Hurricanes

Water causes most of the harm. Decide where you would go before the forecast makes you decide.

KNOW BEFORE THE SEASON

- Ask your county emergency management office whether your home is in an evacuation zone. Most people who leave for storm surge only need to go a few miles inland.
- Choose a place to stay outside the zone, such as a friend or relative, and tell them you might call.
- Atlantic season runs June 1 to November 30.

WATCH AND WARNING

- **Watch:** hurricane conditions are possible. Issued about 48 hours before tropical-storm-force winds are expected.
- **Warning:** hurricane conditions are expected. Issued about 36 hours before those winds. Preparations should be done by then.

BEFORE IT ARRIVES

- Fill clean containers with drinking water.
- Fill the car's gas tank and park vehicles in a garage or under cover.
- If you see flooding or downed lines, or you have to leave, turn off the power.
- If you are told to evacuate, go. Take essentials and use the routes officials recommend.

IF YOU STAY

- Stay inside even if it looks calm outside, and stay away from windows. A room with no windows, or a closet, is better.
- Never drive through flooded areas. Six inches of moving water can knock an adult down, and about two feet can carry away most vehicles.

AFTER

- Run a generator outdoors, more than 20 feet from windows, doors and vents. Never in a garage, even with the door open.
- A closed refrigerator keeps food safe for about 4 hours. A full freezer holds about 48 hours, a half-full one about 24.
- Floodwater can be contaminated. Wear rubber boots and plastic gloves, wash your hands, and throw away what cannot be disinfected.

For our household

Our evacuation zone

Where we would stay

Our local alert source

Our route out, and a backup

Sources: National Weather Service (hurricane watch and warning timing); National Hurricane Center, Prepare (evacuation zones, storm surge); CDC, Hurricane Safety; CDC, Carbon Monoxide; FoodSafety.gov, Food Safety During a Power Outage. Checked October 2026. Zones and orders vary by county, so follow local officials.