

# BE PREPARED FOR A HURRICANE

Threats from hurricanes include powerful winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges, coastal and inland flooding, rip currents, tornadoes and landslides.



FEMA

FEMA V-1006/September 2023

Hurricanes (also called typhoons and cyclones) are massive storm systems that form over warm ocean waters and move toward land.

Hurricanes . . .



can happen along any U.S. coast or territory.



can affect areas more than 100 miles inland.



are most active in September.

## PROTECT YOURSELF FROM A HURRICANE

Know your evacuation zone and consider your personal risk.



Evacuate immediately if told to do so. If not, take shelter from high winds in a designated storm shelter or an interior room.

Make a plan to evacuate AND be ready to shelter in place.



Turn around, don't drown! Do not walk, swim or drive through floodwaters.

Monitor communications and follow instructions from local authorities.



Only use generators outdoors and away from windows.

# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A HURRICANE THREATENS

## Prepare NOW

**Know your area's risk** of hurricanes and consider your personal risk of experiencing impacts.

**Review your insurance policy** for hurricane-related hazard coverage. Standard insurance policies do not cover flooding – you may need to purchase additional policies.

**Sign up to receive emergency alerts and notifications** from your local emergency management office. Learn what common alerts and warnings mean before you are impacted by a hurricane.

**Monitor weather reports** and updates from the National Hurricane Center. Be on alert for heavy rain.

**Practice going to a safe shelter** for high winds, such as a FEMA safe room, an International Code Council (ICC) 500 storm shelter or a small, interior windowless room in a sturdy building. Make sure your safe shelter is on the lowest level that will not be affected by floodwater.

**Develop an emergency communication plan** that you can use to contact family, friends and neighbors during a hurricane. Plan to text or message because you may not be able to make or receive phone calls.

**Develop an evacuation plan based on your evacuation zone.** Consider where you will evacuate to and how you will get there. Practice your plan using your evacuation route.

**Gather enough food, water and emergency supplies** to last you several days. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Don't forget the needs of pets.

**Keep important documents in a dry, safe place** such as a fireproof and waterproof box, and create password-protected digital copies.

**Protect your property.** Install hurricane shutters or reinforce windows. Declutter drains and gutters. Secure outdoor items and furniture or move them indoors.

## Survive DURING

**Evacuate immediately if ordered to do so.** Take critical supplies and documents with you. Follow evacuation routes and directions from local officials. Do not drive around barricades. Drive carefully and be cautious of strong winds and heavy rain.

**If you do not evacuate, take shelter indoors and stay away from windows and doors.**

- **If there is no flooding, make sure your safe shelter is on the lowest level** that will not be affected by floodwater. Take shelter in a FEMA safe room, an International Code Council (ICC) 500 storm shelter or a small, interior windowless room in a sturdy building.
- **If you experience flooding, go to the highest level of the building** to avoid becoming trapped by rising floodwater but do not climb into a closed attic.

**Get inside a safe shelter or a sturdy building as soon as possible** if you are outdoors, in a vehicle, in a manufactured or mobile home, or in a temporary structure during a hurricane.

**Pay attention to updates from weather stations and news sources to stay informed.** Follow advice from local authorities. Take action when advised to do so.

**Use a generator, grill or camp stove ONLY outdoors** and at least 20 feet away from any building openings like windows, doors or garages to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.

**Turn around, don't drown!** Do not walk, swim or drive through floodwaters. Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

**Do not drive during a hurricane.** Wind gusts can overturn vehicles and roads and bridges could collapse.

**Conserve mobile device batteries** for emergency use.

## Be Safe AFTER

**Follow reentry guidance from local authorities** and return home from an evacuation only when it is safe to do so.

**Have a professional inspect your damaged property** before attempting to clean up or repair any damage. Wear protective clothing and use caution during cleanup.

**Stay away from floodwater.** Floodwater can contain a variety of hazards, including sharp objects, downed power lines, sewage, bacteria, chemicals and wild or stray animals.

**Save phone calls for emergencies.** Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Use text messages or social media to communicate with family and friends.

**Document any property damage** with photographs. Contact your insurance company to file an insurance claim. Register with FEMA for additional assistance.

**You are the help until help arrives.** Be careful when helping people who may be trapped or injured. Floodwaters may contain hazards and buildings may be unstable.

## Take an Active Role in Your Safety

Go to [Ready.gov/hurricanes](https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes) and use FEMA's **Guide for Alerts and Warnings** to learn more about hurricane watches and warnings. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about how to prepare.



**FEMA**  
FEMA V-1006