



Handling hurricanes – important tips

Hurricane categories...

- Tropical depression less than 39 mph
- Tropical storm..... 39-73 mph
- Category 1 hurricane..... 74-95 mph
- Category 2 hurricane..... 96-110 mph
- Category 3 hurricane..... 111-130 mph
- Category 4 hurricane..... 131-155 mph
- Category 5 hurricane..... 156 + mph

Before the storm...

- Stay informed.
- Know the difference between a hurricane warning and a hurricane watch:
- A hurricane watch is issued when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 36 hours.
- A hurricane warning is issued when it is expected that the storm will strike within 24 hours or less.
- Know the hurricane categories.
- Learn the location of the nearest shelter.
- Trim trees and clean up loose debris.
- Stock up on important supplies such as plywood, non-perishable food, water, flashlights, battery-operated radio, first aid kit, batteries, non-electric can opener, essential medicines, etc.
- Talk to your children about hurricanes and teach children how and when to call 911.
- Develop an emergency communication plan. Have an out-of-state relative or friend serve as the family contact.

If you are in an area that is under hurricane watch...

- Monitor TV or radio for official information on the storm.
- Identify the safest routes inland.
- Fuel family vehicles.
- Prepare to cover all window and door openings with shutters or plywood.
- Bring lawn furniture and other loose objects indoors.
- Withdraw cash.
- Turn refrigerator and freezer to coolest settings and store drinking water.
- Make arrangements for pets.

If you are in an area that is under a hurricane warning...

- Listen constantly to TV or radio for official instructions.
- Follow all directions issued by local officials. Leave immediately if told to do so. Store valuables and personal papers in a waterproof container on the highest level of your home.
- If power is lost, turn off major appliances to reduce power surge when electricity is restored.

After the storm...

- Stay tuned to local radio for information.
- Wait until an area is declared safe before entering.
- Avoid weakened bridges and washed out roads. Do not drive in flooded areas. Stay away from moving and/or standing water. Moving water only six inches deep can sweep you off your feet and standing water may be electrically charged from downed power lines.
- Report dangling power lines immediately to the power company, police, or fire department.
- Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home.
- Watch out for tornadoes, which are often produced by hurricanes and can cause much of the destruction.
- Use telephone for emergency calls only.
- Beware of snakes, insects, and animals driven to higher ground by flood water. Take pictures of damage, both to the house and its contents, for insurance claims.
- Inspect utilities in a damaged home.