

## Watches & Warnings

Listen closely to instructions from local officials on TV, radio, cell phones or other computers for instructions from local officials. Evacuate if told to do so.

### WATCHES:

- ✓ **Hurricane Watch:** Hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are possible within your area. Because it may not be safe to prepare for a hurricane once winds reach tropical storm force, the NHC issues hurricane watches 48 hours before it anticipates tropical-storm-force winds.
- ✓ **Tropical Storm Watch:** Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are possible within the specified area within 48 hours.
- ✓ **Storm Surge Watch:** The possibility of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline somewhere within the specified area, generally within 48 hours.

### WARNINGS:

- ✓ **Hurricane Warning:** Hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are expected somewhere within the specified area. NHC issues a hurricane warning 36 hours in advance of tropical-storm-force winds to give you time to complete your preparations.
- ✓ **Tropical Storm Warning:** Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are expected within your area within 36 hours.
- ✓ **Storm Surge Warning:** The danger of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline somewhere within the specified area, generally within 36 hours.
- ✓ **Extreme Wind Warning:** Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eyewall, are expected to begin within an hour. Take immediate shelter in the interior portion of a well-built structure.



Learn more about Hurricane Safety at:  
[www.weather.gov/hurricanesafety](http://www.weather.gov/hurricanesafety)

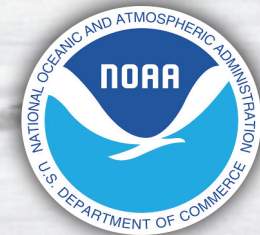


# NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE



## HURRICANE SAFETY

# FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY



## BEFORE A HURRICANE

- ✓ **Know your zone:** Do you live near the Gulf or Atlantic Coasts? Find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation area by contacting your local government/emergency management office.
- ✓ **Have a Family Emergency Plan:** Before an emergency happens, sit down with your family or close friends and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supplies kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster.
- ✓ **Put Together an Emergency Supplies Kit:** Put together a basic disaster supplies kit and consider storage locations for different situations. Check emergency equipment, such as flashlights, generators and storm shutters. For a list of key items for your kit, see [www.ready.gov/kit](http://www.ready.gov/kit)
- ✓ **Review Your Homeowners Insurance:** Review your insurance policy to ensure that you have adequate coverage for your home.
- ✓ **Understand NWS forecast products,** especially the meaning of NWS watches and warnings.



Scituate, Mass., Oct. 29, 2012 - The few summer homes left standing after the Perfect Storm in 1991, stand ready for the tidal surge that is still hours away. Photo by Marilee Caliendo / FEMA

## DURING A HURRICANE

- ✓ **Secure your home:** 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 inch exterior grade or marine plywood, built to fit and ready to install. Buy supplies before the hurricane season rather than waiting for the pre-storm rush.
- ✓ **Stayed tuned in:** Check the websites of your local National Weather Service office and local government/emergency management office. Find out what type of emergencies could occur and how you should respond. Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or other radio or TV stations for the latest storm news.
- ✓ **Follow instructions issued by local officials.** Leave immediately if ordered!

## IF NOT ORDERED TO EVACUATE:

- ✓ **Take refuge in a small interior room,** closet or hallway on the lowest level during the storm. Put as many walls between you and the outside as you can.
- ✓ **Stay away from windows,** skylights and glass doors.
- ✓ **If the eye of the storm passes over your area,** there will be a short period of calm, but at the other side of the eye, the wind speed rapidly increases to hurricane-force winds coming from the opposite direction.

**For more information, visit**  
[www.weather.gov/hurricanesafety](http://www.weather.gov/hurricanesafety)

## AFTER A HURRICANE

- ✓ **Stay Informed:** Continue listening to a NOAA Weather Radio or the local news for the latest updates. If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
- ✓ **Stay Alert:** Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges. If you must go out, watch for fallen objects in the road, downed electrical wires, and weakened walls, bridges, roads and sidewalks that might collapse.
- ✓ **Assess the Damage:** Walk carefully around the outside of your home to check for loose power lines, gas leaks and structural damage.

## STAY SAFE:

- ✓ **Stay out of any building if you smell gas,** if floodwaters remain around the building or if the building or home was damaged by fire and the authorities have not declared it safe.
- ✓ **Carbon monoxide poisoning** is one of the leading causes of death after storms in areas dealing with power outages. Never use a portable generator inside your home or garage.
- ✓ **Use battery-powered flashlights.** Do NOT use candles. Turn on your flashlight before entering a vacated building. The battery could produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas, if present.



Mantoloking, N.J., Nov. 5, 2012 - This house was destroyed by the storm surge of Hurricane Sandy. FEMA



# Weather Safety: Hurricanes

## Safety and Preparedness Fact Sheet

### Before the Hurricane Season

- ▶ Determine safe evacuation routes inland.
- ▶ Learn location of official shelters.
- ▶ Make emergency plans for pets.
- ▶ Check emergency equipment, such as flashlights, generators and battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards and cell phones.
- ▶ Buy food that will keep and store drinking water.
- ▶ Buy plywood or other material to protect your home.
- ▶ Clear loose and clogged rain gutters and downspouts.
- ▶ Trim trees and shrubbery.
- ▶ Decide where to move your boat in an emergency.
- ▶ Review your insurance policy.

### During the Storm

#### When in a **Watch** area...

- ▶ Listen frequently to radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards for bulletins of a storm's progress.
- ▶ Fuel and service your vehicles.
- ▶ Inspect and secure mobile home tie-downs.
- ▶ Board up windows in case the storm moves quickly and you have to evacuate.
- ▶ Stock up on batteries, food that will keep, first aid supplies, drinking water and medications.
- ▶ Store lawn furniture and other loose, light-weight objects, such as garbage cans and garden tools.
- ▶ Have cash on hand in case power goes out and ATMs don't work.

#### Plan to evacuate if you...

- ▶ Live in a mobile or manufactured home. They are unsafe in high winds no matter how well fastened to the ground.
- ▶ Live on the coastline, an offshore island or near a river or flood plain. In addition to wind, flooding from storm surge waves is a major killer.
- ▶ Live in a high-rise. Hurricane winds can knock out electricity to elevators, break windows and more.

#### When in a **Warning** area...

- ▶ Closely monitor radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards for official bulletins.
- ▶ Close storm shutters.

### TERMS TO KNOW

**Hurricane Watch:** Hurricane conditions are possible within the specified coastal area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

**Hurricane Warning:** Hurricane conditions are expected in the specified area of the warning. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

**Tropical Storm Watches and Warnings:** Take these alerts seriously. Although Tropical Storms have lower wind speeds than hurricanes, they often bring life-threatening flooding and dangerous winds. Take precautions!

- ▶ Follow instructions issued by local officials. **Leave immediately if ordered!**
- ▶ If evacuating, leave as soon as possible. Stay with friends or relatives, at a low-rise inland motel or at a designated public shelter outside the flood zone.
- ▶ DO NOT stay in a mobile or manufactured home.
- ▶ Notify neighbors and a family member outside of the warned area of your evacuation plans.
- ▶ Take pets with you if possible, but remember, most public shelters do not allow pets other than those used by the handicapped. Identify pet-friendly motels along your evacuation route.

#### If Staying in a Home...

- ▶ Turn refrigerator to maximum cold and keep closed.
- ▶ Turn off utilities if told to do so by authorities.
- ▶ Turn off propane tanks.
- ▶ Unplug small appliances.
- ▶ Fill bathtub and large containers with water in case tap water is unavailable. Use water in bathtubs for cleaning and flushing only. Do NOT drink it.

# Weather Safety: Hurricanes



## Tips for Staying Safe Before, During and After a Hurricane!



### If Winds Become Strong...

- ▶ Stay away from windows and doors, even if they are covered. Take refuge in a small interior room, closet or hallway.
- ▶ Close all interior doors. Secure and brace external doors.
- ▶ If you are in a two story house, go to an interior 1st floor room.
- ▶ If you are in a multi-story building and away from water, go to the 1st or 2nd floor and stay in the halls or other interior rooms away from windows.
- ▶ Lie on the floor under a table or other sturdy object.

### Be Alert For...

- ▶ Tornadoes. They are often spawned by hurricanes.
- ▶ The calm “eye” of the storm. It may seem like the storm is over but after the eye passes, the winds will change direction and quickly return to hurricane force.

### After the Storm

- ▶ Keep listening to radio, TV or NOAA Weather Radio.
- ▶ Wait until an area is declared safe before entering.
- ▶ Watch for closed roads. If you come upon a barricade or a flooded road, **Turn Around Don't Drown!**<sup>TM</sup>
- ▶ Avoid weakened bridges and washed out roads.
- ▶ Stay on firm ground. Moving water only 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet. Standing water may be electrically charged from power lines.
- ▶ Once home, check gas, water and electrical lines and appliances for damage.
- ▶ Use a flashlight to inspect for damage. Never use candles and other open flames indoors.
- ▶ Do not drink or prepare food with tap water until

### What to Bring to the Shelter

- First aid kit
- Medicine, prescriptions
- Baby food and diapers
- Games, books, music players with headphones
- Toiletries
- Battery-powered radio and cell phone
- Flashlights
- Extra batteries
- A blanket or sleeping bag for each person
- Identification
- Copies of key papers such as insurance policies
- Cash, credit card

**REMINDER: If you do so imm**

NWS hurricane links, forecasts, assessments:

<http://www.weather.gov/os/hurricane>

NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards:

<http://www.weather.gov/nwr>

National Hurricane Center:

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov>

Central Pacific Hurricane Center:

<http://weather.gov/cphc>

NOAA Hurricane Website

<http://hurricanes.noaa.gov/>

American Red Cross:

<http://www.redcross.org>

Federal Emergency Management Agency:

<http://www.fema.gov>