

Personal Preparedness Checklist for Hurricane Season During COVID-19

COVID-19 has made personal preparedness more important than ever. The safety measures and challenges from the pandemic are changing how quickly and effectively first responders and outside groups are able to respond in the aftermath of a hurricane. With that in mind, families should be prepared to look after themselves for at least three days, preferably longer. All of this must be done while continuing COVID-19 safety practices of wearing masks in public, maintaining social distance as much as possible, and frequently washing hands and sanitizing surfaces.

Hurricane Preparedness	
Stay Informed	
	Know where your nearest hurricane shelter is and if it allows pets (check your community's website for a list of shelters).
	Know your community's early warning system signals. Sign up for your county, city or local police alert system. An early warning can give you the minutes you need to prepare for a fast-moving disaster.
	Check your local community's social media for updates.
	If you have children, know their schools' response plans, including where they evacuate and how they plan on contacting parents and caregivers.
	Take a Red Cross first aid and CPR class.
	If disabled, have functional or access limitations, or medical needs ask about special assistance that may be available to you in an emergency. Many communities ask people with a disability to register, usually with the local fire department or emergency management office, so needed help can be provided quickly in an emergency.
	Learn about local hazards unique to your local geography.
Establish a Plan	
	Prior to a hurricane, pick a place to meet your family in case of separation.
	Determine the best escape routes from your home; identify at least two ways out of each room.
	Find the safe spots in your home away from windows but easy to exit if it necessary to evacuate immediately.
	Show each family member how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches. Tape a wrench in a bag to the gas shutoff for easy access in an emergency.
	Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher and show them where it's kept.
	Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
	Keep up with any necessary house repairs.
	Stock emergency supplies and assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit.
Create a Clear Communication Strategy	
	Post emergency telephone numbers by phones and around the house.
	Write down a list of important contacts (emergency, family) and put this list in your wallet.
	Identify a contact on a different island to communicate through; often messages to an unaffected area will travel faster than local ones.
	Texting and WhatsApp are often more reliable than phone calls after a disaster.
	Have a fully charged cell phone with a charger.
COVID-19 Preparedness	
	Stay informed on the novel coronavirus in your local community.
	Always maintain good hygiene habits.
	Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth. You can transfer the virus from surfaces to yourself through unclean hands.
	Use tissues when coughing or blowing your nose.
	Wash or sanitize hands frequently.
	Wash and prepare food carefully.

	Clean and disinfect all surfaces that are frequently touched.
	Practice social distancing by staying 6 feet, or roughly two arm lengths, apart from people.
	Avoid close contact with anyone who has a cough, is sneezing or has a fever.
	Stay at home and separated from other members of your household if you are sick.
	Have a designated separate room in case someone in your home gets sick.
	If you think you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 call your healthcare provider.
Disaster Supplies Kit	
Health Supplies	
	Store a three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil.
	Store a three-day supply of canned food items and a manual can opener. Have an annual 'disaster dinner' to keep the emergency food fresh and restock as needed.
	Have one change of clothing and footwear per person, and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
	Pack sanitation supplies like toilet paper.
	Have a first-aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
	Keep at least 7 days of medication on hand. Work with your insurance company and pharmacist to secure the extra doses.
	Pack COVID-19 specific health supplies such as masks (at least two per person), hand sanitizer, gloves, and hand soap.
Technical Supplies	
	Store emergency tools including a crank or battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
	Keep paper maps in your kit, as neighborhoods look very different when they have been damaged and landmarks you rely on may be gone.
	Have an extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or traveler's checks.
	Store special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
	Keep important family documents in a waterproof container and electronically.
	Store flashlights and spare batteries around the house and in the disaster supply kit.
	Have a full gas tank.
	Keep cash on hand to purchase necessary items – credit cards don't work without internet or power.
	Store necessary pet supplies.
	Make sure your kit is portable. This may mean having a container on wheels or having multiple small kits.

Where can I get more information on COVID-19?

For more information call your local Department of Health, 211, or local COVID-19 Hotline numbers.

For steps to prepare you and your home, refer to the *Americares Homeowner Preparedness Checklist for Hurricanes*.

Other useful resources:

<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes/covid-19/prepare-for-hurricane.html>

<https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>