



PLAY IT SAFE – GET PREPARED

# HURRICANE GUIDE

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# WEATHERING THE STORM

This guide is designed to help you and your neighbors get ready for the hurricane season. The hurricane season runs from June 1 to November 30. However, we at The Home Depot begin preparing for the next hurricane season as soon as the previous one ends.

When the unexpected happens, our Associates work diligently to offer the supplies, resources and support needed to help our neighbors recover. We are committed to being there from the initial response through long-term rebuilding efforts.

## We are here to help – before and after

- Our stores are up and running when possible
- We bring in extra shipments of the things you need most – all at the same low prices as always
- The Home Depot offers free Hurricane Preparedness workshops with helpful information from the American Red Cross
- We invest in local response and education by supporting American Red Cross affiliates throughout the U.S.
- The Home Depot partners with the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes and the National Hurricane Center to support large-scale education opportunities outside of our stores



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## The Home Depot and our partners want you to stay safe this season



The Weather-Ready Nation (WRN) Ambassador™ Program was developed to partner with communities and organizations to help mitigate the impacts of natural disasters. Together we inform and empower people to make life-saving decisions and prevent devastating economic losses.



Through an army of volunteers, donors and partners, the American Red Cross is there during people's darkest hours. The organization helps after disasters nearly 66,000 times a year, and through its lifesaving trainings and apps, over 6.3 million people have learned how to prepare for emergencies. For more information, visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org).



Turn to The Weather Channel, the hurricane authority, throughout the season for updates. The Weather Channel has more than 100 expert meteorologists and features state-of-the-art systems for in-depth analysis. Tune in for 24-hour tracking of international, national and local weather conditions for the most up-to-date information.



The Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH, Inc.) is a nonprofit, 501(c)3 organization dedicated to promoting life safety, property protection and economic well-being by strengthening homes and safeguarding families from natural and man-made disasters. Visit [flash.org](http://flash.org) or call **1-877-221-SAFE (7233)** for more information on FLASH.



The National Weather Service (NWS) provides weather, hydrologic and climate forecasts and warnings for the United States, its territories, adjacent waters, and ocean areas for the protection of life and property and the enhancement of the national economy. NWS data and products form a national information database and infrastructure which can be used by other governmental agencies, the private sector, the public and the global community. For more information, visit [weather.gov](http://weather.gov).



The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security continue to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all disasters and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. Visit [ready.gov](http://ready.gov) to learn more about family and business disaster preparation.



Early Alert offers emergency management preparedness services, as well as disaster and continuity of operations consulting. Their real-time situational awareness and informational resources can help you make smart decisions. For more information, visit [earlyalert.com](http://earlyalert.com).

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FEMA does not endorse any non-government entities, organizations or services.



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### CONTRIBUTING TO DISASTER RELIEF

In 2015, The Home Depot Foundation distributed \$1.5M in disaster relief grants to our non-profit partners.

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# THE SCIENCE OF HURRICANES

Where the weather threatens, The Home Depot believes that knowledge is power. We have compiled a list of common storm phrases and terms to help you stay properly informed and prepared throughout hurricane season.

## What alerts mean

**STORM CONDITIONS** The word “conditions” is used to indicate the winds, surges, waves, flooding and/or tornadoes associated with a tropical storm or hurricane.

**STORM WATCH** Tropical storm or hurricane conditions are **possible** in your area within the next 48 hours.

**STORM WARNING** Tropical storm or hurricane conditions are **expected** in your area within 36 hours or less.

## When a Hurricane Watch is issued for your area

- Closely monitor The Weather Channel (or mobile weather app), radio and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) broadcasts for official updates on weather conditions
- Secure all loose objects (including outdoor furniture and toys)
- Make sure your vehicle is fueled and running properly
- Cover door and window openings with shielding materials

## When a Hurricane Warning is issued for your area

- Complete/maintain the preventive measures outlined for when you are under hurricane watch conditions
- Close all interior doors
- Fill sanitized containers with fresh drinking water
- Set refrigerator controls to the coldest setting, keeping food fresh longer
- Follow evacuation instructions issued by local officials and evacuate immediately if told to do so
- Notify neighbors and family of your evacuation plans
- Leave for public shelters only after hearing announcements that the particular shelter is open
- If not evacuating, stay indoors away from windows, skylights and doors

## Saffir Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale

Hurricanes vary in wind strength, central barometric pressure, size, storm surge height and destructive potential. The Saffir Simpson Scale classifies hurricanes in categories 1 through 5 based on wind speed. This scale is commonly used to rate the damage potential of the hurricane.

CATEGORY	WINDS (MPH)	DAMAGING WIND SUMMARY
1	74–95	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage
2	96–110	Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage
3	111–129	Devastating damage will occur
4	131–156	Catastrophic damage will occur
5	≥ 157	Catastrophic damage will occur

## Tropical Weather Terms

**TROPICAL WAVE:** The most common of tropical disturbances, with about 100 forming each season. These lack a closed circulation, which is when there are winds circling in every direction. Wind speeds are usually less than 20 knots, or 25 mph.

**TROPICAL DEPRESSION:** A tropical wave becomes a depression when there is the presence of a closed circulation, and sustained winds are 20 knots, or 25 mph, and showers and thunderstorms persist. At this point, the system is typically still quite disorganized.

**TROPICAL STORM:** A tropical depression becomes a tropical storm when shower and thunderstorm activity moves over the closed circulation, and sustained winds reach at least 34 knots, or 39 mph. At this point, the system is capable of causing minimal wind damage.

**HURRICANE:** A tropical storm becomes a hurricane when the closed circulation becomes an eye, and sustained winds reach at least 64 knots, or 74 mph. At this point, the system is capable of causing more significant wind and surge damage.

**RAIN/FLOODING:** Hurricanes and weaker tropical cyclones can cause tremendous rainfall and result in massive flooding. In recent decades, most inland deaths in tropical cyclones have been associated with freshwater flooding.

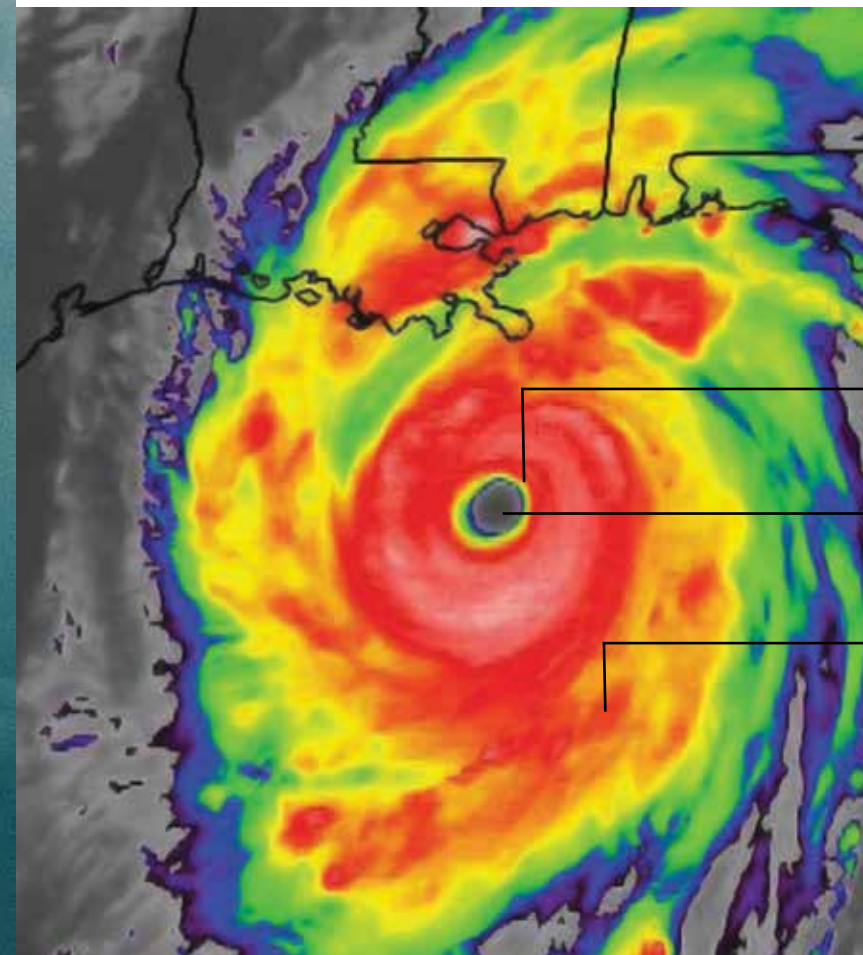
**STORM SURGE:** An increase in sea level water height from the average. Storm surge can come ashore several hours before the eye of a tropical cyclone makes landfall and can destroy low elevation coastal areas.

**TORNADOES:** Commonly form from outer bands and are a threat well inland of the hurricane strike zone.

**EYE WALL:** The organized band of intense convection immediately surrounding the center or eye of a hurricane. The strongest winds of a hurricane are usually in the eye wall.

**EYE:** The relatively calm center of a hurricane has weak winds. Skies can appear partly cloudy to clear. The average eye diameter is about 20 miles, though it can range from 5 to 60 miles.

**RAIN BANDS:** Air travels counter-clockwise around a hurricane in the Northern Hemisphere and often converges in narrow, spiral bands of rain that extend away from the circulation center. These are associated with very heavy rain and stronger winds than areas on either side of the band.



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THE HOME DEPOT HELPS COMMUNITIES REBUILD

When disaster strikes, we are able to aid the rebuilding efforts of affected communities through contributions of money and supplies from The Home Depot Foundation and Team Depot volunteer efforts.

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# WEATHER THE STORM – BEFORE AND AFTER

When it comes to outlasting the storm, preparation is critical. From making an emergency plan to securing your home and belongings, The Home Depot is here to help you with essential advice and supplies. Once the threat of severe weather has passed, it's time to assess the damage and begin the process of repairing and rebuilding. You can trust The Home Depot for all of your post-storm supplies.

## Plan ahead before the storm

- Designate a meeting place for your family if separated.
- In addition to your home, select a local church, school or other location. Make all family members aware of the address/contact information for your meeting places.
- Choose an out-of-state friend as a check-in contact for everyone to call. Make sure every member of your family knows the contact's phone number.
- Create an emergency contact card of important phone numbers and give a copy to each family member.
- Appoint an adult family member to learn how and when to turn off electricity, gas and water.
- Know the nearest shelter and evacuation routes, particularly if you live near a coastal area or on an island.
- Public shelters may not accept pets except service animals. Include how you will care for pets in your family disaster plan.
- Place your valuables and important records in a waterproof container and store them in the safest part of your home.
- Gather the supplies you may need during and after a storm. Some items to include are: at least a ten-day supply of water and non-perishable food with three days packed (in case evacuation is necessary), a first aid kit and medications, portable radio, flashlight and extra batteries. See a complete checklist on the following page.
- Make certain everything you need is readily available to be grabbed quickly in an emergency.
- Find a safe place to move your vehicle and/or boat.
- Clean bathtubs and fill with water in case water lines are damaged in the storm. Use this water for cleaning only.
- Check your insurance policy to see if it provides adequate coverage. Damage caused by floods may not be covered in regular policies.
- For further information and assistance, please contact your local emergency management office and/or chapter of the American Red Cross. You may also wish to visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org), [flash.org](http://flash.org) or [ready.gov](http://ready.gov).



## Returning and repairing

- Call your local FLASH or FEMA chapter for a copy of their Repairing Your Flooded Home booklet.
- Check for structural damage.
- Make a list and take photographs of all property damage.
- Dry water-damaged areas and items within 24–48 hours to help prevent mold growth. Visit [epa.gov/mold](http://epa.gov/mold) for more information.
- Wear a dust mask with sturdy shoes and clothing for cleanup.
- Have water, gas, electric and sewer lines checked professionally.
- Most insurance companies will pay for immediate repairs; keep all receipts.
- If you hire someone to help with repairs, check for current licenses (if applicable), insurance and a work permit.
- We're ready to help with your replacement and installation needs.



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### FREE IN-STORE HURRICANE PREPARATION WORKSHOPS

The Home Depot offers Hurricane Preparedness workshops with helpful information from the American Red Cross and Federal Alliance for Safe Homes. Visit your local store or [homedepot.com/workshops](http://homedepot.com/workshops) to learn more.

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# CHECK THE LIST

To make sure you and your family are prepared for hurricane season, keep all of the following items securely on hand:

## Preparation supplies

- Blankets and pillows
- Cash and credit cards
- Insurance information
- Driver's license
- First aid kit and manual
- Change of clothes
- Medicines and prescriptions
- Emergency cooking facilities (grill or camp stove)
- Filled propane tanks (for grill/stove)
- Eating and cooking utensils
- Canned and dry food
- Manual can opener
- Extra pet food
- Baby food, diapers and formula
- Baby wipes
- Bottled water (1 gal. per person per day for min. 3 days)
- Tools (pliers, wrenches, etc.)
- Ladders
- Extension cords
- Storm panels
- Plastic sheeting and tarps
- Roof cement
- Tie-downs and rope
- Carbon monoxide detector
- Dust masks
- Plastic storage containers
- Generators and oil
- Gas cans, gas and oil
- Flashlights
- Battery operated radio and TV
- Battery operated alarm clock
- Camera and memory card/film
- Fresh batteries for electronics
- Fire extinguisher
- Butane lighter/matches
- Fully charged cellular phone
- Fully fueled motor vehicle
- Cooler for water
- Ice chest
- Water jugs
- Sturdy shoes
- Toilet paper and paper towels
- Can opener
- Mobile weather app

## Post-storm supplies

- Hammer and hatchet
- Shovels/rakes
- Fans and portable air conditioning units
- Trash cans
- Heavy duty plastic trash bags
- Bleach (without lemon/additives)
- Cleaning supplies
- Rags
- Chain saw and fuel
- Wet/dry vacuums
- Pruners
- Cutting saws and pole saws
- Fencing
- Roofing and roofing supplies
- Drills, nails, screws and bolts
- Electrical supplies
- Appliances

## Before the storm

### BOTTLED WATER

Storms can wreak havoc on water supplies and good, drinkable water can be scarce in the days that follow. Stock up on a minimum supply of one gallon per person per day.



### FIRST AID KIT

Every home should have one. All the basics in one convenient carry-all.



### RATCHETING TIE DOWNS

Secure outdoor items so they don't become flying debris.



### WEATHER RADIO

Get weather alerts and emergency bulletins 24 hours a day.



### LED FLASHLIGHTS & LANTERNS

Make sure you have one for every member of the family. Don't forget the batteries.



### GAS CHAIN SAW

An absolute necessity during the post-storm cleanup of fallen trees, branches and limbs. Remember to be on the lookout for fallen power lines as you cut.

## More doing.

### Trash cans & bags

- Fill a new clean plastic trash can with water before the storm
- Each person needs a gallon of water per day
- Use the can and heavy-duty bags to collect debris after the storm



## After the storm

### TARP

Durable poly tarps with weather-resistant polyethylene coating in large sizes are great for covering roof damage.



### CO ALARM

Protect your family against any possible exposure to carbon monoxide fumes when using a portable generator.



### POWER INVERTERS

In the event of electrical failure, you can power small items in your home from your car with this non-interruptible backup power source.



### EXTENSION CORD

These are essential for helping to provide power from generators to items you need to run.



### GAS CANS

Don't run out of gas. Keep an emergency supply on hand for your generators and chain saws.



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THE HOME DEPOT TOOL RENTAL CAN HELP YOU

Our Tool Rental Centers can provide you with an extensive line of professional-quality tools and equipment, plus expert instruction and advice. Visit [homedepot.com/toolrental](http://homedepot.com/toolrental) for locations and more information.

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### Important generator safety tips

Never operate generators indoors, as they can cause unintentional carbon monoxide poisoning. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless gas which, if inhaled, can be fatal. Also, do not install a generator right next to your home – carbon monoxide can collect in the eaves of your home. Don't refill the generator's gas tank while the unit is running as this can cause a fire, leading to serious injury or death. Finally, be sure to remove all gas from the tank when storing your generator.

### How to choose a generator

Identify the items you will need to run in the event of a power outage. Choose the generator that meets or exceeds the total wattage requirement.

#### INVERTER GENERATOR 1,000–3,000 WATTS

Inverter generators are lightweight, portable and quiet. They're mainly for recreational uses like tailgating and camping, and are safe for sensitive electronic equipment like cell phones and tablets.

#### PORTABLE GENERATOR 3,000–7,000 WATTS

Portable generators will power essential items in your home during temporary power outages.

#### HOME STANDBY GENERATOR 7,000–60,000 WATTS

Home standby generators are installed outside your home like an HVAC unit, and run off of your home's fuel source (natural gas or liquid propane). They turn on automatically during a power outage, and power your entire house without extension cords for maximum comfort and security.

You may purchase a generator 24 hours a day, seven days a week from [homedepot.com](http://homedepot.com).

### Generator comparison



GENERATOR TYPE	Inverter	Portable	Home Standby
SAFE FOR SENSITIVE EQUIPMENT	Yes	No	Yes
PORTABLE	Yes	Yes	No
AUTOMATIC	No	No	Yes
STARTING WATTS RANGE	1,000–3,000 Watts	3,750–8,750 Watts	N/A
RUNNING WATTS RANGE	900–2,600 Watts	3,000–7,000 Watts	7,000–60,000 Watts
RUN TIME AT 50% LOAD	8.5 hours	9 hours	Unlimited

Some services and/or products are not available in the U.S. Virgin Islands.



## TRACKING THE STORM

Between the Internet and 24-hour weather stations, modern technology offers more ways than ever to keep current on approaching weather systems.

### Track like the pros

- By noting the latest storm position and strength as reported by the National Hurricane Center and relayed by The Weather Channel, you can follow the progress of tropical depressions, tropical storms and hurricanes.
- When a new advisory is issued, consider noting the time, position and other characteristics on a map.

### Online resources

Throughout hurricane season, [weather.com](http://weather.com) devotes a special section to coverage and information on all tropical weather, including: tracking maps and hurricane advisory maps that detail the areas under watches or warnings; radar images and time lapse satellite pictures; storm tracks (location, wind speed and direction); projected path maps; plus a glossary, forecasting and tracking techniques, and information about how storms form and historical hurricanes.

Other websites, such as [weather.gov](http://weather.gov), [flash.org](http://flash.org) and [earlyalert.com](http://earlyalert.com), provide excellent additional information.

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### CONSIDER INVESTING IN A STANDBY GENERATOR

Standby generators automatically provide electrical power to pre-selected emergency circuits that supply lighting, HVAC, water and appliances. They run off your gas line or LP tank and require a separate automatic transfer switch.

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