

Storm Watch

How to prepare your family and property for severe weather

Outside

- 1 Take objects indoors that might be affected by high winds.
- 2 In a flood-prone area, elevate or move structures to higher ground.
- 3 Lower water level in pool by 6 inches. Add extra chlorine. Turn off electricity to equipment.
- 4 Keep sliding glass doors wedged shut.
- 5 If you evacuate, take pets with you or leave them with a friend. Give large animals in barns plenty of food and water.
- 6 Trim dead or weak branches. Do not leave them for curbside pickup during a storm.
- 7 Keep roof drains clear.
- 8 Take down outdoor antennas.
- 9 Protect windows with custom-fit shutters or 5/8-inch plywood. Consult a building inspector.
- 10 If you use a portable generator, know what loads it can handle, including start-up wattage. If you connect to a household circuit, you must have a double-pole, double-throw transfer switch installed between the generator and outside power, or the "backfeed" could seriously harm utility line workers.

Inside

- 11 Store valuables and extra keys in a waterproof container at the highest point in your home.
- 12 Record a video home inventory and back up the file somewhere safe.
- 13 Charge mobile devices and save emergency numbers on phones. Post a paper copy, as well.
- 14 Scan or photograph vital documents and keep the originals in a safe deposit box. Send a printed copy to someone out-of-state. Include birth and marriage certificates, tax records, credit card info, financial records, wills and trusts.
- 15 Secure or store items that may cause harm, such as bookshelves, hanging pictures, gas appliances and chemicals.
- 16 If someone relies on life support equipment, notify your electric cooperative.
- 17 Check your supply of medicines.
- 18 Fill bathtubs and jugs with clean water in case water becomes contaminated.
- 19 Show adult family members how your fire extinguishers work.
- 20 Keep a battery-operated radio or television and extra batteries.
- 21 Plan home escape routes. Find two ways out of each room.
- 22 Make a plan to reunite if separated. Designate an out-of-state contact and make sure your family knows how to reach the person.

Evacuating your home

- If you must evacuate, leave as quickly as possible.
- Unplug your appliances, but leave your refrigerator on and set to the coldest possible setting.
- Turn off the main water valve.
- Move furniture to a higher place, if possible.
- Take sleeping bags, blankets, warm protective clothing, emergency supplies, eating utensils and identification showing proof of residency.
- Tell somebody where you are going.

Your disaster supply kit

Have enough disaster supplies for 2 weeks ready. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Replace stored food and water every six months. Rethink your kit and family needs at least once a year. (Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.) Ask your doctor or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.

- Emergency food & drinking water
- At least one change of clothes for every person
- Baby food, diapers & formula (if needed)
- ☼ Bar or liquid soap
- Batteries
- Bleach (without lemon or additives)
- Books, magazines, cards & games
- Butane lighters
- Cash & credit cards
- Camera
- Car keys
- Clock (non-electric)
- ☼ Cloth face coverings
- Cooler (with ice)
- ☼ Disinfecting wipes
- Duct & masking tape
- Fire extinguisher
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight
- Grill or camp stove
- ☼ Hand sanitizer
- Lantern with extra fuel (after storm has passed)
- Manual can opener
- Medicines, glasses or contact lens supplies
- Mosquito repellent
- Personal identification
- Pet food
- Phone numbers of places you could go.
- Plastic trash bags
- Radio (battery-operated) or TV
- Sleeping bags, pillows & blankets
- Shampoo
- Sturdy shoes
- Toilet paper & towelettes
- Tool kit including hammer, crowbar, nails, saw, gloves, etc.
- Water purification tablets (available at drug stores)

☼ Recommended by the CDC to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus and other germs

More resources

NCStormCenter.coop

A new online resource from North Carolina's Electric Cooperatives provides information on what to do before, during and after storms year-round.

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