

HURRICANES: PERSONNEL SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

In addition to having a business related Hurricane Emergency Response Plan and a Business Continuity Plan, it is of course most important that personnel and their families remain safe during a hurricane emergency.

Here's what they can do to prepare for hurricanes and high winds...

KNOW WHAT HURRICANE WATCH AND WARNING MEAN

- **WATCH** Hurricane conditions are *possible* in the specified area of the watch, usually within 36 hours.
- **WARNING** Hurricane conditions are *expected* in the specified area of the warning, usually within 24 hours.

PREPARE A PERSONAL EVACUATION PLAN

- Identify ahead of time where you could go if you are told to evacuate. Choose several places—a friend's home in another town, a motel, or a shelter.
- Keep handy the telephone numbers of these places as well as a road map of your locality. You may need to take alternative or unfamiliar routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV stations for evacuation instructions. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Take these items with you when evacuating:
 - Prescription medications and medical supplies;
 - Bedding and clothing, including sleeping bags and pillows



- Bottled water, battery-operated radio and extra batteries, first aid kit, flashlight
- Car keys and maps
- Important Documents – including driver's license, Social Security card, proof of residence, insurance policies, wills, deeds, birth and marriage certificates, tax records, etc.

ASSEMBLE A DISASTER SUPPLIES KIT INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING ITEMS

- First aid kit and essential medications.
- Canned food and can opener.
- At least three gallons of water per person.
- Protective clothing, rainwear, and bedding or sleeping bags.

- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, and extra batteries.
- Special items for infants, elderly, or disabled family members.
- Written instructions on how to turn off electricity, gas and water if authorities advise you to do so. (Remember, you'll need a professional to turn them back on.)

PREPARE FOR HIGH WINDS

- Install hurricane shutters or purchase pre-cut 1/2" outdoor plywood boards for each window of your home. Install anchors for the plywood and pre-drill holes in the plywood so that you can put it up quickly.
- Make trees more wind resistant by removing diseased and damaged limbs, then strategically removing branches so that wind can blow through.

KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN A HURRICANE WATCH IS ISSUED

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV stations for up-to-date storm information.
- Prepare to bring inside any lawn furniture, outdoor decorations or ornaments, trash cans, hanging plants, and anything else that can be picked up by the wind.
- Prepare to cover all windows of your home. If shutters have not been installed, use pre-cut plywood as described above. **Note:** Tape does not prevent windows from breaking, so taping windows is not recommended.
- Fill your car's gas tank.
- Recheck manufactured home tie-downs.
- Check batteries and stock up on canned food, first aid supplies, drinking water, and medications.

KNOW WHAT TO DO WHEN A HURRICANE WARNING IS ISSUED

- Listen to the advice of local officials, and leave if they tell you to do so.
- Complete preparation activities.
- If you are not advised to evacuate, stay indoors, away from windows.
- Be aware that the calm "eye" is deceptive; the storm is not over. The worst part of the storm will happen once the eye passes over and the winds blow from the opposite direction. Trees, shrubs, buildings, and other objects damaged by the first winds can be broken or destroyed by the second winds.
- Be alert for tornadoes. Tornadoes can happen during a hurricane and after it passes over. Remain indoors, in the center of your home, in a closet or bathroom without windows.
- Stay away from flood waters. If you come upon a flooded road, turn around and go another way. If you are caught on a flooded road and waters are rising rapidly around you, get out of the car and climb to higher ground.

IF YOU HAVE TO EVACUATE

If you evacuate from the area during an emergency to another location, advise your manager of your destination and contact information, including a telephone number at which you can be reached. Also, obtain your manager's contact information to let him or her know when you will return to the area.

KNOW WHAT TO DO AFTER A HURRICANE IS OVER

- Keep listening to NOAA Weather Radio or local radio or TV stations for instructions.
- If you evacuated, return home when local officials tell you it is safe to do so.
- Inspect your home for damage.
- Use flashlights in the dark; do not use candles.
- Power Outage Safety
- Food Safety
- Chainsaw Safety
- Portable Generator Safety
- Water Treatment

CONTACTS

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Some information in this document comes from the **American Red Cross** and **FEMA** sites.

The observations, comments and suggestions we have made in this publication are advisory and are not intended nor should they be taken as legal advice. Please contact your own legal adviser for an analysis of your specific facts and circumstances.