



## Emergency Preparedness Checklist for Hurricanes

Hurricanes are severe tropical storms with sustained winds of 74 miles per hour or greater. Hurricane winds can reach 160 miles per hour and extend inland for hundreds of miles. Hurricanes bring torrential rains and a storm surge of ocean water that crashes into land as the storm approaches. Hurricanes also spawn tornadoes. In the United States, the National Weather Service issues hurricane advisories as soon as a hurricane appears to be a threat. The hurricane season lasts from June through November.

Your business should have plans for preparing for hurricanes. The following are considerations when developing your plans:

### Before the Storm

	Yes	No	N/A
Have you purchased a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup to listen for hurricane watches and warnings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made plans for communicating with employees before and after a hurricane?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you established facility shutdown procedures and warning and evacuation procedures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a plan in place to secure roof fixtures, access scuttles, and skylights?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you surveyed the exterior of your facility and made plans to protect outside equipment and structures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have plans to protect windows, such as by installing permanent storm shutters, which offer the best protection, or covering windows with 5/8' marine plywood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made plans for assisting employees who may need transportation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you considered the need for backup systems, such as alternate power sources (e.g., generators or gasoline-powered pumps), and battery-powered emergency lighting?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you considered the need for damming and diking supplies, such as sand bags, to protect the property from floodwaters?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you considered the need for portable and fixed sump pumps to remove floodwater?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you asked your local emergency management office about community evacuation plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you developed records retention and backup programs to ensure vital business records and computer data are not lost during a storm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you prepared to move your records, computers, and other items to a protected place within your facility or to another location in the event of a hurricane emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made provisions to shelter employees in place, including provisions for food, water, and petty cash (for incidentals after the storm)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have trained staff who can respond to emergencies (i.e., fire, medical, etc.), when outside resources may not be available?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a plan in place to secure the utilities to reduce the chance of a fire if the utilities are compromised?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



### During the Storm

	Yes	No	N/A
Is someone assigned to monitor NOAA Weather Radio or the local news for the latest updates?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made provisions for a fire watch, in the event that the fixed protection is compromised during the storm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you provided for monitoring of equipment processes that must remain on during a storm?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you made a plan for shutting down electric equipment during a power interruption to reduce start-up loading?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### After the Storm

	Yes	No	N/A
Have you developed a plan and provided resources to document damage to property, including taking photographs or video?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you developed an emergency repair plan to provide temporary securement of the property for damage, such as broken windows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a resource list of contractors?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have agreements with these contractors to provide repairs as a first property customer, during an emergency?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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### Contact: Contact

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## Protecting Properties from Grass, Brush, and Wildfire

Each year, wild-land fires destroy hundreds of buildings and more than 4,000 acres of land. Property owners located in suburban and rural areas can take steps to reduce the likelihood of property loss from these fires. For those properties located in areas designated by an authority having jurisdiction (AHJ) as wilderness interface areas, a full hazard assessment should be conducted, as outlined in Chapter 17 of NFPA 1-2012, Fire Code, published by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA).

This client handout provides some simple loss prevention steps to reduce the likelihood of losses from grass, brush, and wildfires.

### Property Access

Properties should have well-maintained access roads, large enough to allow evacuation of the occupants and the simultaneous entry of fire department vehicles.

- At a minimum, roads should be at least 12-ft (3.6-m) wide, per lane of travel and have a vertical clearance of at least 13.5 ft (4.1 m). Single lane of travel (one-way) roads, should be at least 16-ft (4.8-m) wide.
- Roads and driveways should not have more than a 10-percent grade.
- Dead-end roads, longer than 300 ft (91.4 m), should be provided with a turnaround having a radius of at least 60 ft (18.3 m).
- Roads and parking areas should be designed to accommodate fire department vehicles having lengths up to 38 ft (11 m) and a turning radius of 48 ft (14.6 m).
- Access should be provided for buildings when any point of a building's exterior is located more than 150 ft (45.7 m) from a roadway.

### Fuel Reduction Area

To prevent the spread of wild-land fires to buildings, fuel reduction areas should be established. These represent areas of increasingly reduced fuel loading as the structure is approached.

- Landscaping within 5 ft (4.5 m) of structures should be limited to nonflammable materials, such as artificial mulches and high-moisture-content annuals and perennials.
- Tree branches and vegetation should be trimmed so that branches are not hanging over roofs or within 10 ft (3 m) of chimneys.
- Dead vegetation, combustibles, wood stacks, etc. should be excluded from within 30 ft (9 m) of any structures.
- At least a 30-ft (9-m) separation should be maintained between buildings and other exposures, such as automobiles, fuel tanks, outside storage areas, or high grass or wooded areas. This open area should be limited to well-irrigated small plants and grass.
- Shade trees should be spaced so that a 30-ft (9-m) separation is maintained from buildings.
- Keep grass within 30 ft (9 m) of structures mowed to less than 4-in (10-cm) high.
- Trees should be trimmed so that branches are not less than 6 ft (2 m) from the ground.

### Building Design

Buildings should be constructed using nationally recognized building codes and include designs that afford protection from hostile fires. Good practices include:

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- Roof vents should be covered with fire- and corrosion-resistant screens, having no opening larger than 0.25 in (7.6 cm).
  - Chimneys should be provided with a spark arrester, constructed of not less than #12 gauge wire, with no opening larger than 0.5 in (15.2 cm).
  - Exterior openings, including windows and doors, should have at least a 20-minute fire-resistance rating.
  - Overhangs, eaves, decks, and balconies should be constructed from heavy timber, non-combustible materials or otherwise have at least a one-hour fire-resistance rating.
  - Stationary mobile homes (i.e., those located on a site) should be provided with a non-combustible skirting on all sides having a fire-resistive rating of at least 20 minutes.

### Emergency Planning

In order to better protect a property in the event of a wildfire, homeowners can take some basic steps that will reduce the loss of life and property, including:

- Monitor weather and fire index conditions and prepare to evacuate early.
- Have a fire exit escape plan.
- Provide for garden hoses on all sides of structures.
- Back cars into garages, for a smoother escape.

### Evacuation

Prior to evacuating, if time permits, property owners should:

- Pre-wet lawns and shrubs, within 5 ft (1.5 m) of the building, before evacuating.
- Move furniture to the center of the room before evacuating. This will reduce the chance of furniture ignition from radiant heat through windows.
- Close all interior and exterior doors, windows, and other openings.
- Shut down heating and air-conditioning systems.
- Turn off fuel supplies, such as propane.

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## Preventing Roof Collapse from Snow Load

Adverse weather conditions can affect the structural integrity of buildings and can cause a partial or complete collapse. Even an unimpressive snowfall can create a considerable snowdrift that causes a collapse. This report provides effective safeguards to lessen the potential against roof collapses. The following safeguards can help prevent roof collapse:

- Most important, keep the snow off the roof.
- Keep all drains clear and unblocked.
- Keep the roof well maintained and do repairs/replacements as soon as required.
- Keep workers trained and the proper equipment available for snow removal.
- Keep an updated winter emergency response plan in effect, especially for snow removal.

### Preparation for Snowfall

Preparation for snowfalls should begin six to ten weeks before the start of winter. The roof's framework should be checked for damage or weakness and its capacity for snow loading should be reassessed. All shovels, snowblowers (if used), and other removal equipment should be examined and put into good working order. Never use any equipment that can damage a roof such as an ice chopper. Finally, inspect all drains for debris (i.e., leaves, dirt, silt) and clean them. The downspouts should also be clear, especially at the outlets.

### During a Snowfall

Monitoring roof top conditions during a snowfall is the best way to prevent a roof from collapsing. The snow removal plan should take effect immediately after the snow begins to fall, rather than waiting until the snow begins to mount or the wind creates snow drifts. Additional recommendations during a snow fall are as follows:

- Remove snow from the roof in increments-do not allow unauthorized workers/persons onto roofs.
- Do not create snow drifts by putting snow from one area on another.
- Remove the snow systematically to maintain the balance of the structure.
- On a gable-type roof, do not remove all the snow from one side before removing any from the other side.
- Verify that drains are clear of ice and snow to allow melting and runoff. If the roof is pitched and without drains, open paths to the eaves to ensure drainage and prevent ponding.



## Assessing Potential Risk

- Have there been any lower roofs, canopies, or covered walkways added to the structure? If so, have the effects of sliding and drifting snow been considered for these additions?
- Have any roofs been retrofitted with additional insulation in an effort to conserve energy? If so, have the increased snow loads due to reduced melting been considered as well as the additional dead load?
- Have solar panels, mechanical equipment, or other roof projections been added to the building? If so, has the roof been checked to assure that it can withstand the additional sliding and drifting snow loads, as well as the additional dead load?
- Is it possible that the building will be unheated for long periods? If so, is the roof capable of withstanding any additional snow load?
- Do roofs that slope towards internal drains have slopes of at least 1/4 in per ft (6.35 mm per meter)? If not, these roofs must be routinely checked for ponding. Low areas should be repaired and/or additional drains added.
- Are all drains, gutters, and downspouts free from debris? If not, they should be cleared and kept cleared.
- Have additional dead loads, such as air conditioners, heaters, and suspended storage platforms been added to the roof's structural members, thereby decreasing the roof's live load capacity?
- Has a taller building been built, or is there one planned to be built within 20 ft (6.1 m) of the existing building? If so, can the existing building's roof sustain potential snow drifts caused by the taller building?

If problems have been found to exist, the roof should be repaired, strengthened, or replaced, as required.

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Reference: Engineering and Safety, Roof Snow Loads, NH-20-02, February, 18, 1998

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