

### **You should evacuate under the following conditions:**

- If you are directed by local authorities to do so. Be sure to follow their instructions.
- If you live in a mobile home or temporary structure—such shelter are particularly hazardous during hurricane no matter how well fastened to the ground.
- If you live in a high-rise building—hurricane winds are stronger at higher elevations.

### **After a Hurricane:**

- Stay alert for extended rainfall and subsequent flooding even after the hurricane or tropical storm has ended.
- If you evacuated, return home only when officials say it is safe.
- Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges. Stay off the streets. If you must go out watch for fallen objects; downed electrical wires; and weakened walls, bridges, roads, and sidewalks.
- Keep away from loose or dangling power lines and report them immediately to the power company.
- Walk carefully around the outside your home and check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage before entering.
- Inspect your home for damage. Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance purposes. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering.
- Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water until you are sure it's not contaminated.
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Wear protective clothing and be cautious when cleaning up to avoid injury.
- Never use a generator inside homes, garages, crawlspaces, sheds, or similar areas, even when using fans or opening doors and windows for ventilation. Deadly levels of carbon monoxide can quickly build up in these areas and can linger for hours, even after the generator has shut off.

## **TORNADOES**

A tornado is a violent windstorm characterized by a twisting, funnel-shaped cloud. It is spawned by a thunderstorm (or sometimes as a result of a hurricane) and produced when cool air overrides a layer of warm air, forcing the warm air to rise rapidly. Tornadoes may strike quickly, with little to no warning.

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# SEVERE WEATHER

## Before a Tornado:

- Pre-identify a place to take shelter such as a basement, center hallway, bathroom, or closet on the lowest floor.

## Look for the following danger signs:

- Dark, often greenish sky
- Large hail
- A large, dark, low-lying cloud (particularly if rotating)
- Loud roar, similar to a freight train.
- If you see approaching storms or any of the danger signs, be prepared to take shelter immediately.

## During a Tornado:

### If Indoors:

- Seek shelter in a windowless interior room, basement, or the lowest level of the building.
- Close hallway doors to shield the corridors from flying debris and stay away from windows.
- Get under and hold on to a piece of sturdy furniture, such as a workbench, heavy table, or desk.
- Use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- Get out and find shelter elsewhere if you're in a mobile home.

### If Outdoors:

- Get inside a building or shelter, if possible.
- If shelter is not available or there is no time to get indoors, lie in a ditch or low-lying area and use your arms to protect your head and neck.

### If in a Vehicle:

- Never try to outrun a tornado in urban or congested areas. Get out of the car immediately and take shelter in a nearby building.
- If there is no time to get indoors, get out of the car and lie in a ditch or low-lying area away from the vehicle. Be aware of the potential for flooding.

## After a Tornado:

- Check for injuries and provide first aid and CPR, if you are trained to do so.

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- Call 911 to report injuries and emergencies caused by the storm. Report locations of trapped persons; make note of persons with injuries and/or people with access and functional needs in need of assistance.
- Watch out for broken glass and fallen power lines. Do not enter damaged areas until you are told it is safe to do so.
- Do not use candles or an open flame; combustibles may be present.
- Use caution when entering a damaged building.

## **THUNDERSTORMS**

A thunderstorm is formed from a combination of moisture, rapidly rising warm air, and a force capable of lifting air, such as a warm or cold front. A thunderstorm is classified as severe if it produces hail at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  of an inch in diameter, has winds of 58 mph or higher, or produces a tornado.

### **Before a Thunderstorm:**

- Secure outdoor objects, such as lawn furniture, and take light objects inside to avoid loss or damage.
- Look around your home and remove dead or rotting trees and branches that could fall and cause injury or damage.
- Secure windows and doors and unplug electronic equipment before the storm arrives.

### **During a Thunderstorm:**

If Indoors:

- Do not handle any electrical equipment or corded telephones because lightning could follow the wire. TV sets are particularly dangerous at this time.
- Avoid bathtubs, water faucets, and sinks because metal pipes can transmit electricity.
- Turn off the air conditioner.
- Stay away from windows and doors, and stay off porches.

If Outdoors:

- If you are boating or swimming, get to land and find shelter immediately. Try to get into a building or car. If no structure is available, get to an open space and squat low to the ground as quickly as possible.
- If you are in the woods, find an area protected by a low clump of trees—never stand underneath a single large tree in the open.

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