

Hurricane Preparation: What to Do Before & During the Storm

Before:

- **Plan your family's evacuation route and have an emergency plan.** Having a plan is the first step of hurricane preparation. Determine where you will go and how you will get there. Learn hurricane evacuation routes and the locations of local shelters. Don't forget to include pets as part of the plan.
- **Comprise an emergency kit of bottled water, non-perishable food, batteries, flashlights, and first aid supplies.** According to Ready.gov, a basic disaster kit should include a gallon of water per person for at least three days, a three-day supply of food, a battery-powered weather radio, cash, a flashlight, a first-aid kit, a whistle, dust masks, moist towelettes, a wrench, maps, a can opener and cell phone chargers.
- **Secure your property to help minimize potential of damage due to the extreme weather:**
 - Secure your property by tying down any freestanding outdoor items. Reinforce your garage doors.
 - Keep trees and shrubs trimmed to improve their wind resistance.
 - Inventory your belongings and keep valuable belongings in a waterproof pouch, including documents and photos.

During:

- **Pay close attention to hurricane alerts.** Know the difference between a hurricane watch (hurricane-type conditions are likely in your area) and a hurricane warning (a hurricane is expected within 24 hours.)
- Consider a plan to move family members, especially those with special needs, to a safe, alternative location in case of an extended power outage. Remember to avoid all downed power lines and to be especially careful in flooded areas where power lines may be hidden by debris. Evacuate if possible. Use the evacuation plan you've already prepared and leave early and during daylight hours.
- Stay calm.

Hurricane Preparation for Driving:

Before Driving:

- Do not drive in rainy weather and high winds if you don't have to.
- Check your tires (including your spare) to make sure they have plenty of tread and are properly inflated.
- Before the storm hits, fill up your gas tank.
- Learn about your county's emergency plans, warning signals, evacuation routes and locations of emergency shelters.
- Make sure the windshield wipers are in good shape. The blades should completely clear the glass with each swipe. Replace any blade that leaves streaks or misses spots.
- Pack an emergency kit in your vehicle, which includes a flashlight with extra batteries, a first-aid kit, drinking water, mobile phone and car charger, extra snacks/food for your travelers and any pets, battery booster cables, and emergency flares or reflectors.

On the Road:

- To boost visibility, drive with your headlights on.
- Reduce your speed to account for the lower traction on wet roads and the destabilizing effects of high winds.
- To avoid a collision, keep enough open space around your vehicle. Drivers should extend their following distance to at least 5 or 6 seconds and adjust speed to always keep open space to at least one side of your vehicle.
- If your vehicle starts to hydroplane, gently ease off the accelerator and continue to look and steer where you want to go. This will help the vehicle regain traction.
- Stay away from downed power lines and electrical wires. Do not drive over or stand near downed power lines. Electric current passes easily through water.
- Avoid driving through flooded areas, even if you are familiar with the roads. The flooded area may contain dangers such as debris, tree branches or power lines that are not visible. The best thing you can do is turn around and find an alternate route.