



# What to Do Before, During and After a Hurricane

Montgomery County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency  
Management

## Basic Preparedness Tips

Put together a disaster supply kit, including a flashlight, batteries, cash, first aid supplies, and copies of your critical information if you need to evacuate.

Plan for adequate supplies in case you lose power and water for 7-10 days and/or you are not able to leave due to flooding or blocked roads.

Make a [family emergency communication plan](#).

Signup for text or email alerting for emergency notifications at [Smart911.com](http://Smart911.com).

Montgomery County is a pass through county; we will **not** evacuate our residents due to a threat of a hurricane. You will need to decide if you should leave, where you will go, where you will stay, and the best route to take. Ensure that you give yourself plenty of time to get to your destination as there will be many **mandated** evacuees trying to reach shelter cities.

## Preparing Your Home

Hurricane winds can cause trees and branches to fall, so before hurricane season, trim or remove damaged trees and limbs to keep you and your property safe.

Secure loose rain gutters and downspouts and clear any clogged areas or debris to prevent water damage to your property.

Reduce property damage by retrofitting to secure and reinforce the roof, windows and doors, including the garage doors.

Purchase a portable generator or install a generator for use during power outages. Remember to keep generators and other alternate power/heat sources outside, at least 20 feet away from windows and doors and protected from moisture; and NEVER try to power the house wiring by plugging a generator into a wall outlet. Service your generator throughout the year to make sure it will work when you need it. Plan to have fuel to run your generator.

## **Hurricane Watch**

**Hurricane watch = conditions possible within the next 48 hrs.**

Steps to take:

- Review your emergency plan
- Monitor and bookmark the Montgomery County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management website [www.mctxoem.org](http://www.mctxoem.org) for storm updates and emergency instructions.
- Review the items in your disaster supply kit and add items to meet the household needs for children, parents, [individuals with disabilities or other access and functional needs](#) or pets

## **Hurricane Warning**

**Hurricane warning = conditions are expected within 36 hrs.**

Steps to take:

- Monitor the Montgomery County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management website [www.mctxoem.org](http://www.mctxoem.org) for storm updates and emergency instructions.
- Check-in with family and friends by texting or using social media.
- Follow the hurricane timeline preparedness checklist, depending on when the storm is anticipated to hit and the impact that is projected for your location.

### **When a hurricane is 36 hours from arriving**

Turn on your TV or radio in order to get the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.

Build or restock your emergency preparedness kit. Include a flashlight, batteries, cash, and first aid supplies.

Plan how to communicate with family members if you lose power. Remember that during disasters, sending text messages is usually reliable and faster than making phone calls because phone lines are often overloaded.

Review your evacuation plan with your family. You may have to leave quickly so plan ahead.

Keep your car in good working condition, and keep the gas tank full; stock your vehicle with emergency supplies and a change of clothes.

### **When a hurricane is 18-36 hours from arriving**

Bring loose, lightweight objects inside that could become projectiles in high winds (e.g., patio furniture, garbage cans); anchor objects that would be unsafe to bring inside (e.g., propane tanks); and trim or remove trees close enough to fall on the building.

Cover all of your home's windows. Permanent storm shutters offer the best protection for windows. A second option is to board up windows with 5/8" exterior grade or marine plywood, cut to fit and ready to install.

### **When a hurricane is 6-18 hours from arriving**

Turn on your TV/radio, or check the county website [www.mctxoem.org](http://www.mctxoem.org) every 30 minutes in order to get the latest weather updates and emergency instructions.

Charge your cell phone now so you will have a full battery in case you lose power.

### **When a hurricane is 6 hours from arriving**

Close storm shutters, and stay away from windows. Flying glass from broken windows could injure you.

Turn your refrigerator or freezer to the coldest setting and open only when necessary. If you lose power, food will last longer. Keep a thermometer in the refrigerator to be able to check the food temperature when the power is restored.

Ensure cell phones are charged case you lose power.

## What to do during a hurricane

Continue to shelter in place.

Stay indoors, preferably in an interior room, on the bottom floor, away from windows.

Listen to NOAA weather radio for updates and instructions.

Do not go outside until you are certain that the hurricane has cleared your area. Some areas will get the eye of the storm, or a clearing in weather conditions and then the second set of hurricane bands will ensue.

## After a Hurricane

Listen to local officials for updates and instructions.

Only leave your home or place of shelter after officials say it is safe to do so.

Check-in with family and friends by texting or using social media.

If you evacuated, return home only when authorities indicate it is safe.

Avoid walking or driving through flood waters. Just 6 inches of moving water can knock you down, and fast-moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

Avoid flood water as it may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines and may hide dangerous debris or places where the ground is washed away.

Photograph the damage to your property in order to assist in filing an insurance claim.

Do what you can to prevent further damage to your property, (e.g., putting a tarp on a damaged roof), as insurance may not cover additional damage that occurs after the storm.

**Before and during a storm, be sure to monitor the Montgomery County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management website at [www.mctxoem.org](http://www.mctxoem.org). You can also like us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter for the latest updates.**

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