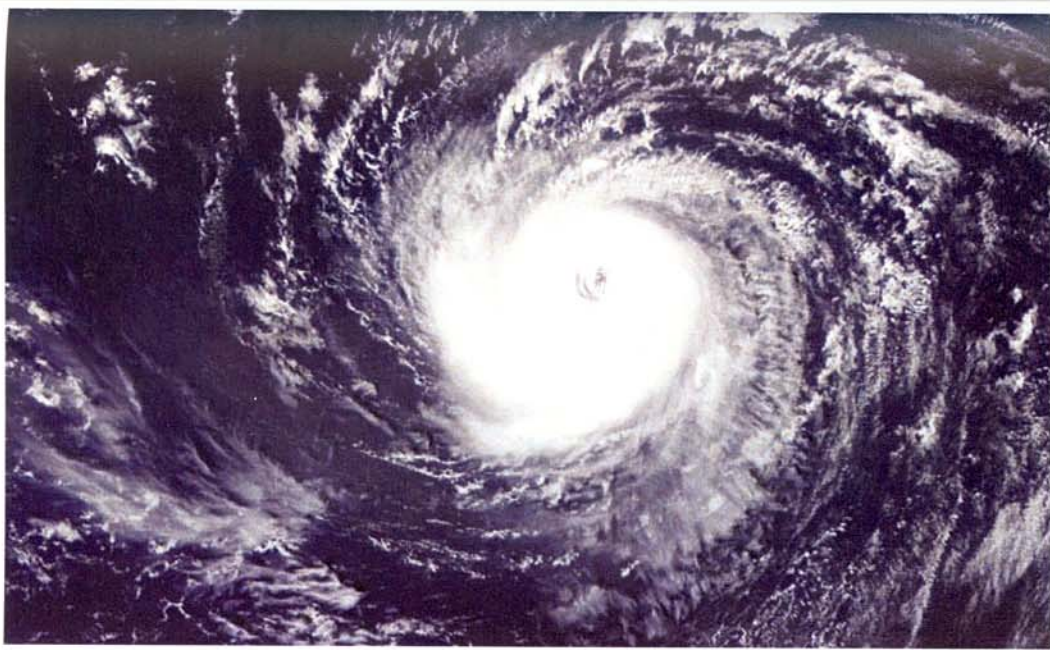




# Preparedness Guide for Hurricane Season



Be Red Cross Ready

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Be Red Cross Ready

## American Red Cross Preparedness Guide for Hurricane Season

### What To Do Now

- ▶ Read this guide carefully.
- ▶ Decide where you plan to go if you are requested to evacuate. You may go to a hotel or motel, stay with friends or relatives in a safe location or go to a Red Cross shelter.
- ▶ Put together your disaster supplies kit as recommended in this guide.
- ▶ Plan for pets. Pets are not allowed in public shelters. If you need to make arrangements for your pet, contact your vet, local SPCA or Humane Society.

### When the Storm Approaches

- ▶ Listen for weather updates. Hurricanes are unpredictable, so remained informed.
- ▶ Have your car ready. Check gas, oil, water and maintenance.
- ▶ Clear your yard of loose objects, bicycles, lawn furniture, trash cans, etc.

### If You Can Stay Home

- ▶ Obtain and mark clean containers for water. You should have a minimum of one gallon per person per day.
- ▶ Obtain a week's supply of non-perishable foods. Don't forget a manual can opener.
- ▶ Check your disaster supplies kit.
- ▶ Stay inside, away from windows.
- ▶ Wait for official word that the danger is over. Don't be fooled by the storm's calm eye.
- ▶ Be cautious with fire. Do not strike matches until you are certain there are no gas leaks. Never use candles. Use a flashlight for light.
- ▶ If a power outage occurs, turn off or disconnect all motor-driven appliances and fixtures to avoid damage from sudden surges when power is restored.
- ▶ Fill clean containers with water for drinking and cooking. You can store water in a bathtub for washing and to flush toilets.
- ▶ Turn the refrigerator and freezer controls to the coldest settings.

### If a Warning Has Been Issued

- ▶ In the event of a hurricane warning for this area, your local TV will provide frequent updates about the storm as well as advice from local officials. Keep listening to local radio and television for information, as the intensity and the path of the hurricane can change quickly and without notice.

### If You Must Evacuate

- ▶ Pack what you will need.
- ▶ Turn off water and electricity and the main valve, breakers or fuses.
- ▶ Turn off propane gas tanks that serve individual appliances like a stove or grill. Do not turn off natural gas unless local officials advise to do so. While you may turn off water and electricity back on, only a professional should turn gas back on, to avoid the possibility of a leak leading to explosion. Since it can take weeks for a professional to respond, do not turn off the gas unless you are told to do so or you suspect a leak.

### Hurricanes: What You Need To Know Electrical Safety Tips

The following tips will help you weather the storm:

- ▶ Stay away from downed power lines. You don't have to touch a downed power line to be electrocuted- if the line is touching an object, including the ground, it poses a deadly hazard.
- ▶ Know what to do if your power is out. If your home is without power once electricity has been restored to your neighborhood call the power company. Do not call 911 to report a power outage.
- ▶ Prepare yourself for safety after a hurricane. Local emergency management may recommend that the best thing to do, if at all possible, is to stay away from home until basic services like electricity, sewer, water, and telephone

### Build Your Disaster Supplies Kit

#### Water

- Store one gallon of water per person per day
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water for each person in your household

#### Food

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits and vegetables
- Canned juices, milk, soup
- Staples: sugar, salt, pepper
- High-energy foods: peanut butter, jelly, crackers, granola bars, trail mix
- Comfort/stress foods: cookies, hard candy, sweetened cereals, lollipops, instant coffee, tea bags

#### Tools and Supplies

- Mess kits or paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Battery-operated radio and extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Cash or traveler's checks, change
- Non-electric can opener, utility knife
- Fire extinguisher, small canister, ABC type
- Tube tent
- Pliers
- Tape
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Aluminum foil, plastic storage containers
- Paper, pencil, needles, thread and medicine dropper
- Shut-off wrench (to turn off household gas and water)
- Plastic sheeting
- Map of area (for locating shelters)
- Fully charged cell phone and extra batteries

#### Sanitation

- Toilet paper, towelettes, soap, liquid detergent, feminine supplies, personal hygiene items, plastic garbage bags, ties (for personal sanitation uses), plastic bucket with tight lid, disinfectant and household chlorine bleach

#### Clothing and Bedding

- Sturdy shoes or work boots and rain gear
- Hat and gloves and sunglasses
- Blankets or sleeping bags

#### Special Items For Baby:

- Formula, diapers, bottles, powdered milk and medications

#### Special Items For Adults:

- Hear and high-blood pressure medication, insulin, prescription drugs, denture needs, contact lenses and supplies, extra eyeglasses, entertainment games and books and important family documents

#### Keep the Following Records in a Waterproof, Portable Container:

- Will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Passports, Social Security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers and companies, credit card account numbers and companies
- Inventory of valuable household goods, important telephone numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

are restored. If you do have to return, bring battery-operated flashlights and radios. Do NOT use cooking fuels inside as they can create dangerous fire, heat and gases such as carbon monoxide. If someone in your household is dependent on electric-powered life-sustaining equipment, remember that you will need an alternate power source.

- ▶ The use of portable generators has increased dramatically. While these generator can be helpful during period of prolonged power outages, they can damage appliances and threatened the lives of crews trying to restore service.
  - Always ground the generator in accordance with the manufacturers instructions.

- Turn off the power at the main circuit breaker of your electrical panel before you connect any appliances to the generator, and keep it turned off the entire time the generator is in operation.
- Never connect the generator to your home's wiring system.
- Be aware of the dangers of carbon monoxide poisoning and always operate your generator outside.

### After a Storm

- ▶ Have valid identification. You may not be allowed back into your area unless you can show proof of residency.
- ▶ Beware of snakes, insects and animals driven to higher ground.
- ▶ Enter your home with caution.
- ▶ To keep spoiling and thawing of food to a minimum, open the refrigerator or freezer as seldom as possible during a blackout period. Food will stay frozen for up to 48 hours if a freezer is full and tightly packed and the door is kept closed. Food in a partly filled freezer may keep for 24 hours.
- ▶ If food in freezer does defrost, use it within one or two days. Never refreeze food that has thawed completely.

### Helping Children Cope with Disasters

- ▶ During a disaster, your family may have to leave your home and daily routine.
- ▶ How you react to an emergency gives them clues on how to act. If you seem overcome with a sense of loss, a child may feel loses more strongly.
- ▶ Children's fears may also stem from their imagination, and you should take these feelings seriously.
- ▶ When talking with your child, be sure to present a realistic picture that is both honest and manageable.
- ▶ Having children participate in the family's recovery activities will help them feel that their life will return to "normal."
- ▶ Teach your children how to call for help.
- ▶ Help your child memorize important family information such as family name, address and phone number.

### Lessons Learned

- ▶ Remember that some areas of your state may have been asked to evacuate before yours, so even if you leave early, roads may be congested.
- ▶ If possible, you should know where you are going and how you plan to get there before you leave home.
- ▶ Using alternate routes may lessen your travel time. Don't assume that you are the only person who may take a certain short cut. Small towns can become big traffic jams.
- ▶ Leaving early will shorten your travel time. Leaving later may not allow you enough time to reach safe shelter. Assume that every hour you delay your start will add several hours to your evacuation travel time, even if you plan on staying in the county.
- ▶ You will need a full tank of fuel in your vehicle.
- ▶ Wait until you receive word from officials in your home area before returning home.

### Become a Volunteer

The American Red Cross is able to meet the needs of disaster victims through its cadre of Red Cross volunteers. Red Cross volunteers are people from all walks of life and are as diverse as our community.

As we enter into another hurricane season, We would like you to consider donating some of your time to help others. Volunteers are needed to assist hurricane shelters, to work with families, to prepare and serve food and to assess damage.

Red Cross volunteer opportunities are open to everyone. To find out more, contact your local Red Cross.

