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Hurricanes

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Hurricanes are dangerous and can cause major damage because of storm surge, wind damage, and flooding. They can happen along any U.S. coast or in any territory in the Atlantic or Pacific oceans. Storm surge is historically the leading cause of hurricane-related deaths in the United States.

Eastern Pacific Hurricane Season: May 15-November 30.

Atlantic Hurricane Season: June 1-November 30.

Central Pacific Hurricane Season: June 1-November 30.

Prepare for Hurricanes

Know your Hurricane Risk

Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. Find out how rain, wind, water could happen where you live [so you can start preparing now](#). Be sure to consider how COVID-19 may affect your plans. Keep in mind that your best protection from the effects of a hurricane may differ from your best protection from diseases, such as coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19).

Make an Emergency Plan

Make sure everyone in your household knows and understands [your hurricane plan](#). Discuss the latest [Centers for Disease Control \(CDC\) guidance on Coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#), and how it may affect your hurricane planning. Don't forget a plan for the [office, kids' daycare, and anywhere you frequent](#).

Know your Evacuation Zone

You may have to evacuate quickly due to a hurricane. [Learn your evacuation routes](#), practice with household, pets, and identify where you will stay.

- Follow the instructions from local emergency managers, who work closely with state, local, tribal, and territorial agencies and partners. They will provide the latest recommendations based on the threat to your community and appropriate safety measures.
- Due to limited space as a result of COVID-19, public evacuation shelters may not be the safest choice for you and your family. If you don't live in a mandatory evacuation zone, make a plan to shelter in place in your home, if it is safe to do so. If you cannot shelter at home, make plans to shelter with friends and family, where you will be safer and more comfortable.
- Note that your regular shelter may not be open this year. Check with local authorities for the latest information about public shelters.
- If you must evacuate to a public shelter, try to bring items that can help protect you and others in the shelter from COVID-19, such as hand sanitizer, cleaning materials, and two [cloth face coverings](#) per person. Children under 2 years old and people who have trouble breathing should not wear masks.
- Review the CDC's guidelines for "[Going to a Public Disaster Shelter During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)."

Those with Disabilities

If you or anyone in your household is an [individual with a disability](#) identify if you may need additional help during an emergency.

Prepare your Business

Make sure your business has a [continuity plan](#) to continue operating when disaster strikes.

Recognize Warnings and Alerts

Have several ways to receive alerts. [Download the FEMA app](#) and receive real-time alerts from the National Weather Service for up to five locations nationwide. [Sign up for community alerts](#) in your area and be aware of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA)- which requires no-sign up.

Sign up for [email updates](#) and follow the [latest guidelines](#) about coronavirus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and your local authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Review Important Documents

Make sure your [insurance policies and personal documents](#) like ID are up to date. Make copies and keep them in a secure password protected digital space.

Strengthen your Home

Declutter drains and gutters, bring in outside furniture, consider hurricane shutters.

Get Tech Ready

[Keep your cell phone charged](#) when you know a hurricane is in the forecast and purchase backup charging devices to power electronics.

Help your Neighborhood

Check with neighbors, [senior adults](#), or those [who may need additional help](#) securing hurricane plans to see how you can be of assistance to others

Gather Supplies

[Have enough supplies](#) for your household, include medication, disinfectant supplies, [masks](#), [pet supplies](#) in your go bag or car trunk. After a hurricane, you may not have access to these supplies for days or even weeks.

- Being prepared allows you to avoid unnecessary excursions and to address minor medical issues at home, alleviating the burden on urgent care centers and hospitals.
- Remember that not everyone can afford to respond by stocking up on necessities. For those who can afford it, making essential purchases and slowly building up supplies in advance will allow for longer time periods between shopping trips. This helps to protect those who are unable to procure essentials in advance of the pandemic and must shop more frequently. In addition, consider avoiding WIC-approved products so that those who rely on these products can access them.

Stay Safe During a Hurricane

Stay Informed

Pay attention to emergency information and alerts.

If you live in a mandatory evacuation zone and local officials tell you to evacuate, do so immediately.

Dealing with the Weather

Determine how best to protect yourself from high winds and flooding.

Take refuge in a designated storm shelter, or an interior room for high winds. Practice going to these places while following the [latest guidelines](#) from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and your state and local authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building. Do not climb into a closed attic. You may become trapped by rising flood water.

Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters. Turn Around. Don't Drown! Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

Stay off bridges over fast-moving water.

Personal Safety

If you must go to a community or group shelter remember to follow the latest guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for protecting yourself and family from COVID-19. Due to limited space as a result of COVID-19, if you do not live in a mandatory evacuation zone, it is recommended that you shelter in place in your home. If you live in a mandatory evacuation zone, talk with your friends and family to see if you can shelter with them. Only evacuate to shelters if you are unable to shelter at home or with family or friends. Be sure to review your previous evacuation plan and consider alternative options to maintain social and physical distancing to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and update your plan accordingly.

Maintain at least 6 feet between you and persons not part of your immediate family while at the shelter [by avoiding crowds or gathering in groups] as much as possible.

If you must evacuate, if possible, bring with you items that can help protect you and others in the shelter from COVID-19, such as hand sanitizer, cleaning materials, and two [masks](#) per person. Children under 2 years old, people who have trouble breathing, and people who cannot remove masks on their own should not wear them.

If you are [sick and need medical attention](#), contact your healthcare provider for further care instructions and shelter in place, if possible. If you are experiencing a medical emergency, call 9-1-1 and let the operator know if you have, or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a mask before help arrives. If staying at a shelter or public facility, alert shelter staff immediately so they can call a local hospital or clinic.

Only use generators outdoors and away from windows.

Returning Home After a Hurricane

Listen to local officials for information and special instructions.

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 take part in disaster cleanup work.

Continue taking steps to protect yourself from COVID-19 and other infectious diseases, such as washing your hands often and cleaning commonly touched surfaces.

Wear protective clothing and work with someone else.

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. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.

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.

Document any property damage with photographs. Contact your insurance company for assistance.

Engage virtually with your community through video and phone calls. Know that it's normal to feel anxious or stressed. Take care of your body and talk to someone if you are feeling upset. Many people may already feel fear and anxiety about the coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19). The threat of a hurricane can add additional stress. Follow CDC guidance for [managing stress during a traumatic event](#) and [managing stress during COVID-19](#).

Additional Resources

Videos

- [Ready Campaign Public Service Announcements - COVID-19](#)
- [Storm Surge Public Service Announcements](#)
- [FEMA Accessible: Hurricane Safety Messages](#)
- [Important Things to Know Before a Disaster](#)
- [When the Waves Swell – Hurricane Animated](#)

Graphics

- [Hurricane Preparedness Graphics](#)

Tip Sheets

- [Hurricane Preparedness Documents](#)

More Information

- [National Weather Service 2020 Hurricane Preparedness Week](#)
- [Protective Actions Research for Hurricane](#)
- [CDC Coronavirus](#)
- [Ad Council Coronavirus Response Toolkit](#)
- [Flood Map Service Center](#)
- [National Flood Insurance Program](#)
- [National Storm Surge Hazard Maps](#)

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Disasters and Emergencies

All Hazards

Emergency Alerts

Attacks in Public Places

Avalanche

Bioterrorism

Chemical Emergencies
