



Hurricane Preparedness

Emergency Management Department - September 2012

The Griffin Hospital - 130 Division Street - Derby, CT 06418

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“One of the most important things a household could have done was to prepare.”

Hurricane Season

The Atlantic Hurricane Season stretches from June 1 through November 30; however, August and September historically are the most active months for Connecticut. Previous hurricanes that have affected Connecticut have left city streets, homes and businesses from Fairfield to New London flooded. The strong winds, snapped trees, left debris and interrupted utilities and power sources.

Families and businesses were forced to manage as best they could in the aftermath of the storms. Without power, traditional media sources were unavailable and advisories and information were difficult to obtain. Being prepared was one of the most important things that every household and business could have done before the storm hit. Check out our Hurricane Preparedness Guide to find out what to do if you lose power, how to build your own emergency kit, and other resources to keep you safe.



Hurricane Irene at peak strength over the Bahamas on August 24, 2012

Come to Terms with Storms

Provided by www.ready.gov/connecticut

Tropical Cyclone: Originates over tropical or subtropical waters, with organized deep convection and a closed surface wind circulation about a well-defined center.

Tropical Depression: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind speed is 38mph or less.

Tropical Storm: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind speed ranges from 39mph to 73mph.

Hurricane: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface wind is 74mph or more.

Storm Surge: An abnormal rise in sea level which accompanies a hurricane or other intense storm. A storm surge is usually estimated by subtracting the normal high tide from the observed storm tide. Storm surge can reach heights well over 20 feet and can span hundreds of miles of coastline.

Storm Tide: The actual level of sea water resulting from the astronomic tide combined with the storm surge.

*“Get familiar
with the terms
to help identify
a hurricane
hazard in your
area!”*

Hurricane Warning: An announcement that hurricane conditions are expected somewhere within the specified area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

Hurricane Watch: An announcement that hurricane conditions are possible within the specified area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

Tropical Storm Warning: An announcement that tropical storm conditions are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours.

Tropical Storm Watch: An announcement that tropical storm are possible within the specified area within 48 hours.

What's in Your kit?

Provided by www.ready.gov/connecticut

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides this list for preparedness:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio
- Extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask
- Plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food
- Local maps
- Lighter
- Battery operated light source



"Personalize your kit to help fit your family's needs!"

Some additional items to consider:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents
- Cash
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil

When the Lights Go Out

By The Griffin Hospital Emergency Management

When a storm hits, one of the most important things to be prepared for is power loss. The loss of electricity can affect a household/business for hours, days or weeks at a time. It is very important to know what amenities in your home will be affected. Make an effort to increase your knowledge about generators before your purchase or use one. Review the basic information presented below; consult a local and licensed electrician about generator use in your home.

Generator Safety

Provided by Consumer Energy

- Typically, a generator produces 1,000 watts of power for every HP motor output. It is important to choose a generator that produces 25 percent more power than the total load to be connected. [Adding up the power requirements of the appliances and equipment you design to use during a power outage will help you determine the size generator needed.]
- Connecting the generator is another important consideration. An improperly connected generator can pose a serious risk to you, your neighbors and utility crews working to restore your power.
- Never operate a generator in your home, garage, basement or any other enclosed area. A generator needs to be at least 3 feet to 4 feet from an enclosed area as well as away from doors, windows and fresh air intakes where exhaust fumes and carbon monoxide can enter the home. Proper ventilation is always critical.
- Never fuel a generator when it is running. Turn the generator off and let it cool before refueling.
- Before permanently installing a generator, contact your local electrical inspector and a qualified electrician to obtain the proper permits and connection criteria.
- Always read the Owner's Manual provided with your generator to obtain specific operating guideline.



For more information on generators, click the link on Griffin's Emergency Preparedness Page titled "Generator Safety"

Steps to Keep Food Safe During a Weather Emergency:

Information provided by the USDA

- ✓ Keep an appliance thermometer in the refrigerator and freezer.
- ✓ Make sure the freezer is at 0 °F (Fahrenheit) or below and the refrigerator is at 40 °F or below.
- ✓ Freeze containers of water for ice to help keep food cold in the freezer, refrigerator, or coolers after the power is out.
- ✓ Freeze refrigerated items such as leftovers, milk, and fresh meat and poultry-this helps keep them at a safe temperature longer.
- ✓ Plan ahead and know where dry ice and block ice can be purchased.
- ✓ Store food on shelves that will be safely out of the way of contaminated water in case of flooding.
- ✓ Have coolers on hand.
- ✓ Purchase or make ice cubes and Freeze gel packs ahead of time for use in coolers.
- ✓ Group food together in the freezer- this helps the food stay cold longer.
- ✓ Keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature.

When in Doubt, Throw it Out!

Information provided by the USDA

- ✓ Never taste a food to determine its safety!
- ✓ The refrigerator will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if it is unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours.
- ✓ Food may be safely refrozen if it still contains ice crystals or is at 40 °F or below.
- ✓ If the power has been out for several days, then check the temperature of the freezer.
- ✓ If the food still contains ice crystals or is at 40 °F or below, the food is safe.
- ✓ If a thermometer has not been kept in the freezer, then check each package of food to determine its safety. If the food still contains ice crystals, the food is safe.
- ✓ Discard refrigerated perishable food such as meat, poultry, fish, soft cheeses, milk, eggs, leftovers, and deli items after 4 hours without power.



For a suggested grocery list and a three day meal plan find the link on our website titled: "Three Day Meal Plan"

If You Have to Get Out, Know Your Route!

When community evacuations become necessary, local officials provide information to the public through the media. In some circumstances, other warning methods, such as sirens or telephone calls, also are used.

Additionally, there may be circumstances under which you and your family feel threatened or endangered and you need to leave your home, school, or workplace to avoid these situations.

The amount of time you have to leave will depend on the hazard. If the event is a weather condition, such as a hurricane that can be monitored, you might have a day or two to get ready. However, many disasters allow no time for people to gather even the most basic necessities, which is why planning ahead, is essential.



Manage Your Meds

The elderly and chronically ill must take note of their medications when the power goes out. Insulin and some liquid medications may require cooling, says Dr. David Seaburg, president of the American College of Emergency Physicians.

Lunch bags containing a cool pack are a good option for those products.

Note: If you are unsure about the safety precautions you should take, contact your physician ahead of time!

KID ZONE

Talk to your kids about disasters and evacuation plans! Let them help make the family emergency kit, have them draw out your evacuation plan with you, and explain to them what could happen to your home!

Also, you can visit www.ready.gov/kids for fun activities to help your kids prepare!

A large blue arrow pointing to the right, with a white outline. Inside the arrow, the text "For even more information on any of the topics discussed, please visit our website and utilize all of the links!" is written in white.

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