

Storm Preparedness



This enhanced satellite image made available by NOAA shows Tropical Storm Florence, center, in the Atlantic Ocean on Saturday afternoon (September 8, 2018). On Sunday morning the storm was upgraded to hurricane status. According to NOAA's "updated 2018 Atlantic Hurricane Outlook," released on August 9th, conditions in the ocean and the atmosphere are conspiring to produce a less active Atlantic hurricane season than initially predicted in May, though NOAA and FEMA are raising caution as the season enters its peak months. Credits: NOAA; AP

HELPING YOU TO BETTER PREPARE: BE AWARE, BE STRONG

In an effort to help ready you for future storms, Sea Grant offers a number of **#HurricanePrep tips** and resources from **NOAA**, its other line offices (including the **U.S. National Weather Service** and **National Hurricane Center**) as well as partner organizations including the **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**.

What You Should Know About Hurricanes

- It only takes one storm to change your life and community.
- Know what to do before, during, and after a hurricane.
- Prepare before hurricane season starts. Pacific hurricane season starts May 15 and Atlantic hurricane season starts June 1. <http://1.usa.gov/1poO5wl>
- Create a communications plan with your family before a hurricane. ready.gov/make-a-plan
- Have emergency supplies in place at home, at work, and in the car.
- Know your local community's evacuation plan and evacuation routes.

Listen to local officials

Online hurricane resources: From developing plans, to assembling supplies, to learning where you can find the most up to date information on hurricanes, NOAA's NWS has you covered. Visit <http://go.usa.gov/3KM8Y> to learn more.

Additionally, check out:

- National Hurricane Center mobile-friendly site. www.nhc.noaa.gov
- Ready.gov/prepare for hurricane preparedness resources.
- Ready.gov/hurricanes can also help you lessen the impact of severe tropical weather on your family, home, or business.

Determine Your Risk

- Find out today what types of wind and water hazards could happen where you live, and then start preparing now for how to handle them.
- Live on the coast? You are most at risk for extreme winds & flooding from rain & storm surge during a hurricane.
- Live inland? You are at risk for wind, thunderstorms, flooding, & power outages during a hurricane.
- Think because you live inland a hurricane will not impact you? Wrong. Inland communities should prepare for flooding & high winds.
- Hurricanes not only result in high winds, but floods, too. If you see a flooded path: **Turn Around, Don't Drown.**
- Hurricane watch = conditions possible w/in the next 48 hrs. Hurricane warning = conditions are expected within 36 hrs. Learn how to prepare. ready.gov/hurricanes
- Do you want to have a better understanding of the hurricane risk you and your community face? Check out this map of the U.S. and the frequency of hurricane and tropical storm activity by county. <http://1.usa.gov/1poO5wl>
- Where you live, the structure of your home, & your personal circumstances all contribute to your hurricane risk. Learn more about preparing for a hurricane with America's PrepareAthon. <http://1.usa.gov/1sVepZI>

Develop an Evacuation Plan

Before a storm, develop a hurricane evacuation plan. Practice the plan at night, during inclement weather, and other times to familiarize yourself with your route.

- The first thing you need to do is find out if you live in a hurricane storm surge or flood evacuation zone or if you are in a home that would be unsafe during a hurricane. If you are, figure out where you would go and how you would get there if told to evacuate.

Where is your local evacuation route? Make sure you know the answer before the next hurricane. If authorities advise or order a hurricane evacuation, do so immediately.

If you rely on public transportation, contact your local emergency management agency about evacuation procedures before a hurricane.

If a hurricane or tropical storm should threaten your area, would you know what to do? Contact your local emergency management office and find out if you live in an evacuation zone and the evacuation route. For tips and information visit: ready.gov/today.

In NYC, the Office of Emergency Management provides related information via its "Know Your Zone" campaign.

- If you were told to evacuate due to a hurricane, where would you go? What would you take? Make a **PLAN** to answer these questions. <http://1.usa.gov/1XU9NUZ>
- Flood waters on roadways have super power. The force of moving water can even sweep away a sports utility vehicle. When evacuating a storm, avoid driving through flooded roadways. **Turn Around, Don't Drown!**
- Take action now, before the storm hits. **America's PrepareAthon!** offers free hurricane tools and resources that will help you prepare. Check them out now. <http://1.usa.gov/1N3Si1U>
- Keep your car's gas tank at least half full in case you need to quickly evacuate for a hurricane.



Assemble Disaster Supplies

Depending on your location, you may need to stay where you are for an extended time until flooding recedes and roadways are restored. You are going to need supplies to get through the storm and for the potentially lengthy and unpleasant aftermath. Have enough non-perishable food, water, and medicine to last each person in your family a minimum of three days and for a week or more if possible.

Suggested items to build and/or restock your disaster supply kit include food, water, medications, a flashlight, batteries, chargers, cash, and first aid supplies in case you need to shelter-in-place during a storm. Be sure to have enough supplies to last for at least three days. In some locations you may need supplies for a week or more in order to stay where you are until flood waters subside and roads are restored.



Hurricane Preparation #HurricanePrep



Strengthen Your Home

Make sure your home is in good repair and up to local hurricane building code specifications. However, always remember, if local officials tell you to evacuate, listen to them. Whether you stay or evacuate, be sure to include flood-proofing measures such as using a water sealer in areas that have basements, sand-bagging, elevating utilities, and moving furniture to the second floor. Consult www.flash.org for information on strengthening for wind such as window protection, garage door protection, roof protection, and door protection. Secure outdoor items that could be blown away and cause damage.

- Bring in outdoor furniture & anything else that is not tied down to prevent injury/damage from debris.

- Trim trees & shrubs. High winds can turn branches into projectiles during a storm.
- Reduce property damage in the event of a hurricane by retrofitting (i.e., reinforcing) the roof, windows, and doors. <http://1.usa.gov/1R73EQA>
- Prepare your property before a hurricane by installing storm shutters. More mitigation tips at: <http://1.usa.gov/1o9qmti>
- High winds ahead! Permanent storm shutters offer protection for your home during a hurricane.
- Reduce potential property damage by elevating and anchoring utilities & installing sewer backflow valves. Also, use flood damage resistant materials.
- When constructing or upgrading a home, consider elevating the structure to better protect against floodwaters and/or storm surge.

Identify Trusted Sources of Information for a Hurricane Event

NOAA's National Hurricane Center and Central Pacific Hurricane Center are your official sources for hurricane forecasts and the issuance of hurricane watches and warnings. Your local NOAA National Weather Service forecast office provides information regarding the expected impacts from the storm for your area.

Emergency managers will make the decisions regarding evacuations.

- How would you learn about important updates from local officials if a hurricane was heading your way? Downloading local alerts and warning apps to your phone is an easy way to stay prepared and one of the 10 Ways to Prepare as part of **America's PrepareAthon!** Learn more with the **Be Smart: Know Your Alerts and Warnings** guide. <http://1.usa.gov/1R8fX7>
- Understanding the difference between a hurricane watch and a hurricane warning is critical. Take action now to learn what you need to know to stay safe.
- Know before you go. Familiarize yourself with key weather alert terminology to ensure that you recognize the looming weather risks. ready.gov/hurricanes

- It is time to go. If you have been instructed to evacuate, please do so. Listen to local officials to save yourself and your family.
- If local authorities say roadways are not passable, stay off the roads. Never drive on flooded roadways. After the hurricane, return home only when authorities advise it is safe.
- Stay weather alert. Keep track of your local weather forecast by following the National Weather Service.

Complete Your Written Hurricane Plan

The time to prepare for a hurricane is before the season begins, when you have the time and are not under pressure. If you wait until a hurricane is on your doorstep, the odds are that you will be under stress and will make the wrong decisions. Take the time now to write down your hurricane plan, know where you will stay or go to be safe for the storm, and get your supplies.



- Your family's needs change over time – make sure you have what you need for this year's hurricane season. ready.gov/considerations
- Do you have a communication plan for when the hurricane passes? Be sure your family knows where you are! Build a family communications plan today. <http://1.usa.gov/1JPWKf0>
- You may not be with your family when a hurricane strikes, so it is important to plan how you will communicate with each other. Develop and practice your communication plan before a storm threatens your area. **America's PrepareAthon!** offers free tools to help you create a family communication plan. You can even keep it right in your wallet! <http://1.usa.gov/1JPWKf0>
- In a disaster, it may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call in-town because local phone lines may be jammed. Identify someone outside of your community or state as a central point of contact to help your family reconnect. ready.gov/make-a-plan

NOAA SEA GRANT'S COASTAL STORM AWARENESS PROGRAM

In late October 2012 Hurricane Sandy, which was downgraded to a post-tropical cyclone by the time it made landfall in New Jersey, was still strong enough to directly kill 147 people. Sandy's "major to record" storm surge caused extensive damage along large portions of the New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts coasts estimated at \$50 billion, making it the second-costliest cyclone to hit the country since 1900."

In response to Sandy, NOAA Sea Grant's Coastal Storm Awareness Program (CSAP) has helped better understand how people respond to coastal storm warnings. "These storms will not go away," says NYSG Director **Bill Wise**. "They are likely to increase and, perhaps, become even more severe on average with global warming."

"Our Coastal Storm Awareness Program explored the human dimensions of the coastal storm preparedness planning and response issue," says Wise. "This is an issue that people in the greater New York metropolitan area have had to deal with for a long time and [Superstorm] Sandy has brought it to the forefront."

CSAP is a \$1.8M suite of 10 social science projects administered by Sea Grant programs in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Findings from these 18-month community-based investigations are detailed at www.nyseagrant.org/csap.



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