



# HURRICANE SAFETY

## FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

### BEFORE A HURRICANE

- ✓ **Know your zone:** Do you live near the Gulf or Atlantic Coasts? Find out if you live in a hurricane evacuation area by contacting your local government/emergency management office.
- ✓ **Have a Family Emergency Plan:** Before an emergency happens, sit down with your family or close friends and decide how you will get in contact with each other, where you will go and what you will do in an emergency. Keep a copy of this plan in your emergency supplies kit or another safe place where you can access it in the event of a disaster.
- ✓ **Put Together an Emergency Supplies Kit:** Put together a basic disaster supplies kit and consider storage locations for different situations. Check emergency equipment, such as flashlights, generators and storm shutters. For a list of key items for your kit, see [www.ready.gov/kit](http://www.ready.gov/kit)
- ✓ **Review Your Homeowners Insurance:** Review your insurance policy to ensure that you have adequate coverage for your home.
- ✓ **Understand NWS forecast products,** especially the meaning of NWS watches and warnings.

### DURING A HURRICANE

- ✓ **Secure your home:** Cover all of your home's windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8 inch exterior grade or marine plywood, built to fit and ready to install. Buy supplies before the hurricane season rather than waiting for the pre-storm rush.
- ✓ **Stayed tuned in:** Check the websites of your local National Weather Service office and local government/emergency management office. Find out what type of emergencies could occur and how you should respond. Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or other radio or TV stations for the latest storm news.
- ✓ **Follow instructions issued by local officials.** Leave immediately if ordered!

### IF NOT ORDERED TO EVACUATE

- ✓ **Take refuge in a small interior room,** closet or hallway on the lowest level during the storm. Put as many walls between you and the outside as you can.
- ✓ **Stay away from windows,** skylights and glass doors.
- ✓ **If the eye of the storm passes over your area,** there will be a short period of calm, but at the other side of the eye, the wind speed rapidly increases to hurricane-force winds coming from the opposite direction.



Scituate, Mass., Oct. 29, 2012 - The few summer homes left standing after the Perfect Storm in 1991, stand ready for the tidal surge that is still hours away.  
Photo by Marilee Caliendo / FEMA



# National Weather Service



## STAY SAFE

- ✓ **Stay out of any building if you smell gas**, if floodwaters remain around the building or if the building or home was damaged by fire and the authorities have not declared it safe.
- ✓ **Carbon monoxide poisoning** is one of the leading causes of death after storms in areas dealing with power outages. Never use a portable generator inside your home or garage.
- ✓ **Use battery-powered flashlights**. Do NOT use candles. Turn on your flashlight before entering a vacated building. The battery could produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas, if present.

## WATCHES & WARNINGS

Listen closely to instructions from local officials on TV, radio, cell phones or other computers for instructions from local officials. Evacuate if told to do so.

## WATCHES

- ✓ **Hurricane Watch:** Hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are possible within your area. Because it may not be safe to prepare for a hurricane once winds reach tropical storm force, the NHC issues hurricane watches 48 hours before it anticipates tropical-storm-force winds.
- ✓ **Tropical Storm Watch:** Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are possible within the specified area within 48 hours.
- ✓ **Storm Surge Watch:** The possibility of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline somewhere within the specified area, generally within 48 hours.

## WARNINGS

- ✓ **Hurricane Warning:** Hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or greater) are expected somewhere within the specified area. NHC issues a hurricane warning 36 hours in advance of tropical-storm-force winds to give you time to complete your preparations.
- ✓ **Tropical Storm Warning:** Tropical storm conditions (sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph) are expected within your area within 36 hours.
- ✓ **Storm Surge Warning:** The danger of life-threatening inundation from rising water moving inland from the shoreline somewhere within the specified area, generally within 36 hours.
- ✓ **Extreme Wind Warning:** Extreme sustained winds of a major hurricane (115 mph or greater), usually associated with the eyewall, are expected to begin within an hour. Take immediate shelter in the interior portion of a well-built structure.

## AFTER A HURRICANE

- ✓ **Stay Informed:** Continue listening to a NOAA Weather Radio or the local news for the latest updates. If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
- ✓ **Stay Alert:** Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed-out bridges. If you must go out, watch for fallen objects in the road, downed electrical wires, and weakened walls, bridges, roads and sidewalks that might collapse.
- ✓ **Assess the Damage:** Walk carefully around the outside of your home to check for loose power lines, gas leaks and structural damage.



Mantoloking, N.J., Nov. 5, 2012 - This house was destroyed by the storm surge of Hurricane Sandy. FEMA