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## DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

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### What supplies are helpful in a disaster?

- Battery or solar powered radio with a hand-crank
- Food and water
- Flashlights
- First-aid supplies
- Batteries
- Work gloves
- Hand wipes
- Medicines and healthcare equipment
- Blankets
- Sleeping bags
- Baby/children necessities
- List of emergency phone numbers
- Mobile device chargers

### Prepare Your Home

- Install hurricane shutters or precut 3/4" pieces of marine plywood over each window of your home.
- Make trees more wind resistant by removing diseased or damaged limbs, then strategically removing branches so that wind can blow through.
- Lock the windows and doors of your home before leaving.
- Store lightweight objects that could become airborne.
- Anchor outdoor objects that cannot be brought inside.
- Turn off all utilities.

### Evacuate

- Be prepared to evacuate, especially if you live on the coastline, on an offshore island, in a mobile home, or near river or floodplain.
- Take your supplies kit.
- Fill your car with gas.
- When a weather emergency is approaching, a watch or a warning will be announced through your local news media.
- Follow any recommended evacuation routes.

### During a Weather Disaster

- If you're not told to evacuate, settle in and stay put. Keep the roads free for those who need to use them.
- Collect your supplies kit and keep them near you.
- Keep children and pets indoors.
- Have battery-powered radio nearby.
- If you're along the immediate coast and in danger of a storm surge, go to a room on an upper floor, preferably one without windows.
- If you're in a location not susceptible to a coastal storm surge, then go to an interior room on the lowest floor to protect yourself from wind-related damage.

## Prevent Further Damage and Document

- Before you start cleaning up debris, prepare an inventory of all damaged or destroyed personal property. If you can, videotape or photograph the damage.
- Make temporary repairs to prevent further damage.
- Clean up any flammable or poisonous materials that may have been spilled.
- Dispose of all spoiled food immediately. If you have insurance coverage for spoiled food, document your losses.
- Hold off on permanent repairs until you've received approval for reimbursement.
- Save remnants of damaged or destroyed property for your insurance company adjuster, and do not sign agreements with contractors or anyone else until you have a chance to meet with your insurance adjuster.
- Keep a written record of everyone you talk to about your insurance claim, including the date of the conversation and a summary of what was said.
- Keep all receipts.
- Your pre-disaster home inventory will be of great assistance to you at this point. After you've examined everything and determined the extent of damage, call your independent insurance agent as soon as possible to file a claim.

## Safety First

- If you have evacuated, wait until authorities tell you it's safe before returning home.
- Be alert for future weather warnings.
- Stay away from flood waters.
- Use a flashlight. Do not light matches or turn on electrical switches.
- Sniff for gas leaks. If you smell gas or suspect a leak, turn off the main gas valve, open windows and evacuate. If you have any concerns, have the gas system checked by a professional.
- Do not touch wires or outlets.
- Check for frayed cords and for cracked or broken prongs and plugs.
- Turn off the main electrical circuit switch. Be careful to stand on a dry surface and do not touch the metal handle of the switch box. Use a piece of heavy rubber, plastic or a piece of dry wood to open the metal door and throw the switch. Share your concerns with a licensed electrician.
- Watch for holes in the floor, loose boards or hanging plaster.
- If your home has been flooded, check for snakes and other animals that may have entered the property



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