

Topics

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Hurricane is a tropical cyclone that moves with heavy rains and high winds. These natural disasters can be very devastating. If you are prepared before hand, loss can actually be avoided or at least minimized. For some hurricane preparedness tips read on...

More than the [hurricane](#), it is the aftermath that causes lot a of problems. Shortage of fuel supply, water and food, is very common during these situations. There are also high chances of a sudden outbreak of pandemics.

Pre-hurricane preparedness

Always prepare a hurricane plan for your home as well as your office. Insuring your property is one important way in which you can minimize the damage that can be caused by a hurricane. To keep your insurance claims valid, pay your premiums before the hurricane season. Now, lets come down to the steps that you can manually take to safeguard your house. If possible make your building [hurricane proof](#) by installing plywood hurricane shutters.



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Prepare a 'disaster bag' for each member of the house. Keep the first aid and all your medications with their prescriptions in that bag. In case you have to evacuate, keep photos of all family members, ID proofs, blankets, clothes, dry, canned food and bottled water in the bag too. This bag should be prepared, well in advance, so that there will be no last-minute hurry. Keep all your valuables and important papers in a water-proof locker at the highest floor. The advancement of hurricane is usually accompanied with an acute shortage of fuel, so keep your cars fueled up, well before time. Make a note of your emergency shelter and their contact numbers. Pets are not allowed in the emergency shelter and they may have to be left in an animal shelter. Ensure that they have proper collars (with proper identification). The animal shelter may require (certain details, like) the papers of their vaccination. If your pet is under some sort of medication; then you need to inform the authorities about it.

During a hurricane

The bottom line is 'Stay Alert'. Stay informed about all hurricane watch and warnings. A hurricane watch is issued when a hurricane is expected within 36 hours and a warning is issued when hurricane is expected within 24 hours. If a flood warning is also issued along with the hurricane warning; take it as a clue, that you may have to evacuate. Follow all instructions given by the local authority.

Take videos or photos of your property before you leave. This will help you during insurance claims. To reduce the damages caused by the hurricane; bring all the out-door objects inside your home and keep your yard clean. Before leaving your home; turn-off all electrical appliances and remove the T.V antennae from the roof. Lock all rooms and the house properly. A battery operated radio and flash light with extra batteries can prove to be of much help during these times. It is very common that when a hurricane hits a city, the ATM machines don't work, so it is better if you keep some emergency cash or a credit card along with you. If you, do not choose to evacuate, then stay in the house and do not move out, unless and until it's an extreme emergency. Turn off electricity from the main switch as soon as a warning is issued. Avoid any contact with the windows and doors. Don't try to video shoot the hurricane (the photos will be available on T.V and net). Stay away from the wind; this means if the wind is hitting your kitchen windows, then stay in the room opposite to the kitchen.

Post-hurricane preparedness

If your area has been hit by [tornadoes](#) and flood, there are chances that there may be an outbreak of many diseases. Make sure there is proper sanitation and hygiene. Carry bottled water along with you. Impure water caused by hurricanes are the biggest sources of most of these diseases. Boil water before drinking, if boiling is not possible use bleach or water purification tablets. Eat only the food that is provided

by the authorities; (it is the safest food that can be available during these times.) Throw away cans which are damaged.

Keep listening to the radio for the instructions issued by the authorities. Return home only after re-opening is ordered. Be-ware of snakes and other insects, that may have come with flood. Before turning on any appliance, check if there is a gas leak or any damage to the system which you are about to turn on. Photographs of your damaged property will prove to be very useful during your insurance claims. Fallen electrical wires are very common after a hurricane. If you notice any such fallen wire; do not come in contact with it and inform the authorities immediately.

After such [natural disasters](#), depression and anxiety is more common in women than men. Do not panic, be calm and composed. Mental health is more important than loss of property. If possible see a mental health practitioner. Consider it as a temporary phase and try to over come it as soon as possible.

By Gauri Waikar

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