



Stand-up Talk

Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane season begins in June and extends until the end of November. Now is the time to think about how to protect yourself and your loved ones during a hurricane. If a hurricane is approaching and you can't move to a safer place, follow these tips:

- **Make plans to secure your property.** Cover your windows with permanent storm shutters or with 5/8-inch plywood boards. Bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans and anything else that is not secured. Be sure trees and shrubs around your home are well trimmed so they are more wind-resistant, and clear any rain gutters or downspouts that may be clogged.
- **Designate a room in your home** without windows as a safe zone to ride out a storm or consider building a safe room (a fortified shelter for storms or intrusions).
- **Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least three days.** While government responders will work hard to respond to a major disaster, it will take time to deliver supplies.
- **Think about whether your health could be at risk if you lose air-conditioning, fresh water, sewage service, or other services.** While many older people can cope just fine if there's no electricity, others are living with health conditions that may limit their ability to tolerate heat, especially if they must exert themselves to climb stairs or carry heavy loads.
- **If you decide to relocate before or immediately after a storm, remember that it's often easier to go only as far as needed to reach an area where services are still operating normally.** Often this is only 100 or 150 miles from home.
- **Make a plan for your pets. Because many of us consider pets to be family members, we can hesitate to evacuate when necessary for fear of leaving our animals at risk.** For more pet information, go to [redcross.org](https://www.redcross.org).
- **If you need assistance during and after a storm, register with a special-needs shelter in your area.** To register, call your county emergency operations center. The phone number can be found in the blue pages of your phone book.

In the case of evacuation before or after a hurricane, make sure you have a solid evacuation kit, which should include all of the following:

- Copy of all household members' IDs or driver's licenses and birth certificates
- Clothes
- Food, water and medications (for at least three days)
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Maps of your evacuation route, alternate routes and a way to get to local shelters

- Extra set of car keys, along with a full tank of gas
- At least one flashlight with extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Extra glasses or contact lenses

Always remember: Safety Depends on Me!