

Hurricane

A hurricane is a tropical cyclone, a low-pressure system that originates in the tropics. The cyclone usually includes intense thunderstorms and strong winds that can exceed 155 mph. Hurricanes and tropical storms can further result in tornadoes and heavy flooding. Hurricanes can cause extensive damage through both strong winds and high flood waters from rain and storm surges.

Preparedness Is Your Duty

The Navy encourages all personnel to maintain a basic level of preparedness for all potential hazards.

You are encouraged to be informed about potential hazards, have a family emergency plan, and make an emergency preparedness kit.

How to Prepare for a Hurricane

- Stay informed and know your hurricane terminology:
 - **Tropical depression**—A system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and sustained winds that do not exceed 38 mph.
 - **Tropical storm**—A system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and sustained winds 39–73 mph.
 - **Hurricane**—A system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined surface circulation and sustained winds 74 mph or higher.
 - **Storm surge**—A dome of water pushed ashore by winds during tropical storms and hurricanes. Storm surges can reach 25 feet high and be 50–1000 miles wide.
 - **Storm tide**—A combination of storm surge with normal tide, increasing the amount of water (e.g., a 15-foot storm surge with a 2-foot normal tide creates a 17-foot storm tide).
 - **Hurricane/tropical storm watch**—Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible within 36 hours in specified areas. Stay tuned to radio or TV for further information.
 - **Short-term watches and warnings**—Provide detailed information about specific threats during hurricanes, such as flash flooding or tornadoes.
- Understand the categorization of hurricanes:
 - **Category 1**—Winds 74–95 mph, storm surge 4–5 feet, minimal damage to plants and signs.
 - **Category 2**—Winds 96–110 mph, storm surge 6–8 feet, some flooding, minimal damage to mobile homes, roofs, and small crafts.
 - **Category 3**—Winds 111–130 mph, storm surge 9–12 feet, extensive damage to small buildings and low-lying roofs.
 - **Category 4**—Winds 131–155 mph, storm surge 13–18 feet, extreme damage with destroyed roofs and mobile homes, downed trees, cut off roads, and flooded homes.
 - **Category 5**—Winds exceeding 155 mph, storm surge over 18 feet, catastrophic damage destroying most buildings and vegetation, cutting off major roads, and flooding homes.
- Install permanent storm shutters or have supplies available to board up your windows.
- Install straps or clips to secure your roof to the frame structure.
- Make sure trees and bushes are well trimmed and maintained.
- Create a family communication plan in case you are separated. Keep in mind phone lines and cell phone towers may be down.
- Create a family evacuation plan and an emergency supplies kit.

What to Do If There Is a Hurricane

- Listen to the radio or TV for more information and further instructions.
- Secure your home by closing the storm shutters and bringing outdoor furniture inside.
- Ensure a supply of water for household purposes.
- Turn your refrigerator to the coldest setting and keep the door closed.
- Turn off utilities if told to do so.
- If you are told to evacuate:
 - NEVER ignore an evacuation order.
 - Follow the guidelines given regarding times and routes.
 - Take only essential items and your emergency kit
 - Turn off gas, electricity and water if you have not already done so.
 - Disconnect all appliances.
 - Make sure your car's gas tank is full.
 - Do not walk in moving water.
 - Do not drive in high water (As little as 6 inches can cause a stall or loss of control)
 - Follow the designated evacuation plan and expect a high volume of traffic.
- If you are NOT told to evacuate:
 - Stay tuned to emergency stations on TV or radio.
 - Listen for further instructions.
 - Stay away from windows and doors by seeking shelter in a bathroom or basement.
 - Prepare to evacuate to a shelter or neighbor's home if your home is damaged.
 - Do not go outside until instructed to do so even if the storm is over and it seems calm.
When the eye of the hurricane passes, it is calm for awhile but does not remain that way.
- Once you are in a safe place, muster with your command if you are military or civilian personnel or a member of the selective reserves.

What to Do After a Hurricane

- Listen to news reports to make sure water supplies are not contaminated.
- Avoid flood waters, standing or moving, as they may be contaminated or deeper than expected.
- Beware of downed power lines.
- Avoid any roads where flood waters have receded as they may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Be extremely cautious when entering buildings and homes as there may be unseen damage.
- Clean and disinfect everything that was touched by flood water, as it can contain sewage and other contaminants
- After a declared emergency, register your needs with the Navy through the Navy Family Accountability and Assessment System (NFAAS) at <https://www.navyfamily.navy.mil> or call **1-877-414-5358** or 1-866-297-1971 (TDD).

Where to Find Additional Information

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)—www.bt.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes
- Department of Homeland Security (Ready.gov)—www.ready.gov/hurricanes
- FEMA—www.fema.gov/hazard/hurricane/index.shtm

It's ***your duty*** to stay informed, develop disaster plans with your family, and have ready an emergency supply kit good for at least three days.