

HURRICANE PLANNING GUIDE FOR HOMEOWNERS

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GENERAL GLOSSARY OF TERMS & INFORMATION:

- ✓ **Tropical Storm Watch** – Conditions are possible in the specified area of the watch within 36 hours.
- ✓ **Tropical Storm Warning** – Conditions are expected in the specified area of the warning within 24 hours.
- ✓ **Hurricane Watch** – Conditions are possible in the specified area of the watch, usually within 36 hours. During the “watch” period, prepare to take immediate action to protect your family and property in case a “warning” is issued.
- ✓ **Hurricane Warning** – Conditions are expected in the specified area of the warning, usually within 24 hours. Complete all storm preparations and evacuate if directed to do so by local officials.
- ✓ **Short Term Watches and Warnings** – Provide detailed information on specific hurricane threats, such as tornadoes, floods and high winds.
- ✓ **Public Advisory** – Issued by the National Hurricane Center and provides critical hurricane warning and forecast information.
- ✓ **Tropical Cyclone Forecast/Advisory** – Issued by the National Hurricane Center and outlines the meteorological reasoning behind the warnings and forecasts.
- ✓ **Strike Probability Forecast** – Provides a measure of the forecast track accuracy. The probabilities have no relation to the tropical cyclone intensity.
- ✓ **Hurricane Local Statements** – Issued by the National Weather Service and give greater detail on how the storm will impact your area.
- ✓ **Short Term Forecast** – Provides updated information on what the weather will be over the next few hours in the immediate area.

AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

All public safety operations in the field will cease once the winds reach a sustained speed of 60 mph. These conditions are risky to the safety of law enforcement, fire and EMS personnel. If you have an emergency during this time, if you are stranded by rising water or if you have chosen to ignore the evacuation notice and then change your mind, once the winds reach this thresh-hold, public safety personnel are not going to be able to assist you. However, the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) will remain operational and as long as you have telephone service, information can be received from the EOC to help you until someone can reach you after the winds calm down. **WAITING TO LEAVE MAY JEOPARDIZE YOUR LIFE AND THE LIVES OF OTHERS.** Once the wind speed reduces to below 60 mph, public safety crews will once again respond to emergency call.

YOUR HURRICANE PLAN:

- ✓ Have a practice drill to determine what everyone's responsibility will be.
- ✓ Educate all family members in CPR and other first aid measures.
- ✓ Teach children how to use a fire extinguisher and when & how to call 911 for emergency assistance.
- ✓ Check all fire alarms, smoke alarms, etc. for proper operation.
- ✓ Determine what the criteria will be as to whether you evacuate or stay in your home.
- ✓ Know your evacuation routes and determine which route you will use should an evacuation order be issued.
- ✓ Determine in advance your evacuation destination. If you will not be staying with a friend or family member, make hotel reservations at this location as soon as a "watch" is issued. Remember, that during an evacuation several towns may be evacuated at the same time and hotels will fill up quickly in all surrounding areas. Reservations can be cancelled.
- ✓ Make a decision about vehicles. If you have more than one vehicle and will not be taking all of them with you determine where the other vehicles will be left during the storm.
- ✓ Make a decision about boats and other recreational vehicles.
- ✓ If you have pets, determine whether they will evacuate with you or be placed in a shelter.
- ✓ Have a list of phone numbers, such as family members, doctors, employers, insurance company's, etc.
- ✓ Make arrangements for extra cash on hand.
- ✓ Catalog all personal items NOW. Include description (brand name, model number, age, purchase price, place of purchase, etc.) Take a picture of everything and make two copies of the pictures and lists. Keep one copy with you and send the other to a relative or friend out of town. Never give the insurance company the only copy.
- ✓ Have a secure place for all valuables & documents that you will need to take with you, such as birth certificates, property deeds, insurance policies, etc.
- ✓ Determine an out-of-town person who can be a "point of contact" to communicate messages if communications are down for an extended period of time.
- ✓ Prepare and maintain a "Hurricane Kit" (a list of recommended supplies is included). It is recommended that you have approximately 7 gallons of water for each person and food supplies for a minimum of 2 weeks.
- ✓ Check all flashlights, battery operated radios & TVs, and other supplies in your "Hurricane Kit" for proper operation.
- ✓ Evaluate your home to determine if you can make improvements that will provide better protection. If you have an older home, getting a professional opinion about updated building codes, etc. may be helpful in determining beneficial improvements.

- ✓ You should also review your insurance policy, with your agent, to determine if you need to make any coverage changes. Be sure to ask questions about coverage for updated building codes, demolition coverage for an undamaged portion of your home, flood coverage, understand your coverage and deductibles, clarify any exclusions, verify that in the event of a complete loss you will have the coverage you need to re-build, ask what you will need to prove a claim, find out what their procedures are relative to immediate protection of the home following a loss, ask who to contact immediately following the storm and get phone numbers, how long you may expect to wait for an adjuster, how contact will be made in the event that all communications are lost for a period of time, and any other questions that you can think of. Preparing now will make the claims process much easier and less stressful for everyone.
- ✓ Obtain and prepare plywood, plastic, shutters or other protective provision for windows & doors. Install and inspect the covering in advance of an emergency to insure proper fit.

PREPARING THE OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME:

- ✓ The most important thing you can do to protect your home is to protect the openings where the wind can get in. Available options include hurricane shutters (obtain DRB approval first!), plywood covering during the storm, etc.
- ✓ Check your garage doors and consider installing braces on them.
- ✓ Keep all windows completely closed during a storm.
- ✓ Bring in any objects that can blow away, including garbage cans, lawn furniture, garden tools, grills, plants, etc. Anchor objects that cannot be brought inside.
- ✓ Disconnect propane gas tanks and turn off the main gas line.
- ✓ Turn off gas appliances at their individual shut-off valves inside your home, if accessible. Do not turn them off at the outside meter.
- ✓ Fill your vehicle's gas tanks as soon as possible to avoid long lines and delays. Keep a full tank of gas immediately before and following the storm because gas may not be available in the area for several days (remember, pumps don't work when there is no electricity!).
- ✓ Park any vehicles that are not evacuating with you in a garage or carport. If this is not available, park your vehicle as close to the side of the house as possible away from any trees that may fall.
- ✓ Do not trim trees or shrubbery immediately before a storm, because the debris will not be collected. This debris can become a flying obstacle during a storm and be very dangerous during high winds.
- ✓ Prepare your pool. Lower the water level of your swimming pool approximately 6 inches to accommodate heavy rains but do not drain it completely. Add extra chlorine to the pool and turn off electricity to the pool equipment.

PREPARING THE INSIDE OF YOUR HOME:

- ✓ If you choose not to evacuate or it is not a feasible option, you should prepare the inside of your home in advance to ensure your quality of life in the days following a hurricane. Be sure you have your supplies and that they are in a secure location.
- ✓ Choose a “Safe Room” where you will ride out the storm. Normally, this would be a hallway, large interior closet or an interior bathroom with no windows.
- ✓ Equip your “safe room” with a battery-operated radio or TV and extra batteries; chairs, sleeping bags or cushions; snacks and drinking water; towels; games, cards, books; etc. A slow moving storm could mean a long wait. Have a mattress ready to move into your safe room if advised to do so by emergency personnel. You should only have to do this in an extremely severe storm.
- ✓ Turn off and unplug any unnecessary electrical equipment, especially sensitive electronics **BEFORE THE POWER GOES OUT**. If the power goes out, turn off the circuit breaker or remove fuses. You might want to leave on one circuit breaker that operates a lamp, so that you will know when the power has been restored.
- ✓ If the electricity goes off, use only flashlights. Never use candles or kerosene lamps during the storm.
- ✓ Never cook during the storm. A gust of wind could spread a fire, and the fire department would not be able to respond.
- ✓ Tell stories, sing songs or play games to keep children calm.
- ✓ Do not go outside during the storm, unless winds have calmed briefly and **protective repairs are absolutely necessary**. The winds and rain may stop for a few minutes to more than half an hour and then can suddenly pick back up again from the opposite direction, possibly with greater force than before.
- ✓ Turn your refrigerator & freezer to their coldest settings. Freeze water in plastic jugs and use them to fill empty spaces in your refrigerator and freezer to help keep food cool. Cover your refrigerator with blankets and secure them with ropes to keep the coldness in. If you open the refrigerator only when necessary and close it quickly, you can keep food cool for up to 2 days without electricity.
- ✓ Prepare a water supply for bathing and sanitary purposes by storing water in the bathtub and other jugs and bottles. Seal the bathtub well by caulking around the drain to keep the water from running out. Remember that this water is **NOT** for drinking.
- ✓ Place valuables and personal papers in a waterproof container or plastic garbage bags and store them on the top shelf of a closet. Include voter registration cards, passports, visas, and all important papers.
- ✓ Take identification and insurance papers with you if you leave your home (you should take a recent electric or other utility bill, voter registration card, etc. with you to prove permanent residency and facilitate re-entry).

- ✓ Fill clean, sanitary jugs with water for drinking. You will need a minimum of 7 gallons per person. Sterilize the jugs by putting a little chlorine bleach (plain, no lemon) in some water, sloshing them around *and rinsing thoroughly*.

AFTER THE STORM HAS PASSED:

- ✓ Stay tuned to the radio or TV and remain indoors until you hear the “all clear”.
- ✓ Stay away from ALL downed power lines. The line can still be “live” whether the power is off in your neighborhood or not.
- ✓ Do not use your telephone unless you have an emergency.
- ✓ Do not call 911 except for life-threatening situations.
- ✓ If your home has sustained structural damage, do not move back in until local officials check it. The county has plans to certify buildings for safety before habitation.
- ✓ Do not allow children to walk around without shoes.
- ✓ Avoid weakened bridges and washed out roads. Do not drive into flooded areas.
- ✓ Stay on firm ground. Moving water only 6 inches deep can sweep you off your feet. Standing water may also be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines.
- ✓ Check gas, water and electrical lines and appliances for damage.
- ✓ Avoid using candles and other open flames indoors. Use a flashlight to inspect for damage.
- ✓ Do not cut trees that are touching or even near power lines.
- ✓ Do not pile debris near power or telephone poles or equipment. This will delay service from being restored.
- ✓ Do not call the police or utility companies immediately to report downed power lines, broken gas or water mains or overturned gas tanks.
- ✓ Utility companies will restore electric, gas, and water and/or telephone service as quickly as possible. If service has been restored in your neighborhood and you are still having trouble, call the utility company.
- ✓ Remember that while emergency crews will begin clearing roads and effecting repairs immediately after the storm, neighborhood streets have a lower priority than major thoroughfares.
- ✓ Don't wait for the city or county to clear your streets. If possible, get able-bodied neighbors together to clear a path for traffic and emergency vehicles.
- ✓ Solid waste departments will collect trash as soon as possible. Priority is given to household garbage, so separate it from other trash and debris. If you fail to separate your garbage, you could create a health risk and attract rodents and other animals.
- ✓ **DO NOT CONNECT A PORTABLE OR RV GENERATOR TO YOUR HOUSE WIRING. THE POWER FROM THESE GENERATORS CAN ACTUALLY FLOW OUT OF YOUR HOUSE AND RECHARGE THE LINES, CAUSING INJURY TO POWER COMPANY AND TELEPHONE COMPANY EMPLOYEES.** Generators

- should only be connected to electrical systems that have been properly designed, equipped and inspected by the electric company or building department.
- ✓ Portable generators should be used only **OUTSIDE** of your home. Generators emit carbon monoxide gas that is poisonous.
 - ✓ When using a generator, run a separate, heavy-duty properly grounded extension cord from the generator directly to **EACH** of the electrical appliances you want to power.
 - ✓ When using a generator, calculate the total power consumption (number of watts) of all the appliances you intend to connect to be sure that you stay within the load capacity of your generator. **DO NOT OVERLOAD THE GENERATOR.**
 - ✓ Do not drink tap water immediately after a hurricane. Assume a boil water order is in effect until you are informed it has been lifted.
 - ✓ If you did not store sufficient drinking water and must use water from the tap, do the following: **FIRST**, strain the water through a paper towel or several layers of thick cloth to remove dirt before purifying, or let the water settle in a container for 24-hours so that solid particles will sink to the bottom; **SECOND**, use one of the following methods to purify the water...(1) keep water boiling at a rolling rate for 3-5 minutes, **OR** add 4 water purification tablets per gallon, **OR** add 12 drops of 2% tincture of iodine per gallon of water, **OR** add 8 drops of household bleach (without lemon or other additives) per gallon of water.
 - ✓ It is important to take action immediately after the storm to safeguard your home and prevent more damage from occurring. That is why it is important to have all of the necessary supplies on hand.
 - ✓ Take pictures and make detailed lists & descriptions of all damages inside and outside of your home.
 - ✓ If you do not have insurance, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will set up disaster application centers within 2 weeks after the storm.
 - ✓ If you hire an individual or business to make repairs for you, check to make sure that they have a current business license, are properly insured (including liability & worker's comp), and possess a permit authorizing them to do the work. These safe guards will help to protect you from unsavory individuals or businesses taking advantage of you.

SUPPLY CHECKLIST

You should have a 2-week supply of the following items in your “Hurricane Kit”. Be sure to include supplies for each family member or any friends or relatives that will be staying with you. Make the kit portable so that you can TAKE IT WITH YOU!

- ✓ Water (7 gallons per person)
- ✓ Baby food, diapers, formula
- ✓ Battery operated radio or TV (and extra batteries)
- ✓ Bleach
- ✓ Butane lighters
- ✓ Cameras & film
- ✓ Candles
- ✓ Cleaning Supplies / Disinfectants
- ✓ Duct tape
- ✓ Disposable eating utensils (plates, cups, forks, knives, etc.)
- ✓ Emergency cooking supplies
- ✓ Extension cords
- ✓ Extra batteries
- ✓ Extra pet food
- ✓ Fire extinguisher
- ✓ First-aid kit
- ✓ Flashlights
- ✓ Fuel for your car
- ✓ Gas grill & gas or camping stove
- ✓ Glasses or contact lenses
- ✓ Inflatable raft
- ✓ Lantern and extra fuel
- ✓ Life preserver
- ✓ Manual can opener
- ✓ Map of, or directions to shelter locations
- ✓ Matches
- ✓ Medicine (including prescriptions, aspirin, antacid & antibiotic creams)
- ✓ Mosquito netting & repellent
- ✓ Non-perishable & pre-packaged foods & beverages
- ✓ Plastic trash bags
- ✓ Portable cooler
- ✓ Rope (at least 100 feet)
- ✓ Sleeping bags
- ✓ Soap & shampoo
- ✓ Spray paint
- ✓ Tarps (heavy-duty plastic)
- ✓ Toilet paper & towelettes
- ✓ Tools (include crowbar, sledge hammer, chain saw, hammer & nails, gloves)
- ✓ Valuables
- ✓ Water purification tablets
- ✓ Water jugs (large & small)
- ✓ Prepare one change of clothing for each family member & sturdy, waterproof shoes.

EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Emergency Preparedness –	202-7400
Mt. Pleasant Police	884-4176
Charleston City Police	577-7074
North Charleston City Police	740-2800
Sheriff Departments –	
Berkeley County Sheriff	577-9562
Or (ext 4412)	723-3800
Charleston County Sheriff	554-4700
Dorchester County Sheriff	873-5111
SCE&G Natural Gas Leaks/Emergencies	745-6000
TTY Emergency Numbers –	
Charleston County TTY	744-3200
Berkeley County TTY (ext 4170)	723-3800
S.C. Highway Patrol	953-6010
Area Hospitals –	
East Cooper Regional	881-0100
MUSC	792-2300
Trident Medical Center	797-7000
Charleston Memorial Hospital	577-0600
Roper St. Francis – Berkeley	899-7700
Roper St. Francis – West Ashley	402-1000
Summerville Medical Center	832-5000
Moncks Corner Medical Center	761-8721
American Red Cross Low Country Chapter	764-2323
Animal Shelters –	
Berkeley County SPCA	797-0610
John Ancrum SPCA - Long Point Rd.	971-7757
John Ancrum SPCA – Leeds Ave.	747-4849
CARTA (Public Bus Service) -	724-7420

NOTE:

PIPS (Public Information Phone System) is a state program that will be activated during an evacuation for up to date information on where shelters are located in South Carolina. Listen to your local media sources for their toll free number.

EVACUATION SHELTERS

BERKELEY COUNTY:

Cainhoy Elementary/Middle School 2424 Cainhoy Road	899-8975
Goose Creek High School 1137 Red Bank Road	553-5300
Hanahan High School 6015 Murray Drive	820-3710
Berkeley High School 406 W. Main Street	899-8800
St. Stephen Elementary School 1053 Russellville Road	567-2813
Cross High School 1293 Old Highway 6	899-8900
Sangaree Elementary School 1460 Royal Road	820-3850
Stratford High School 951 Crowfield Blvd.	820-4000
Westview Primary School 98 Westview Blvd.	820-3898
Macedonia Middle School 200 Macedonia Foxes Circle	899-8940
Berkeley Intermediate School (Special Needs) 777 Stoney Landing Road	899-8840

DORCHESTER COUNTY:

Woodland High School 4128 US Highway 78	873-1842
Alston Middle School 500 Bryan Street	873-3890
Beech Hill Elementary School 1001 Beech Hill Road	821-3970
Fort Dorchester High School 8500 Patriot Blvd.	760-4450
Summerville High School 1101 Boone Hill Road	873-6460
Summerville Senior Center (Special Needs) 312 N. Laurel Street	

CHARLESTON COUNTY:

RD Schroder Middle School 7224 Highway 162	889-2391
Burns Elementary School 3750 Dorchester Road	745-7113

IF YOU EVACUATE TO A SHELTER, PLEASE TAKE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WITH YOU:

- ✓ Sleeping bag/beach chair/other bedding
- ✓ Extra change of clothes
- ✓ Water and snacks for your family
- ✓ Activities to keep children busy
- ✓ Radio or small television & batteries
- ✓ Flashlights
- ✓ Prescription medication and first aid kit
- ✓ Other special medical needs

PLEASE NOTE THAT SHELTERS DO NOT PERMIT THE FOLLOWING:

- ✓ Pets – Please make provisions with your veterinarian or local animal shelter
- ✓ Weapons
- ✓ Alcohol / Drugs

NOTE:

- ✓ Please notify your family about your evacuation plans.