

# Safety-Gram

June 2006

## Horror-cane Preparedness

There is nothing anyone can do to stop a hurricane. The only way to protect yourself is to be as prepared as possible. A hurricane is a massive tropical storm of high swirling winds and torrential rainfall. Loss of life and property damage is caused by the winds, storm surge, floods, landslides and other effects of the storm.

The winds blow in a large circle around a calm center called the “eye” of the storm. The storm can last for a couple of weeks over the ocean, allowing time for tracking the storm and predicting when it will hit land. Weather monitoring systems are generally able to give warning of a hurricane’s path, size and force. Be alert to broadcast news and official bulletins about approaching storms.

### **Here are some preparations you can make to get through the hurricane season in good shape:**

- Know the hurricane risk for the area where you live and work. If you live on the coast or near a river or flood plain, make plans to evacuate.
- Learn several alternate routes to safe areas and shelters inland from your home and workplace.
- Discuss emergency plans with your family, including where to meet if separated and whom to telephone out of town to leave messages. Pack emergency supplies to survive several days without power and other services. Also plan how to protect your home by shuttering windows and securing loose objects.
- When a hurricane watch is issued, get ready to protect lives and property. Monitor emergency broadcasts. Board up windows and bring outdoor items inside. Review emergency plans with your family and co-workers. Arrange for a place to stay outside the hurricane danger area. Check emergency supplies at home and keep the fuel filled up in your vehicle.
- If you are ordered to evacuate, do so promptly. Travel during daylight if possible. If you go to an emergency shelter, register right away so others will know you have reached safety.
- Ride out the storm in a safe shelter. The storm will last for hours, interrupted by a lull of minutes when the eye of the storm passes through. Do not return home until local officials say it is safe to do so.



Most fatalities in a hurricane are from the storm surge, when a wall of water sweeps over low-lying areas near the ocean. But there are many other hazards ranging from flying debris during the storm to heat stress illness during storm cleanup. Tornadoes also tend to come with hurricanes – so beware.

***Hurricane survival starts with emergency preparedness. If you live in hurricane country, find out what your employer has planned to protect lives and property. Get your family prepared with evacuation plans and emergency supplies.***