

# HURRICANE INFORMATION

## Before the Storm

Careful prior planning and preparation might save your life during the next hurricane or major storm event. Don't fall into the trap of thinking it won't happen here because it already has. Being ready is the key to getting yourself and your family through the storm with as little pain and discomfort as possible. Here are some tips to consider:

## Today is Critical

Begin planning before a storm threatens the area. Advance planning helps minimize what you have to do and brings order into the chaos caused by this disaster. Make sure your Hurricane Survival Kit is stocked and ready. Be aware of the possibility you will need to evacuate. If you live in a flood zone or in a mobile home within the warning area, there's a good possibility you'll need to leave. If so, figure out in advance where you will go - either to a shelter, the home of a friend or relative, or perhaps a hotel. Plan your evacuation route well in advance.

## Develop an Emergency Communication Plan

In case family members are separated from one another during a disaster, have a plan for getting back together such as asking an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact". After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Make sure everyone in the family knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person. Teach family members how and when to turn off gas, electricity, and water. Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1.

## Protect Your Property

Trim back dead or weak branches from trees, secure lawn furniture, flower pots, grills and any other items that are not anchored. Sandbags may be available from City and County Public Works at various locations. Call 407-585-1452 (Lake Mary) or 407-665-5100 (Seminole County). Taping windows doesn't protect glass. Permanent shutters are the best protection for your windows but a lower-cost approach is to put up plywood panels. Use 1/2 inch plywood cut to fit each window and pre-drill holes every 18 inches for screws. Do this long before the storm. Check your flood insurance policy to make sure coverage is adequate. You can find out about the National Flood Insurance Program through your local insurance agent or emergency management office. Homeowners' policies do not cover damage from the flooding that accompanies a hurricane.

## Precious Commodities Before and After a Storm

Gas, cash (with no power, banks may be closed, checks and credit cards unaccepted, and ATM's may not be operational), charcoal, wooden matches, grill, propane tanks and ice.

## Hurricane Survival Kit

One of the most important tools for emergency preparedness is your Hurricane Survival Kit. You'll need provisions to carry you through a week or more after the storm. Remember, there may be no electricity or clean water for days. Downed trees and other hurricane related debris blocking the roads will keep you from traveling far. Below are the most important items for your Hurricane Survival Kit:

- Two weeks supply of prescription medicines and non-perishable foods.
- Drinking water/containers: one gallon per person per day for two weeks. It's a good idea to sterilize the bathtub and fill it with water just before the storm for washing and cleaning.
- Flashlights and batteries for each member of the family.
- Portable radio and batteries.
- First aid book and kit including bandages, antiseptic, tape, compress, non-aspirin pain reliever, and medications.
- Mosquito repellent and citronella candles.
- Two coolers (one to keep food; the other to retrieve ice).
- Plastic tarp for roof/window repair, screening, tools, nails, etc.
- Water purification kits (tablets, chlorine (plain) and iodine).
- Infant necessities (medication, sterile water, diapers, ready formula, bottles).
- Clean up supplies (mop, buckets, towels, disinfectant).
- Camera and film.
- Manual can opener.
- Plastic trash bags.
- Toilet paper, paper towels and pre-moistened towelettes, eating utensils, masking tape, and zip-lock bags to keep valuables safe from water.

If you evacuate you also should take:

- Pillows, blankets, sleeping bags or air mattresses.
- Extra clothing, shoes, eyeglasses, raingear, etc.
- Folding chairs, lawn chairs or cots.
- Personal hygiene items (toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, etc.).
- Quiet games, books, playing cards and favorite toys for children.
- Important papers (driver's license, special medical information, insurance policies and property inventories).

During the Storm:

- Stay inside away from windows, skylights, and glass doors.
- Find the safest place in the house to ride out the storm. Generally some place in the interior of the house, i.e. an interior closet.
- Keep a supply of flashlights and extra batteries handy. Avoid open flames, such as candles and kerosene lamps, as a source of light.
- If power is lost, turn off major appliances to reduce power surge when electricity is restored.

After the Storm:

- Be patient. Access to affected areas will be controlled. You won't be able to return to your home until search and rescue operations are complete and safety hazards, such as current downed trees and power lines, are cleared. It may take two to four weeks before utilities are restored.
- Return home only after authorities advise that it is safe to do so.
- Stay tuned to local radio and TV for information.
- Have a valid ID. Security operations will include check points. Valid identification with your current local address will be required.
- Help injured or trapped persons.
- Give first aid where appropriate.

- Do not move seriously injured persons unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help.
- Avoid loose or dangling power lines and report them immediately to Florida Power and Light at 1-800-226-3545 or Progress Energy at 407-629-1010.
- Enter your home with caution.
- Beware of snakes, insects, and animals driven to higher ground by flood water.
- Open windows and doors to ventilate and dry your home.
- Check refrigerated foods for spoilage.
- Take pictures of the damage, both to the house and its contents, for insurance claims.
- Drive only if absolutely necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges.
- Use telephone only for emergency calls.

#### Inspecting Utilities in a Damaged Home

- Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas at the outside main valve if you can and call the gas company from a neighbor's home. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional.
- Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks, broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice.
- Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact Public Works at 407-585-1452 during normal business hours or 407-585-1330 after hours or on weekends. Avoid the water from the tap. You can obtain safe water by melting ice cubes.

#### Protecting Your Pets

If you evacuate, plan for your pets as well. Take your Pet Survival Kit if you go to friends, relatives or a hotel. The Red Cross shelters cannot accept pets, so if you plan to go to a public shelter, make other provisions for your pet. Limited space is available at pet shelters (kennels, veterinarians, etc.). After the storm has passed, be careful in allowing your pet outdoors. Familiar scenes and landmarks may be altered and your pet could easily be confused and become lost. Downed power lines, animals and insects brought in with high water could present real dangers to your pet. Take care not to allow your pet to consume food or water which may have become contaminated. For more information call Animal Control or the Humane Society.

#### Pet Survival Kit

- Proper ID collar and rabies tag/license. Make sure your pets have had all their shots within the past 12 months. Pet shelters will require proof of vaccinations; carrier or cage; leash; ample food supply (at least two weeks); water/food bowls; any necessary medication(s); specific care instructions; newspapers, cat litter, scoop, plastic trash bags for handling waste; and proper ID on all belongings.