

Preparing to Evacuate

Expect the need to evacuate and prepare for it. The National Weather Service will issue a hurricane watch when there is a threat to coastal areas of hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours.

When a hurricane watch is issued, you should:

- Fill your automobile's gas tank or make arrangements with friends or family for transportation.
- Fill your clean water containers.
- Review your emergency plans and supplies, checking to see if any items are missing.
- Tune in to the radio or television for weather updates. Listen for disaster sirens and warning signals.
- Secure any items outside which may damage property in a storm, such as bicycles, grills, propane tanks, etc.
- Cover windows and doors with plywood or boards.
- Place vehicles under cover, if at all possible.
- Fill sinks and bathtubs with water as an extra supply.
- Adjust the thermostat on refrigerators and freezers to the coolest possible temperature.

If You Are Ordered to Evacuate

Never ignore an evacuation order. Authorities will be most likely to direct you to leave if you are in a low-lying area or within the greatest potential path of the storm. Be aware that most shelters and some hotels do not accept pets. If a hurricane warning is issued for your area or you are directed by authorities to evacuate the area:

- Take only essential items with you.
- If you have time, turn off the gas, electricity, and water.
- Disconnect appliances to reduce the likelihood of electrical shock when power is restored.
- Make sure your automobile's emergency kit is ready.
- Follow the designated evacuation routes.

If You Are Ordered NOT to Evacuate

The great majority of injuries during a hurricane are cuts caused by flying glass or other debris. Other injuries include puncture wounds resulting from exposed nails, metal or glass, and bone fractures. To get through the storm in the safest possible manner:

- Monitor the radio or television for weather conditions.
- Stay indoors until the authorities declare the storm is over.
- Do not go outside, even in the weather that appears to have calmed - the calm "eye" of the storm can pass quickly, leaving you outside when strong winds resume.
- Stay away from all windows and exterior doors, seeking shelter in a bathroom or basement. Bathtubs can provide some shelter if you cover yourself with plywood or other materials.
- Prepare to evacuate to a shelter or to a neighbor's home if your home is damaged or if you are instructed to do so by emergency personnel.

For more information, visit [cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes](https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/hurricanes) or call CDC at [1.800.CDC.INFO](tel:1800.CDC.INFO) (English and Spanish) or [1.888.232.6248](tel:1888.232.6248) (TTY).