



Are You Ready?

# HURRICANES



*A Fact Sheet for People who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing*

A hurricane, which can have winds as strong as 160 mph, can generate tornadoes and flooding from heavy rain and tidal surges. A hurricane storm approaching land can generate waves as high as 25 feet and between 50 to 100 miles wide. By being prepared for a hurricane, you can reduce your vulnerability and be more prepared for the aftereffects.

## Plan ahead.

Hold a hurricane drill in your household or workplace during each hurricane season. Check a local Red Cross or emergency planning agency to get more information. Have your household practice how to get to the nearest shelter. Know your needs and be prepared.

## Stock up on supplies, such as:

- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Cell phone with text message feature or 2-way pager and charger to use in your automobile
- Portable TTY with extra batteries
- Batteries and back-up hearing assistive technology
- Portable battery-operated television with extra batteries and charger to use in your automobile.
- NOAA radios with text alerts and visual and/or tactile alerts, or AM/FM portable radio if you can hear it with a neckloop or headset.
- Extra contact lenses or eyeglasses
- Paper and pens
- First aid kit
- Food and water (for up to 72 hours)
- Non-electric can opener
- Cash and credit cards
- Work or hiking shoes/boots to protect your feet when walking thru disaster areas

## Develop an emergency communication plan.

In case household members are separated from one another during a hurricane, have a back-up plan for where you can meet each other. Before disaster strikes, ask an out-of-state relative or friend to be a contact person. During or after the disaster, contact that person by pager or TTY. If you don't have a pager or a working TTY, ask a hearing person with a cell phone to call for you. Be sure everyone in the household knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.

## If evacuation is necessary

If officials order an evacuation, leave immediately. Prepare your home by unplugging all of your appliances and turn off all electrical power and the water supply. If time allows, move valuables to upper floors to avoid damage from flooding. Avoid flooded roads and watch for damaged bridges.

## Be alert for these watches and warnings:

**Hurricane/Tropical Storm Watch:** Hurricane/tropical storm conditions are possible in specific areas.

**Hurricane/Tropical Storm Warning:** Hurricane/tropical conditions are expected in specific areas, usually within 24 hours. Be alert for changes in the weather.

## Hurricane terms and what they mean:

**Advisory:** Hurricane and storm information is distributed to the public every six hours.

**Special Advisory:** Information is distributed when there are important changes in storm-related weather conditions.

**Gale Warning:** Continued winds of 35-54 mph and strong wave action are expected.

**Tropical Disturbance:** A moving area of thunderstorms in the tropics.

**Tropical Depression:** An area of low pressure turning circulation of clouds and winds up to 38 mph is recognized.

**Tropical Storm:** A storm set apart by counterclockwise circulation of clouds and 39-73 mph winds is developing.

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# Hurricanes Fact Sheet, Continued

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Category	Wind Speed	Damage	Tidal Surge
1	74-95 mph	Minimal (unanchored mobile homes, vegetation and signs)	4-5 feet
2	96-110 mph	Moderate (all mobile homes, roofs, small crafts, flooding)	6-8 feet
3	111-130 mph	Extensive (small buildings, low-lying roads cut off)	9-12 feet
4	131-155 mph	Extreme (roofs destroyed, trees down, roads cut off, mobile homes destroyed, and beach homes flooded)	13-18 feet
5	Above 155 mph	Catastrophic (most buildings destroyed, vegetation destroyed, major roads cut off, homes flooded)	More than 18 feet

## What to do if a watch or warning is issued:

Watch television if closed captioning is available. Check the Internet or your pager for hurricane reports. If no warning information is accessible, call the local television station, Red Cross emergency shelter or a family member or friend. If this still is not helpful, go to the nearest shelter to get information. Follow instructions if ordered to leave your location.

Check your emergency supplies. Store drinking water in clean bathtubs, jugs, bottles and cooking utensils.

Outdoor lawn furniture, toys and garden tools should be brought inside to avoid harming people. Remove outdoor antennas if it is safe and possible to do so.

Secure your home by installing hurricane shutters or precut plywood over windows.

Put the refrigerator and freezer on the coldest settings, unless officials tell you to turn off all electrical power.

Make sure your car's gas tank is filled. Review the evacuation route and get your emergency supplies ready.

Put important papers in a waterproof container. If you have a boat, tie it up or move it to a safe place.

## After the hurricane:

When it is okay to go home, watch out for loose or downed power lines on your way home.

Enter your home carefully. Open all windows and doors to dry out your home. Do not use candles or open flames in the house in case there is a gas leak; use a flashlight instead.

Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas, leave the building immediately and leave the door open. Call, or ask someone to call, the gas company.

Look for electrical damage. If you see sparks, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box. If the area is flooded, call a licensed electrician.

*Information adapted from materials by the Federal Emergency Management Agency ([www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)).*



### Questions? Comments? Contact the CEPIN Project at:

TDI, 8630 Fenton St. Suite 604, Silver Spring, MD 20910-3822  
(301) 589-3006 TTY, (301) 589-3786 Voice, (301) 589-3797 Fax  
[www.tdi-online.org](http://www.tdi-online.org) • [info@tdi-online.org](mailto:info@tdi-online.org)



[www.c-s-d.org](http://www.c-s-d.org)



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