOU PREPARED?



**H**urricane season is June 1 to November 30. Preparedness is key to staying safe and protecting your property. Follow these tips to prepare before a hurricane and to know what to do during and after one.

### BEFORE A HURRICANE:

- **Create an emergency kit.** The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommends packing the following items in your emergency kit:
  - o Water for drinking and sanitation to last at least three days; one gallon of water per person per day is the rule of thumb
  - o Non-perishable food to last at least three days
  - o Hand crank or battery-powered radio and spare batteries. Tune in to the NOAA radio station for weather updates. The nationwide station listing can be found at [http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/coverage/station\\_listing.html](http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/coverage/station_listing.html)
  - o Flashlight with extra batteries
  - o First aid kit
  - o Whistle to call for help
  - o Dust mask, plastic sheeting and duct-tape for making shelters, if necessary
  - o Moist towelettes and garbage bags
  - o Pliers or wrench to turn off utilities
  - o Can opener
  - o Local maps
  - o Cell phone with an extra charger
- **Make a family evacuation plan** with all the members of your household; discuss and practice the plan with them. Include your pets in your plan.
- **Learn community hurricane evacuation routes.** Determine the meeting place, as well as the routes to get there. Contact your local emergency management agency for more information.
- **Consider getting flood insurance protection** at least one month before hurricane season; it is sold separately from regular home insurance. Details on the National Flood Insurance Program can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/national-flood-insurance-program>.

- **Make copies of important documents**, such as proof of property ownership and store them in your emergency kit. These will help you in case you need to file an insurance claim.
- **If there are levees and dams in your area**, find out from your local emergency management agency if they pose a risk to your home during hurricanes.
- **Keep your car in good working condition** and keep the gas tank full; stock your vehicle with emergency supplies and a change of clothes.
- **Secure your property:**
  - o Cover your home's windows with permanent storm shutters or marine plywood, unless your windows are made of laminated glass with impact-resistant glazing.
  - o Securely fasten your roof by installing straps or additional clips to reduce damage.
  - o Prune trees and shrubs around your home to allow wind to flow freely through the branches.
  - o Keep your rain gutters and downspouts clean and unclogged.
  - o Reinforce your garage door to help it better withstand severe winds.
  - o Bring in all your outdoor furniture, bikes, garbage cans, etc.
  - o Buy a generator to run essential appliances if the power goes out. Keep the generator outside at least 20 feet away from windows and doors and protect it from moisture.
  - o Learn how to shut off the power and gas to your home. Have the tools for the job handy.

### DURING A HURRICANE:

- **Stay indoors** until the local authorities have announced that the storm is over. Listen to the radio to get the latest updates.
- **Avoid low-lying areas.** If your home is on low-lying ground or if you're in a mobile home, go to the nearest safe place, such as a shelter.
- **Keep away from windows**, skylights, and glass doors. Find a safer spot, such as an interior room or a bathroom on the lower level.

- **Don't use electrical appliances**, to avoid fire hazards and electrical shocks.
- **Turn off electricity** at the main circuit breaker. Don't turn on electricity until local authorities have advised it's safe to do so.
- **Avoid using the shower**, phone or electrical equipment to stay safe from lightning in your home during the hurricane.
- **Be aware that the eye of the storm may pass over your area**, during which the storm will calm. However, the storm will start again without warning.

### AFTER A HURRICANE:

- **Listen to local officials** for updates and instructions. Get in touch with family and friends as soon as possible.
- **Return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.** If you stayed in your home, make sure that the storm has completely passed before going out. Watch out for debris and downed power lines, and report downed lines to the authorities.
- **Avoid floodwater**, as it may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines. It also contains contaminants and may hide dangerous debris.
- **Don't drive through floodwater**, either. Just six inches of fast-moving water can sweep large vehicles away.
- **Take photos of the damage** that occurred in your property to assist in filing an insurance claim.
- **Prevent further damage to your property** as insurance may not cover additional damage that occurs after the storm. For instance, once the hurricane has passed, you can put a tarp on a damaged roof.

When in doubt, always hire a professional restoration company, such as PuroClean, to safely and efficiently restore your property and its contents to pre-loss condition. PuroClean professionals are standing by to assist in property damage situations, such as those resulting from water, fire, mold, and biohazard.

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## The Paramedics of Property Damage

Water

Fire

Mold

Biohazard