

Preparing Your Family for a Disaster

Source Unknown

First Actions

- Discuss the type of hazards that could affect your family.
- Know your home's vulnerability to storm surge, flooding and wind.
- Raise valuables off the floor, if you can.
- Locate a safe room or the safest areas in your home or elsewhere.
- Determine escape routes from your home and places to meet, as close as possible.
- Have an out-of-state friend as a family contact, so there is a single point of contact.
- Make a plan now for what to do with your pets if you need to evacuate.
- Post emergency telephone numbers by your phones.
- Make sure your children know how and when to call 911.
- Check insurance coverage - flood damage usually not covered by homeowners plan.
- Photograph or video your belongings before you evacuate.
- Stock non-perishable emergency supplies and a disaster supply kit.
- Have a portable radio with fresh batteries.
- Take with you whatever family photos you absolutely want to save.

Helpful Supplies

- Water - at least 1 gallon daily per person for 3 to 7 days
- Food - at least enough for 3 to 7 days
 - non-perishable packaged or canned food / juices
 - foods for infants or the elderly
 - snack foods
 - non-electric can opener
 - cooking tools / fuel
 - paper plates / plastic utensils
- Blankets / Pillows, etc.
- Clothing - seasonal / rain gear/ sturdy shoes
- First Aid Kit / Medicines / Prescription Drugs
- Special Items - for babies and the elderly
- Toiletries / Hygiene items / Moisture wipes
- Telephones - Fully charged cell phone with extra battery and a non-cordless phone
- Cell phone chargers
- Cash (with some small bills)
- Credit Cards - Banks and ATMs may not be available for extended periods
- Keys
- Toys, Books and Games
- Important documents - in a waterproof container or watertight re-sealable plastic bag — insurance, medical records, bank account numbers, Social Security card, etc.
- Tools - keep a set with you during the storm
- Vehicle fuel tanks filled

If Ordered to Evacuate

- If ordered to evacuate, do not delay your departure. If possible, leave before local officials issue an evacuation order for your area. Even a slight delay in starting your evacuation will result in significantly longer travel times as traffic congestion worsens.
- Select an evacuation destination that is nearest to your home, preferably in the same parish, or at least minimize the distance over which you must travel in order to reach your intended shelter location. In choosing your destination, keep in mind that the hotels and other sheltering options are likely to be filled very quickly in a large hurricane evacuation event.
- If you decide to evacuate to another region, be prepared to wait in traffic. The large number of people in this state who must evacuate during a hurricane will probably cause massive delays and major congestion along most designated evacuation routes; the larger the storm, the greater the probability of traffic jams and extended travel times.
- If possible, make arrangements to stay with the friend or relative who resides closest to your home and who will not have to evacuate. Discuss with your intended host the details of your family evacuation plan well before the beginning of the hurricane season.
- If a hotel or motel is your final intended destination during an evacuation, make reservations before you leave. Most hotel and motels will fill quickly once evacuations begin. The longer you wait to make reservations, even if an official evacuation order has not been issued for your area or county, the less likely you are to find hotel/motel room vacancies, especially along interstate highways and in major metropolitan areas.
- If you are unable to stay with friends or family and no hotels/motels rooms are available, then as a last resort go to a shelter. Remember, shelters are not designed for comfort and do not usually accept pets.
- Make sure that you fill up your car with gas, long before you are ready to leave. If you are able, and feel it is safe to do so, take along extra fuel, but not inside your car. Use a trailer or pick-up bed.