



Hurricane Preparedness and Response

Preparedness



Planning

It is important to have an evacuation plan in place to ensure that workers can get to safety in case a hurricane may affect the area. A thorough evacuation plan should include:

- Conditions that will activate the plan
- Chain of command
- Emergency functions and who will perform them
- Specific evacuation procedures, including routes and exits
- Procedures for accounting for personnel, customers and visitors
- Equipment for personnel

Some businesses are required to have an Emergency Action Plan meeting the requirements under 29 CFR 1910.38, see Evacuation Plans and Procedures eTool for more information. Ready.gov - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has more information on evacuation plans as well as suggestions for precautions to take if you are unable to evacuate and do not have a safe room.

In addition to having evacuation plans in place, it is important to be familiar with the warning terms used for hurricanes, as well as your local community's emergency plans, warning signals, and shelters. **Hurricane/Tropical Storm watches** mean that a hurricane or tropical storm is possible in the specified area. **Hurricane/Tropical Storm warnings** mean that a hurricane or tropical storm is expected to reach the area, typically within 24 hours.

Be prepared to follow instructions from the local authorities and to evacuate if instructed to do so.

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale is a 1 to 5 rating based on a hurricane's sustained wind speed. This scale estimates potential property damage. Hurricanes reaching Category 3 and higher are considered major hurricanes because of their potential for significant loss of life and damage. Category 1 and 2 storms are still dangerous, however, and require preparatory measures. In the western North Pacific, the term "super typhoon" is used for tropical cyclones with sustained winds exceeding 150 mph. This affects one or more U.S. territories (i.e. Guam and the Mariana Islands).

Category	Sustained Winds	Types of Damage Due to Hurricane Winds
1	74-95 mph 64-82 kt 119-153 km/h	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage: Well-constructed frame homes could have damage to roof, shingles, vinyl siding and gutters. Large branches of trees will snap and shallowly rooted trees may be toppled. Extensive damage to power lines and poles likely will result in power outages that could last a few to several days.
2	96-110 mph 83-95 kt 154-177 km/h	Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage: Well-constructed frame homes could sustain major roof and siding damage. Many shallowly rooted trees will be snapped or uprooted and block numerous roads. Near-total power loss is expected with outages that could last from several days to weeks.
3 (major)	111-129 mph 96-112 kt 178-208 km/h	Devastating damage will occur: Well-built framed homes may incur major damage or removal of roof decking and gable ends. Many trees will be snapped or uprooted, blocking numerous roads. Electricity and water will be unavailable for several days to weeks after the storm passes.
4 (major)	130-156	Catastrophic damage will occur: Well-built framed homes can sustain



Hurricane Intensity Scale (Wind Damage)
Click on the image to view the animation.

	mph 113-136 kt 209-251 km/h	severe damage with loss of most of the roof structure and/or some exterior walls. Most trees will be snapped or uprooted and power poles downed. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.
5 (major)	157 mph or higher 137 kt or higher 252 km/h or higher	Catastrophic damage will occur: A high percentage of framed homes will be destroyed, with total roof failure and wall collapse. Fallen trees and power poles will isolate residential areas. Power outages will last for weeks to possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

Equipping

- Get emergency supply kits and keep them in shelter locations
 - Basic Disaster Supplies Kit
 - Emergency Response Plan - Evacuation. Ready.gov - Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
 - Hurricane Preparedness - Get Supplies. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Training and Exercises

- Ensure that all workers know what to do in case of an emergency.
- Practice evacuation plans on a regular basis.
- Update plans and procedures based on lessons learned from exercises.

OSHA's Disaster Site Worker Outreach Training Program is a training program for workers who provide skilled support services (e.g., utility, demolition, debris removal, or heavy equipment operation) or site clean-up services. The program highlights the differences between disaster sites and construction sites, and emphasizes the need for workers and employers to have pre-incident training.



Additional Resources

- *Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)*
 - America's PrepareAthon
 - Hurricanes
- National Hurricane Center. National Weather Service
- Hurricane Preparedness - Make a Plan. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)



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