

# How to on How To Get Ready For Hurricanes

By Bill Matthias Director of Emergency Services

It is time for hurricane season again and none of us should forget what Mother Nature might bring to us every year at this time. As director of emergency services, I have been accused of being over protective of the town and wanting too much in protection measures. But my philosophy is that I am here to serve and protect our beautiful town and would be neglectful if I didn't ask for what was needed. I have compiled a list of things to consider and prepare for in the event of a hurricane.

1. Identify your evacuation route, means of transportation, and know where you will be staying.
2. Call the PKS Emergency Management Office to sign up for special assistance needs.
3. Identify out-of-area emergency contact numbers.
4. Identify friends and family who can check on you during an emergency.
5. Pre-plan your home. Know the location of all your utility shut offs.
6. Review your homeowners insurance with

your insurance agent and make sure you have the proper coverage. Flood insurance can be obtained by contacting your insurance agent or through the National Flood Insurance Program at 800-638-6620.

7. Residents living in rental property should consider purchasing renter's insurance to cover losses of personal property within the rental unit.

8. Make a list of your belongings and take pictures or videotape them. Include a close-up shot of the day's newspaper to provide the date. Keep your inventory list along with purchase receipts, pictures and your insurance policy in a safe place away from your home.

9. Install a generator that connects directly to your home.

10. Identify places to secure your outside belongings. Anything left outside becomes a missile during a storm.

11. Come to the PKS Public Safety Building to get your resident pass.

12. Keep abreast of weather conditions. Here is a guide to preparing a disaster supply kit which should contain enough essential items for seven days.

1. Drinking water – one gallon per person per day. Do not reuse milk or juice jugs to store water. Even if rinsed out, the jugs will retain residue that will develop into bacteria. Change out water every six months.

2. First aid kit and book.

3. Current medication
4. Extra glasses, hearing aids, and wheelchair batteries.
5. Plenty of oxygen supply.
6. Store enough high energy, non-perishable food and water to last a week.
7. Manual can opener
8. Portable radio/TV and flashlights with plenty of extra batteries.
9. Extra clothing
10. Rain coat and walking shoes.
11. Sanitation kit containing toilet paper, alcohol wipes, anti-bacterial hand cleanser, bleach, bar soap, shampoo, toothbrush and toothpaste, rubber gloves, trash bags and feminine hygiene supplies.
12. Blankets or sleeping bag.
13. Cell phone.

### If you have pets prepare a Pet Disaster Kit:

1. Proper identification to include immunization and rabies records.
2. Ample supply of food and water
3. A carrier cage, collar w/identification, and leash for each animal.
4. Medications
5. Food and water dishes.
6. Old newspapers and trash bags for clean-up

Most of these items are required at pet shelters. Pets are not allowed in public shelters and many hotels and motels will not accept pets.

"Should I stay or should I go?" This is often the hardest decision to make and I recommend

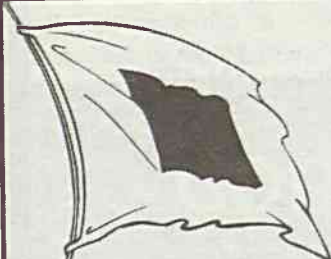
that if you are in doubt, head on out. If the town's emergency services announce that they are leaving the island then it is a pretty good indication that things are going to get very bad. Some of the things to consider are:

1. Do I use medical equipment that requires power?
2. Will I be OK if I am cut off from the mainland?
3. Is my home in a storm surge zone or a flood zone?
4. Is the place where I am staying structurally sound?
5. Do I have hurricane shutters to keep out driving rain and wind?
6. How strong is the storm?

OK, you decided to stay, now what? Remember in the event of a strong storm, PKS emergency services personnel will evacuate the island with all their equipment. All residents will be strongly encouraged to evacuate also.

1. Have an emergency contact list posted on your refrigerator.
  - a. Add PKS Emergency Services 247-2268, 247-2694
  - b. Add Carteret County Emergency Services 728-8470
  - c. Of course, add 911
2. Insure that family, friends and neighbors know where you are staying and provide them with emergency contact numbers.
3. Gas up your vehicle.
4. Remember the bridges never closes to traffic heading off the island.
5. Heed the curfew warnings; no one is

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## Hurricane Safety Tips

Hurricane Season is June 1–Nov. 30.


**The safest way to protect yourself is to immediately evacuate the area.**

*But if you've decided to ride the storm out at home, take note of these survival tips.*

- Monitor water levels in your neighborhood. This is your quickest signal to move to high points in your house or to evacuate to higher ground.
- Listen for tornadoes. Tornadoes often lead the way in a tropical storm.
- Get some rest. If at all possible, sleep in shifts so everyone is rested if the time comes to evacuate.
- If you are in the middle of a hurricane, STAY PUT until the storm passes. If you must leave your house for an emergency, use a large, heavy vehicle, drive slowly, be alert and don't go very far.

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