

# Hurricane Preparedness Toolkit

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[National Hurricane Preparedness Week](#) (May 5-11, 2024) is almost here! As part of our [Year of Resilience](#), we are excited to help partner with you to prepare our communities. This toolkit is a continuation of our theme this season: “Take Control in 1,2, 3, and Be Informed About Hurricane Preparedness.” Thinking about who in your network could use preparedness support is how we can weather storms effectively, emerging stronger and more resilient. This toolkit is designed to provide you and your organization with easy-to-use tools to promote hurricane preparedness amongst your stakeholders.

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## Key Messages

- **Preparedness Actions save lives.** It is essential to highlight hurricane preparedness by emphasizing actions such as: creating an emergency kit, securing loose objects outdoors, and developing a family communications plan.
- **Stay Informed** about weather updates and evacuation orders to mitigate risk and ensure safety.
- **Encourage Community Support.** Individuals are encouraged to participate in local disaster preparedness programs, neighborhood watch groups, and/or community emergency response teams. The utilization of community support and local emergency management



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groups will help to identify vulnerable populations and elderly neighbors, while fostering a sense of unity and resilience.

## Talking Points

### Before the Storm

- **Know Your Zone** – You may live in a hurricane evacuation zone. Contact your local emergency management agency or check out this website from the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH). [2020 Hurricane Evacuation Zones.pdf \(flash.org\) \(Updated April 2022\)](#)
- **Put together a kit** – Build your own or a family emergency kit. Don't forget things like flashlights, storm shutters, and a generator to make your kit more hurricane-proof. Go here to start building your kit! [Build A Kit | Ready.gov](#)
  - [Safeguard Critical Documents and Valuables \(ready.gov\)](#) with this checklist.
- **Make a family communications plan** – Know who you'll contact and how to contact them by making a family communications plan before hurricane season starts. Keep your plan with your emergency supply kit. Go here to build your plan today! [Create Your Family Emergency Communication Plan \(ready.gov\)](#)
- **Review your insurance coverage** – Make sure you have adequate coverage.
  - Most homeowners' insurance policies do not cover flood damage.
  - Flood insurance takes 30 days to become effective – don't wait until the last minute!
  - Visit [www.Floodsmart.gov](http://www.Floodsmart.gov) for more information.
  - Document your property in advance, including photographs, in case you need to make an insurance claim. Protect your important information using the [Emergency Financial First Aid Kit \(EFFAK\)](#).
  - Preparing your home for hurricanes can mean the difference between minor damage and complete destruction. For details visit: [Hurricanestrong](#).
- **Understand and sign up for alerts and warnings** – Understand National Weather Service (NWS) alerts and warning by visiting this page: [Hurricane and Tropical Storm Watches, Warnings, Advisories and Outlooks \(weather.gov\)](#). Have several ways to receive warnings/alerts from the National Weather Service. Do not rely on a single source of weather alert information. [Turn ON Wireless Emergency Alerts \(WEAs\) in your smartphone settings](#). [Keep a NOAA Weather](#) radio tuned to your local emergency station.
  - Sign up for your [community's warning system](#). Stay tuned for the latest information. Follow the guidance of your local officials and check media and weather reports via official sources, including social media.



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- Monitor local TV and radio stations. Many stations and on-air meteorologists have their own social media accounts, to which they post critical weather information.
- [By downloading the FEMA app](#), you can receive weather alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five different locations anywhere in the United States.
- [IPAWS Integrated Public Alert and Warning System 101 \(fema.gov\)](#)
- **Don't forget about the needs of your pets.**
  - Find pet-friendly shelters in advance, and use this [checklist](#) to make sure you are well-stocked on supplies.

### During the Storm

- **Secure your home** – Gather supplies *before* the storm hits so you have time to secure your home, especially your windows.
  - Declutter drains and gutters to allow water to flow. Install check valves in plumbing to prevent backups.
  - Consider installing hurricane shutters if you live in a hurricane-prone area.
  - Talk to your local officials about trimming trees and dead limbs.
  - Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machinery outdoors **ONLY** and away from windows.
- **Continue to follow alerts and warnings** – Continue to follow NWS alerts and warnings and heed the warnings of local officials.
- **Check on your neighbors if it is safe to do so** – keep in mind [senior adults](#), or those [who may need additional help](#), when checking on your network and neighborhood.
- **Evacuate if ordered to do so.**
  - If you're not ordered to evacuate:
    - Take refuge in an interior room. Put as many walls between you as possible.
    - Stay away from windows and glass.
    - The eye of the storm may provide a short period of respite from the worst part of the storm, but it is short lived.

### After the Storm

- **Continue listening for alerts and warnings.**
- **Only drive when it is safe to do so** – If you evacuated, only return when it is safe to do so. Follow the directives of your local officials.
- **Avoid debris** – Watch for flooded roads, washed out bridges and gullies, and downed power lines.



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- If you smell gas, *do not* enter your home.
- If your home is flooded, *do not* enter your home.
- If your home has fire damage, *do not* enter your home.
- Use battery-powered flashlights to enter your home; *do not* use candles. Turn your flashlight on *before* entering your home, as batteries may cause a spark when the flashlight is turned on and start a fire if gas is present.
- **Practice generator safety** – Carbon monoxide poisoning is one of the leading causes of death post-storm. Never use a portable generator inside your home or garage.
- **Protect yourself while cleaning up** - Be careful during clean-up. Wear protective clothing, use appropriate face coverings or masks if cleaning [mold or other debris](#), and maintain a physical distance of at least six feet while working with someone else.
  - People with [asthma and other lung conditions](#) and/or immune suppression should not enter buildings with indoor water leaks or mold growth that can be seen or smelled, even if they do not have an allergy to mold.
  - Children *should not* participate in clean-up work.
  - Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. If it is safe to do so, turn off electricity at the main breaker or fuse box to prevent electric shock.
  - Avoid wading in flood water, which can contain dangerous debris and wildlife. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.
- **Save phone calls, or text** - 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.
- **Manage your stress** - The threat of a hurricane can add additional stress. Follow CDC guidance for [managing stress during a traumatic event](#)

### Flood Insurance

- Flooding can be an emotionally and financially devastating event. With flood insurance, you're able to recover faster and more fully.
  - Use the tool linked below to see how much flood damage – even from just a few inches of water – could cost you. <https://www.floodsmart.gov/flood-insurance-cost/calculator>



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- Several factors are considered when determining your annual flood insurance premium. These factors include:
  - [Flood risk](#) (e.g., your flood zone)
  - The type of coverage being purchased (e.g. building and contents coverage)
  - The deductible and amount of building and contents coverage
  - The location of your structure
  - The design and age of your structure
  - The location of your structure’s contents (e.g., are your utilities elevated?)
- For detailed information about your flood insurance policy, review the [Flood Insurance Manual](#) or contact your insurance agent today. You can also call the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) at 877-336-2627.
  - [Residential properties](#).
  - [Commercial properties](#).
  - Contents and building coverage are **purchased separately**, and there are always separate deductibles. Unless you have contents coverage, your flood-damaged belongings are not covered.
  - Typically, there’s a 30-day waiting period from date of purchase until your flood insurance policy goes into effect.
- If you live outside of the high-risk area, NFIP’s [Preferred Risk Policy \(PRP\)](#), offers the option for combination coverage for both contents and building, but there are always separate deductibles.
- If you live in the [high-risk flood area](#) and have a government-backed mortgage, you are required to purchase flood insurance.
- Learn more about flood insurance at [www.floodsmart.gov/](http://www.floodsmart.gov/)

## [Online Resources](#)

[Hurricane Season Preparedness Digital Toolkit | Ready.gov](#) – Additional content for social media.

[Be Prepared for a Power Outage \(ready.gov\)](#)

[National Weather Service \(NWS\) Hurricane Safety Materials](#) – This collection of resources focuses on safety and educational materials compiled by the National Weather Service for hurricane preparedness. The materials include videos, social media content, infographics, and ways for individuals and communities to get involved in hurricane safety.

[Floodsmart.gov](http://www.floodsmart.gov/) –The official website of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP)



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[FEMA Flood Risk Communication Toolkit for Community Officials](#)- The Flood Risk Communication Toolkit was developed to help community officials design a communication plan, hold effective public meetings, and use social media to address flood risk. It is supported by story maps and videos that visually communicate the objectives of updating flood risk data and maps. This document contains guidance on when and how to use the [videos](#) during a flood risk project as well as additional engagement ideas and a section on special topics. New users can get started with this [guide](#).

[Small businesses](#) and other organizations should consult preparedness planning resources, like [this toolkit](#).

## Social Media

- Disasters don't plan ahead. You can. Make an emergency plan today. [www.ready.gov/plan](http://www.ready.gov/plan) #PlanAhead #HurricanePrep
- Do you know your evacuation routes? Use this search tool <http://go.usa.gov/cyKYR>
- Do you have the basics in your emergency kit? Pledge to prepare and check this list: <https://www.ready.gov/build-a-kit>
- In #severewx, listen to [@NOAA](#) Weather Radio for comprehensive weather and emergency info. Learn more: <http://go.usa.gov/yb9>

*Long form suggested posts:*

- No need to panic, Hurricane Preparedness means a few proactive steps ahead of time keep you [safe through the storm](#). [Know your risk](#), [evacuation zone](#), and how to [contact](#) your network. Then rest easy knowing your home is [secured](#), [insured](#), and [important documents are safe](#).
- Hurricanes are getting stronger and more frequent every year, but our communities have many ways to weather the storm and stay resilient. Do your part to ensure preparedness for yourself and others. [Hurricanes | Ready.gov](#) has preparedness tips in several languages, as well as for [People with Disabilities | Ready.gov](#), [Older Adults | Ready.gov](#), and [Caregivers | Ready.gov](#).



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## Graphics



**HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS**

**MAKE A PLAN**   **BUILD A KIT**   **BE INFORMED**

This graphic features a green background with a dark green banner at the top containing the text "HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS". Below the banner are three circular icons: a house with a checkmark, a first aid kit, and a smartphone with a warning symbol. Each icon is positioned above a small dark green box containing white text: "MAKE A PLAN", "BUILD A KIT", and "BE INFORMED".



**CONOZCA SU ZONA DE EVACUACIÓN**

This graphic shows a stylized street map in light gray. A large, tilted green banner is overlaid on the map, containing the text "CONOZCA SU ZONA DE EVACUACIÓN" in white, bold, italicized font.



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## Videos

[Hurricane Evacuation PSA: Make Your Evacuation Plan \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Storm Surge Fast Draw \(youtube.com\)](#)

For Planners: [Mapping Rising Flood Risk - YouTube](#)

[FEMA Accessible: Hurricanes Safety Messages \(youtube.com\)](#)

[Flood Risk Communication Video Series](#) – Eight videos that visually communicate the objectives of updating flood risk data and maps and the importance of flood insurance.



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