

# How to Prepare for a Hurricane



Hurricanes can shatter lives and damage property. Being prepared can help you, your family or your business minimize the impact of the storm.

Don't wait until a hurricane watch is issued, because it may already be too late to take certain precautions. Reduce property damage and get through any hurricane emergency with less stress by preparing before the season begins.

## **1. Plan your evacuation route well ahead of time**

If you live on the coast or in a mobile home, you may have to evacuate in the event of a major storm. It's wise to create your evacuation plan well before a disaster strikes. This way, you can know ahead of time about the nearest shelters, take your pets into account in your plan, make sure to take important papers and make a trial run.

## **2. Keep non-perishable emergency supplies on hand**

When a hurricane warning is issued, people run for the stores. As much as possible, get ahead of the rush having the following on hand:

- Extra batteries
- Candles or lamps with fuel
- Matches (keep these dry)
- Materials and tools for emergency home repairs—such as heavy plastic sheeting, plywood, a hammer, etc.
- Prescription drugs
- A three-day supply of drinking water
- Food that you don't have to refrigerate or cook
- First aid supplies

- A portable NOAA weather radio
- A wrench and other basic tools
- A flashlight

If you need to evacuate, you'll bring these supplies with you. As expiration dates approach (for example, food or batteries), use the items and replenish your emergency stash.

### 3. Take an inventory of your personal property

Creating a home inventory will help ensure that you have purchased enough insurance to replace your personal possessions. It can also speed the claims process, substantiate losses for income tax purposes and is helpful should you need to apply for disaster aid. In the event you need to evacuate, be sure your home inventory is among the important documents you take with you.

### 4. Review your insurance policies

This hurricane season insurance checklist can help you to understand your coverage and whether it's adequate to repair or rebuild your home, if necessary, and to replace your belongings. Keep in mind that your homeowners insurance covers the cost of temporary repairs for hurricane damage, as well as reasonable additional living expenses (ALE) over and above your normal living expenses if you have to relocate (such as the extra expense of getting to work or to school if your temporary home is in a different community). However, your homeowners policy doesn't cover flood damage, so you may want to consider looking into flood insurance. If you live by the coast, you may also need a separate policy for protection against wind and wind-blown water damage. If you have questions about what your current policy will cover or need to augment your current coverage, contact your insurance professional.

### 5. Take steps to protect your home

Hurricane force winds can turn landscaping materials into missiles that can break windows and doors and much of the property damage associated with hurricanes occurs after the windstorm when rain enters structures through broken windows, doors and openings in the roof. While retrofitting your home to protect against these possibilities is undoubtedly an expense, you can do it in stages.

- Replace gravel or rock landscaping materials with shredded bark, which is lighter and won't cause as much harm.
- Cut weak branches and trees that could fall on your house and keep shrubbery trimmed.
- Install storm shutters to protect your windows from breakage. Alternately, fit plywood panels to your windows, which can be nailed to window frames when a storm approaches.

- Make sure exterior doors are hurricane proof and have at least three hinges and a dead bolt lock that is at least one-inch long.
- Sliding glass doors should be made of tempered glass and, during a storm, covered with shutters or plywood. These types of doors are more vulnerable to wind damage than most other doors.
- Replace old garage doors and tracks with a door that is approved for both wind pressure and impact protection. Wind coming into your home through an opening this large poses grave problems for the rest of your home—especially your roof.
- Seal outside wall openings such as vents, outdoor electrical outlets, garden hose bibs and locations where cables or pipes go through the wall. Use a high quality urethane-based caulk to prevent water penetration.
- If you live in a mobile home make sure you know how to secure it against high winds and be sure to review your mobile home insurance policy.
- If you have a boat on a trailer, know how to anchor the trailer to the ground or house—and review your boat insurance policy.

## 6. Take steps to protect your business

Hurricanes take a toll on businesses, too so be prepared.

- Create an emergency business response and continuity plan. In the event of a hurricane this will help your business quickly recover.
- Keep contact information for employees, suppliers and vendors current so you can check on their wellbeing and communicate next steps for resuming normal business operations.
- Review your business insurance policies in order to understand what's covered.

For more preparedness tips, handy checklists (including ones you can personalize yourself) and evacuation planning advice to cover a variety of disasters.



## Road Closures

For your safety, the City of Holly Hill provides information on planned road closures. Road conditions can change quickly, and we encourage drivers to exercise caution and travel only when absolutely necessary if conditions are poor.

Please do not use this site while operating a motor...

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## Boil Water Notices

A boil-water notice or boil-water advisory is a public health advisory given by the City or Health Department to our customers when the drinking water could be contaminated.

When under a boil-water notice, the water should be brought to a rolling boil for one minute in order to kill...

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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Related Questions

## Why is it important not to dump oil or other chemicals down a storm drain?

Storm drains empty into ground water and/or the Halifax River. Dumping toxic items into the storm drain or curb and gutter will directly impact the health of the water flowing through our community. Help us protect our natural resources by disposing of chemicals and oils responsibly and appropriately.

## What are the declared storm watches and storm warnings?

1. **Tropical Storm Watch:** An advisory issued by the [National Hurricane Center](#) when tropical storm conditions, with winds of 39 to 73 mph, could threaten a coastal area within 24 to 36 hours.
2. **Tropical Storm Warning:** An advisory issued when winds of 39 to 73 mph are expected. If a hurricane is expected, tropical storm warnings probably will not be issued before

hurricane warnings.

3. **Hurricane Watch:** An advisory issued when hurricane conditions are a threat within 24 to 36 hours. Chances are 1-in-3 the center part of the watch area will be hit. There's a 1-in-4 chance any location in the watch area will be hit, a 1-in-5 chance for the edges of the watch area.
4. **Hurricane Warning:** An advisory that says hurricane conditions are expected in a specific area within 24 hours. That means a 1-in-2 chance the central part of the warning area will be hit, a 1-in-3 chance for the edges of the warning zone. All areas in the warning zone are likely to be affected, even if the hurricane grazes by.

## What is storm surge?

Storm surge is the abnormally rapid and high rise in the sea into a wall or dome of water that is pushed onto shore by the high winds of a storm.

## What is the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale?

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale is a 1-5 rating based on a hurricane's intensity with 1 being the weakest. The scale was designed by two South Floridians, Herbert Saffir, a Coral Gables engineer, and Robert Simpson, former director of the National Hurricane Center. This scale is used to provide an estimate of a storm's potential for flooding and property damage.

### Category One Hurricane:

Winds 74-95 mph (64-82 kt or 119-153 kph).

Storm surge generally 4-5 ft above normal.

No real damage to building structures. Damage primarily to unanchored mobile homes, shrubbery, and trees. Some damage to poorly constructed signs. Also, some coastal road flooding and minor pier damage.

### Category Two Hurricane:

Winds 96-110 mph (83-95 kt or 154-177 kph).

Storm surge generally 6-8 feet above normal.

Some roofing material, door, and window damage of buildings. Considerable damage to shrubbery and trees with some trees blown down. Considerable damage to mobile homes, poorly constructed signs, and piers. Coastal and low-lying escape routes flood 2-4 hours before arrival of the hurricane center. Small craft in unprotected anchorages break moorings.

### **Category Three Hurricane:**

Winds 111-130 mph (96-113 kt or 178-209 kph).

Storm surge generally 9-12 ft above normal.

Some structural damage to small residences and utility buildings with a minor amount of curtain-wall failures. Damage to shrubbery and trees with foliage blown off trees and large trees blown down. Mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the hurricane center. Flooding near the coast destroys smaller structures with larger structures damaged by battering of floating debris. Terrain continuously lower than 5 ft above mean sea level may be flooded inland 8 miles (13 km) or more. Evacuation of low-lying residences with several blocks of the shoreline may be required.

### **Category Four Hurricane:**

Winds 131-155 mph (114-135 kt or 210-249 kph).

Storm surge generally 13-18 ft above normal.

More extensive curtain-wall failures with some complete roof structure failures on small residences. Shrubs, trees, and all signs are blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Extensive damage to doors and windows. Low-lying escape routes may be cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the hurricane center. Major damage to lower floors of structures near the shore. Terrain lower than 10 ft above sea level may be flooded requiring massive evacuation of residential areas as far inland as 6 miles (10 km).

### **Category Five Hurricane:**

Winds greater than 155 mph (135 kt or 249 kph).

Storm surge generally greater than 18 ft above normal.

Complete roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings. Some complete building failures with small utility buildings blown over or away. All shrubs, trees, and signs blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Severe and extensive window and door damage. Low-lying escape routes are cut by rising water 3-5 hours before arrival of the hurricane center. Major damage to lower floors of all structures located less than 15 ft above sea level and within 500 yards of the shoreline. Massive evacuation of residential areas on low ground within 5-10 miles (8-16 km) of the shoreline may be required.

[View All FAQ's](#)

## **Web Links**

- [Weather Underground - 32117](#)
- [National Hurricane Center](#)
- [Volusia County Emergency Management](#)