

## Hurricane & Tropical Storm Preparedness

Hurricane season begins June 1st of each year and ends November 30th. South Florida can be threatened any time during this season. Preparedness is a significant undertaking for every community association in Florida. We published this Hurricane Preparedness Guide to help our residents navigate through the different stages and challenges that arise when a storm hits. We hope that these helpful tips will allow you to stay ahead of the hurricane season and prepared in the event of a storm. Please take the time to read this information carefully.

The following are some useful definitions:

- TROPICAL DEPRESSION has winds of less than 39 miles per hour or 34 knots.
- TROPICAL STORM has winds from 39 to 73 miles per hour or 34 to 63 knots.
- TROPICAL STORM "WARNING" once issued, can develop into a hurricane.
- HURRICANE "WATCH" - a hurricane may threaten the area within 24-36 hours.
- HURRICANE "WARNING" - a hurricane is expected to strike the area within 24 hours or less.
- HURRICANE has winds of greater than 74 miles per hour or 64 knots.
  - Category 1: 74-95 MPH Minimal
  - Category 2: 95-110 MPH Moderate
  - Category 3: 111-130 Major
  - Category 4: 131-155 Extensive
  - Category 5: 156 MPH + Catastrophic

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO BE READY IN THE EVENT OF A DISASTER?

#### Before the Storm

Preparing in advance for hurricane season can determine not only how safely and comfortably you ride out the storm, but also how easily it is to handle the days and weeks after the storm has passed. Take a look at the information collected below to learn how you can prepare in the days and weeks before a hurricane.

#### Plan your stay or evacuation:

If you plan to evacuate, make arrangements in advance. You need to make sure that where you are going is safe. It defeats the purpose of evacuating if you go to an unsafe place. If you decide to relocate out of the area, be sure to bring a road map and make sure that your car is full of fuel. Stay away from major bodies of water. Make arrangements in advance if you can. Go early, traffic will be heavy if you leave at the last minute, and you may not make it to your destination. Another option is evacuating to an Emergency public shelter. For more information on Emergency Shelters and a list of available public shelters please visit a Miami-Dade Public Library or Publix Supermarket. Pet-friendly evacuation centers are available for residents living in evacuation areas. Locations will be announced prior

to the storm's arrival. Service animals are permitted at **all** evacuation centers. Please be aware that not every evacuation center location will open. Decisions are based on the National Hurricane Center's forecast in order to determine when and where landfall will occur.

If you need to evacuate, it is important to bring:

- Sleeping bag/mat or folding cot/lawn chair
- Infant and child care items, such as formula, diapers, toys, etc.
- Cash
- Personal hygiene items
- Comfort materials, such as books, magazines, etc.
- Medication (refrigeration will be available for prescription or emergency medication)
- Drinking water
- Snacks
- Extra clothing
- Special items for family members who are elderly or disabled

While hurricane evacuation centers will provide meals such as sandwiches and soups, it will take time to get the food set up and served, so you should eat before you leave your home. If you have a special diet, you should bring those dietary items with you, so as to ensure the highest level of comfort during your evacuation away from home. It is strongly recommended to bring portable electronic devices, such as phones, tablets and battery packs - fully charged as there are limited outlets at evacuation centers.

Whether you decide to stay home or evacuate, you need to prepare your home:

- Make sure all smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors (important for generator use) are operational.
- Protect areas where wind can enter.
- Withdraw cash from the bank and get fuel for your vehicle, generator and other gas-powered tools.
- Have battery-powered light sources available and ready for use.
- Protect electronics with surge protectors and waterproof coverings.
- If power is lost, lighting will be poor inside, so keep heavy-traffic areas free of clutter.
- Bring in lawn furniture or other outdoor items not tied down that could become airborne.
- Repair or replace broken or damaged fences.
- Secure loose rain gutters and downspouts and clear any clogged areas or debris.
- Inspect the roof for loose tiles, shingles or debris.
- Make sure you have homeowners, flood and wind insurance.

- Make bed rolls from your existing comforters and blankets.
- If you will be evacuating your home for the storm, turn off the power at the main circuit breaker before leaving.

Sheltering in place offers immediate protection for a short time in your home. It is the best way to protect yourself from a hazard and is a safer alternative than evacuation. If you decide to shelter in place, be sure to:

- Go indoors to your designated shelter-in-place room or area.
- Make sure all family members and pets are with you.
- Bring your emergency supply kit with you.
- Protect yourself with a mattress or padding.
- Don't use gas, propane, or kerosene appliances; vapors might be toxic.
- Listen to your radio or TV for emergency information.
- Stay indoors until given the "all clear" signal or other instructions.
- Prepare a family emergency plan. Include plans for communicating with your family and caring for pets.
- Choose a room in which to shelter. It should be an interior room with few or no windows, doors or vents. If possible, choose a room with a water supply and a hard-wired telephone.
- Prepare an emergency supply kit.
- Know which local radio and TV stations broadcast emergency information.
- Learn CPR and first aid.
- Designate a contact person outside of your area for family members to call during an emergency to report where they are.
- Remember to stay together. Keep your pet in a crate or carrier and find a safe area where you will all be together. Keep their collar and tag on in case you get separated. It's always best to microchip your pets since they tend to lose their collars.

### Doors and Windows

Windows and doors should be secured with County-approved storm shutters or by boarding up windows with 5/8-inch plywood. Inspect existing shutters to ensure they are in good working order. Tape does **not** prevent windows from breaking.

Once your windows and doors are shuttered or boarded, it will be more difficult to get out in the case of an emergency, so make sure that you and everyone in the house is aware of the available exits.

Metal hurricane shutters are reliable and economical, and you can choose from several different types. Each type has its sets of pros and cons, so be sure to do your research before committing to a type of metal hurricane shutters.

Windows with impact-resistant glass have become more common over the years, and the technology has improved to the point that they can withstand Category 5 wind conditions. Impact-resistant glass is expensive, but it can also help reduce insurance costs.

Be sure to reinforce garage doors and tracks or replace with a hurricane-tested door.

Please remember, as per Dimensions at Doral Rules & Regulations, any approved hurricane accordion shutter or panel may be installed or closed, up to 72 hours prior to expected arrival of a hurricane and must be removed or open 72 hours after the hurricane watch or warning or as the Board may determine otherwise. Except as the Homeowners Association may otherwise decide, shutters may not be closed at any other time other than a storm event.

### **Tree Pruning**

During hurricane season, the right tree in the right place may help protect your property from strong winds by acting as a buffer. However, improperly pruning trees before a storm can increase the possibility they will break or fall more easily during the storm. The large amounts of fallen and damaged trees usually seen after a storm are from improper cutting or pruning of trees. **Please do not begin any pruning during a Hurricane Watch or Hurricane Warning**, several months prior to hurricane season, do the following:

- Prune trees during the tree species dormant season or during early spring.
- Make sure the lawn care worker or tree trimmer is a certified arborist. Ask to see their registration or license and insurance.
- Never "top" or "hat-rack" any tree. "Hat-racking" is the term used when a tree is cut or chopped so badly that it is left with few or no leaves on the branches.
- Do not remove more than 25 percent of the tree canopy.
- Do not cut the tree root system.
- Remove mainly the interior branches. This will thin the canopy of the tree and allow the winds to pass through it more easily.
- Make sure to correctly dispose of all tree cuttings since branches and stumps left out in the open can become projectiles during a storm.

Please keep in mind that, as per Dimensions at Doral Rules & Regulations, except for the obligation of the association to maintain trees and palms in the common area lawn, owners shall maintain units' front yards and patios, including tree pruning as needed. Also remember that no lawn furniture, fountains, plant pots, birdbaths, or sculptures shall be permitted in the front yard.

### Kits and Checklists

Emergency supplies should be fully stocked by June 1, the start of hurricane season. Once a hurricane warning is declared, most of your preparations should be directed toward your home. It is important to put them in one place. Be sure every family member knows where the kit is kept.

- Keep loose items in airtight plastic bags.
- Gather the kit's items in easy-to-carry containers or duffel bags. Put them within reach, near the exit you use most often.
- Check and update your kit at least once a year.

Your hurricane supply kit should contain:

- 7-day supply of non-perishable foods
- 7-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day, including pets)
- A manual can opener
- Battery-powered portable television or radio with extra batteries
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit and manual
- Sanitation and hygiene items, such as instant hand sanitizing gel, disinfectant wipes, moist towelettes, toilet paper, and feminine hygiene products
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), such as masks and gloves
- Thermometer with batteries, if required
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Whistle
- Kitchen accessories and cooking utensils
- Cash
- Extra clothing, blankets and sleeping bags
- Photocopies of identification, insurance, prescriptions, household inventory, credit cards and your utility bill
- Copies of important documents such as birth certificates, adoption certificates, marriage licenses, divorce papers, Social Security cards, passport, green cards, will, insurance policies (home, auto, life, health, etc.), bank statements
- Prescription medications, eyeglasses, contact lens solution and hearing aid
- Batteries
- Type ABC fire extinguisher
- Telephone that is not dependent on electricity and/or a cell phone
- Formula, baby food, diapers and pacifiers
- Pet carriers, leashes, shot records, and food for each animal evacuating with you

- Tire repair kit, booster cables, pump and flares
- Toys and games for children
- Mosquito repellent
- Sunscreen (45 SPF recommended)

### **During the Hurricane**

If a hurricane is heading to our area, here are some tips to stay safe.

- Monitor your radio or television for weather updates and instructions from public safety officials. Upon activation of the Miami-Dade County Emergency Operations Center, all key service update information will be posted on [www.miamidade.gov](http://www.miamidade.gov).
- Stay indoors, preferably in a room with few or no windows.
- Take your emergency kit and disaster supplies with you if you move from room to room or if you evacuate to a shelter.
- If flooding threatens your home, turn off electricity at the main breaker.
- Use flashlights, not candles or kerosene lamps, as your light source.
- If you lose power, turn off all major appliances.
- Avoid using the phone and do not take a bath or shower during the storm.
- Fight the temptation to go outside during the eye of the storm. There's only a brief period of calm before hurricane-force winds return.
- Keep children informed about what's happening and watch for signs of stress.
- Keep animals in their carriers or crate.
- Get in the tub and pull a mattress over you to protect yourself from debris if your home begins to come apart.
- For seaport and airport passenger information, contact your local carrier about closings.
- Listen for advisories from local law enforcement agencies regarding roadways and bridges being locked down.

### **After the Storm**

After the storm has passed and you've confirmed that everyone is okay, it's time to assess the damage and begin the recovery phase. Here are some tips to keep in mind when inspecting your home post-hurricane: Before returning home after an evacuation, make sure that the authorities have declared the area safe.

- Electrical power and natural gas or propane tanks should be shut off to avoid fire, electrocution or explosions.
- If you suspect a gas leak, turn off the main gas valve, open all windows and leave the house immediately. Then call your gas company. Do not return to the house until you are told it is safe to do so.

- Do not drive or walk through standing water. It may be much deeper than you realize and there may be hidden hazards.
- Learn proper safety procedures and operating instructions before operating any gas-powered or electric chainsaw.
- When using any power equipment, always wear a safety face shield or eyeglasses and gloves.
- Use battery-powered lanterns and flashlights instead of candles.
- If you must use candles, make sure you put them in safe holders away from curtains, paper, wood or other flammable items.
- Never leave a candle burning when you are out of the room.
- Contact your insurance agent. Take pictures of damage. Keep good records of repair and cleaning costs.
- Your electrical system may have been damaged. If you see frayed wiring or sparks when you restore power, or if there is an odor of something burning but no visible fire, you should immediately shut off the electrical system at the main circuit breaker.
- You should consult your utility company about using electrical equipment, including power generators. Be aware that it is against the law and a violation of electrical codes to connect generators to your home's electrical circuits without the approved automatic-interrupt devices. If a generator is online when electrical service is restored, it can become a major fire hazard. In addition, the improper connection of a generator to your home's electrical circuits may endanger line workers helping to restore power in your area.
- Replace the electrical outlet and have the system checked by a certified electrician before turning on the circuit breakers and energizing the outlet for use.
- Following a storm, if flooding is affecting the interior of your property, report it by calling 311. If you have broken or leaking pipes, call the Water and Sewer Department at 305-274-9272.

## Important Resources

Useful Contacts Before, During & After a Storm or Disaster:

### FEDERAL AGENCIES

- EMA- [www.FEMA.gov](http://www.FEMA.gov) 1-800-621-FEMA
- NOAA- [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov) (Miami) 305-229-4522
- HUD- [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov) 1-800-245-2691

### STATE AGENCIES

- Florida Division of Emergency Management- [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org) 1-800-226-4329
- Florida Office of the Attorney General- [www.myfloridalegal.com](http://www.myfloridalegal.com) 1-866-966-7226  
(Report suspected cases of price gouging)

**LOCAL RESOURCES**

- Florida Power and Light (FPL) outage and restoration information is available by calling 1-800-4-OUTAGE (1-800-468-8243) or through their mobile website at [www.FPL.com](http://www.FPL.com).
- Doral PD Hotline: 786-871-1465
- Miami-Dade Answer 311 Center
- State of Florida Emergency Information Line 800-342-3557; TTY: 800-226 4329

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

- American Red Cross- [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) 1-800-RED-CROSS
- All Hands and Hearts- [www.allhandsandhearts.org](http://www.allhandsandhearts.org) 508-758-8211
- The Salvation Army- [www.salvationarmyusa.org](http://www.salvationarmyusa.org) 1-800-SA-TRUCK
- ASPCA- [www.aspcs.org](http://www.aspcs.org) 1-888-666-2279
- Humane Society of Greater Miami-[www.humanesocietymiami.org](http://www.humanesocietymiami.org) 305-696-0800