



TDCJ Risk Management's *Training Circular*

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HURRICANE AWARENESS "HUNKER DOWN"



We have already been in hurricane season for a month now, and we still have a long road until the end of November. While a lot of Texans welcome the lazy days of summer, others are keeping a close eye on the coastal waters. In the past year we have learned the importance of being prepared and staying prepared - that is one thing Hurricane Ike taught us. While many Hurricane Ike victims are still rebuilding their lives, and keeping their ears to the local news, others should take time to prepare and become knowledgeable of weather systems.

What is a Tropical Depression?



Once a group of thunderstorms has come together under the right atmospheric conditions for a long enough time, they may organize into a tropical depression.

Winds near the center are constantly between 23-39 mph.

What is a Tropical Storm?

A tropical storm is an organized system of strong thunderstorms with a well defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 30 to 73 mph.

What is a Storm Surge?

A storm surge or tidal surge is an offshore rise of water associated with a low pressure weather system, typically a tropical cyclone. A storm surge is caused primarily by high winds pushing on the ocean's surface. The wind causes the water to pile up higher than the ordinary sea level. However, on an experimental basis for the 2009 Tropical Cyclone Season, these storm surge ranges and flooding references will be removed from the definition/effects for each category (1-5). The revised content will be included experimentally this year in a scale called the "Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale."

What is a Hurricane?

A hurricane is a type of tropical

cyclone, the generic term for a low pressure system that generally forms in the tropics. A typical cyclone is accompanied by thunderstorms, and in the Northern Hemisphere, a counterclockwise circulation of winds near the earth's surface

All Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas are subject to hurricanes or tropical storms. Parts of the Southwest United States and the Pacific Coast experience heavy rains and floods each year from hurricanes spawned off Mexico. The Atlantic hurricane season lasts from June to November, with the peak season from mid-August to late October.

Hurricanes can cause catastrophic damage to coastlines and several hundred miles inland. Winds can exceed 155 miles per hour. Hurricanes and tropical storms can also spawn tornadoes and microbursts, create storm surges along the coast, and cause extensive damage from heavy rainfall.

Hurricanes are classified into

five categories based on their wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential. Category Three and higher hurricanes are considered major hurricanes, though Categories One and Two are still extremely dangerous and warrant your full attention

buildings will occur with a minor amount of wall failure. Mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Tree and limb damage. Near total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks. .

The 2009 Atlantic hurricane seasons outlook calls for 50% chance of a near-normal season, 25% chance of above-normal and 25% chance of a below-normal season according to the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center.

How are the Hurricane Categories Determined?

- * **Category 1 Hurricane:**
Winds 74 to 95 mph. Damaging winds are expected. Some damage to building structures could occur, primarily to unanchored mobile homes. Some damage is likely to poor constructed signs. Loose outdoor items will become projectiles. Tree and limb damage. Many areas will experience power outage due to downed power lines.
- * **Category 2 Hurricane:**
Winds 96 to 110 mph. Very strong winds will produce widespread damage. Some roofing material, door and window damage will occur. Considerable damage to mobile homes. Loose outdoor items will become projectiles, causing additional damage. Tree and limb damage. Extensive damage to power lines will likely result in widespread power outages.
- * **Category 3 Hurricane:**
Winds 111 to 130 mph. Dangerous winds will cause extensive damage. Some structural damage to houses and

- * **Category 4 Hurricane:**
Winds 131 to 155 mph. Extremely dangerous winds causing devastating damage are expected. Some wall failures with some complete roof structure failures on houses will occur. All signs will be blown down. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Windborne debris will cause extensive damage, injury or death. Tree and limb damage will occur. Electricity will be unavailable for weeks.
- * **Category 5 Hurricane:**
Catastrophic damage is expected. Completed roof failure on many residences and industrial buildings will occur. Come complete building failure with small buildings blown over or away are likely. Complete destruction of mobile homes. Severe injury or death is likely for persons struck by wind-blown debris. Severe tree and limb damage will occur. Power lines will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possible months.

2009 Atlantic Hurricane Outlook

2009 Hurricane Predication

Named Storms: 9 - 14

Hurricanes: 4 - 7

Major Hurricanes: 1 - 3

Now that we understand a little about hurricanes, the next question is; "Are we prepared for hurricane season at work and home?" If you answered with a blank look, it probably means you aren't ready. We not only need to be prepared at home but at work also. Last year during Hurricane Ike TDCJ relocated numerous offenders and staff out of harms way. Don't wait until the last minute to try and get prepared, lets do it **NOW!!!!**

One of the most important decisions you will have to make is "**Should I Evacuate?**" **If you are asked to evacuate, you should do so without delay.** But unless you live in a coastal or low-lying area, an area that floods frequently, or in manufactured housing, it is unlikely that emergency managers will ask you to evacuate. That means that it is important for you and your family to **HAVE A PLAN** that makes you as safe as possible in your home.



Disaster prevention includes modifying your home to strengthen it against storms so that you can be as safe as possible. It also includes having the supplies on hand to weather the storm. The suggestions provided here are only guides.

- **DEVELOP A FAMILY PLAN** - Your family's plan should be based on your vulnerability to the Hurricane Hazards. You should keep a written plan and share your plan with other friends or family.
- **CREATE A DISASTER SUPPLY KIT** - There are certain items you need to have regardless of where you ride out a hurricane. The disaster supply kit is a useful tool when you evacuate as well as making you as safe as possible in your home.
- **SECURE YOUR HOME** - There are things that you can do to make your home more secure and able to withstand stronger storms.
- **ONLINE VULNERABILITY INFO** - There are web sites that can give you information about your communities vulnerability to specific hazards. These include hurricanes as well as other weather related hazards.

Family Disaster Plan

- Discuss the type of hazards that could affect your family. Know your home's vulnerability to **flooding** and **wind**.
- Locate a safe room or the safest areas in your home for each hurricane hazard. In certain circumstances the safest areas may not be your home but within your community.
- Determine escape routes from your home and places to meet.
- Have an out-of-state friend as a family contact, so all your family members have 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 and make sure your children know how and when to call 911.
- Check your insurance coverage - flood damage is not usually covered by homeowners insurance. [National Flood Insurance Program](#)
- Stock non-perishable emergency supplies and a [Disaster Kit](#).



- Use a [NOAA weather ra-](#)

[dio](#). Remember to replace its battery every 6 months, as you do with your smoke detectors.

- Take First Aid, CPR and disaster preparedness classes

Disaster Supply Kit

- 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/juice.
- Foods for infants or the elderly.
- Snack foods.
- Non-electric can opener.
- Cooking tools/fuel.
- Paper plates/plastic utensils.
- Blankets and pillows.
- Clothing - seasonal, rain gear and sturdy shoes.
- First Aid Kit - medicines, prescription drugs.
- Special Items - for babies and the elderly.
- Toiletries - hygiene items, moisture wipes.
- Flashlight and batteries.
- Radio - battery operated and NOAA weather radio.
- Telephones - fully charged cell phones with a extra battery and a traditional (not cordless) telephone set.
- Cash - some small bills, and credit cards. Banks and



ATM's may not be available for extended periods.

- Keys
- Toys - books and games.



- Important documents - place items in a waterproof container or airtight resealable plastic bag - insurance cards, medical records, bank accounts numbers, social security cards and etc.



- Tools - keep a set with you during the storm.

- Vehicle fuel tanks filled.



- Pet care items - proper identification, immunization records, medications. Ample supply of food and water. A carrier, cage, muzzle and leash.



Get Your Vehicle Ready For Evacuation



Now that you have your personal items ready for an evacuation, let's get your vehicle ready. The U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

recommends that residents take the following actions to be ready to go once an evacuation order is announced:

Keep a full tank of gasoline in your vehicle. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and may be unable to pump gas during power outages. Have your tires checked for proper air. Check your vehicle radiator and coolant, so you won't be stranded on the side of the road. Plan to take one car per family to stay together, and reduce highway congestion and delay. Listen to a battery-powered radio or your car radio and follow local evacuation instructions.



Do not take shortcuts, they may be blocked. Be alert for washed-out roads and bridges. Let others know where you are going. Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by severe weather.

Remember - Be prepared and Stay Prepared.



Have a Safe and Happy July 4th Weekend



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