

Emergencies and disasters can occur anytime, anywhere. Some are primarily seasonal and allow for certain preparations – others occur swiftly and without warning. We can survive a hurricane, even a “Super Hurricane” like Katrina if we follow some simple basic rules. Listen to Hurricane advisories. The National Weather Services gives advisories over radio, television, and the internet (www.nhc.noaa.gov). Follow the instructions given by Emergency Management, also given over radio and television air waves.

Action checklist recap

Here is a list of the many things to consider before, during and after a hurricane. Some of the safety rules will make things easier for you during a hurricane. All are important and could help save your life and the lives of others. If local authorities recommend evacuation, you should leave! Their advice is based on knowledge of the strength of the storm and its potential for death and destruction.

In general:

- If you live on the coastline or offshore islands, plan to leave.
- If you live in a mobile home, plan to leave.
- If you live near a river or in a flood plain, plan to leave.

- If you live on high ground, away from coastal beaches, you may consider staying, however, watch out for tornadoes.

At the beginning of the hurricane season (June), make plans:

- Learn the storm surge history and elevation of your area.
- Learn safe routes inland.
- Determine where to move your boat in an emergency.
- Trim back dead wood from trees.

When a Hurricane Watch is Issued for Your Area

- Check often for official bulletins on radio and television.
- Fuel your car.
- Moor small craft or move to safe shelter.
- Move boats on trailers close to house. Weight them down. Lash securely to trailer and use tie-downs to anchor trailer to ground or house. Let air out of trailer tires.

- Anchor rigging should consist of new or good tie ropes.
- Safe anchorage boats should be tied high, using a half hitch knot (Loop knots slip). Rope lengths should be sufficient to take care of excessive high water.
- When your boat is moored, leave it and don't return once the wind and waves are up.
- Stock up on canned provisions.
- Check supplies of special medicines and drugs.
- Check batteries for radio and flashlights.
- Secure lawn furniture and other loose material outdoors.
- Tape, board, or shutter windows to prevent shattering.
- Wedge sliding glass doors to prevent their lifting from their tracks.

When a Hurricane Warning is Issued for Your Area:

- Stay home if sturdy and on high ground.
- Board up garage and porch doors.

Hurricane

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- Move valuables to upper floors.
- Bring pets in.
- Fill containers (bathtubs) with several days supply of drinking water.
- Turn up refrigerator to maximum cold and don't open unless necessary.
- Use phone only for emergencies.
- Stay indoors on the downwind side of house away from windows.
- Beware of the eye of the hurricane.
- Bring in small hand tools to aid you should your home be damaged during the storm.
- Leave mobile homes.
- Leave areas which might be affected by storm tide or stream flooding.
- Leave early in daylight if possible.

Hurricane

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- Shut off water, gas, and electricity at main stations.
- Take small valuables and papers but travel light.
- Persons needing special foods or medicines should take them with them.
- Take sufficient money in small bills to defray certain expenses you may incur.
- Leave food and water for pets (most shelters will not take pets). Lock up house.
- Drive carefully to designated shelter using recommended evacuation routes.