

The 2015 Atlantic Hurricane Season started on June 1<sup>st</sup>. By now you should have a plan and family supply kit for the season:

- items you will need to have on hand if electric service is disrupted for several days or weeks or if floodwater contaminates local drinking water supplies (non-perishable food items, a manual can opener; water for drinking, cooking, and hygiene – at least one gallon per person/pet per day; unscented bleach for disinfection – one part bleach and nine parts clean water make an excellent solution for sanitizing hard surfaces, and 16 drops of bleach in a gallon of water can make it safe to drink; flashlights and radios with batteries; bug repellent, cash, and a full tank of fuel);
- what you and your family will do if an evacuation order is given (Do you live in evacuation zone A/B, C, D, or E? How much time do you need to gather your family members, pets, and supplies?);
- where you will go (designate a primary and back-up relative or friend's home out of the impact area, a suitable hotel away from path of the storm, or as a last resort, a public shelter);
- what to take with you (identification, pictures of belongings and copies of important documents that could be lost to flood – make them portable now by scanning them to a thumb drive and putting it in a waterproof baggie, prescription medications in original containers, aspirin, anti-diarrheal and antacid medicine, cash, clothes and sturdy shoes, favorite pillows, blanket/sleeping bag, toothbrush and other personal hygiene items, spare eyeglasses, cell phone charger, special foods, refillable bottles of water, sewing kit with safety pins, needles and thread, and a first aid kit with moistened towelettes, isopropyl alcohol, thermometer, tweezers, scissors, assorted bandages, antiseptic ointment);
- and items needed for your pets (leash and collar with ID tag, proof of current vaccination status, crate and bowls, food they are used to eating, water, medications).
- If you will need evacuation transportation assistance, you should have already registered with Emergency Management (it's not too late, see [www.nassaufl-em.com](http://www.nassaufl-em.com))

After the storm passes many safety issues still remain.

- If you sheltered at home, stay there; roads need to be clear for emergency response, utility repair, and debris removal crews.
- Standing water can hide physical hazards like sharp debris items or deep holes, harbor infectious bacteria, or might even be electrified if live power lines are down. If you must go outdoors, wear appropriate shoes/boots and never drive through water covering the roadway.
- If there is flooding remember that snakes, spiders, insects, and other wild, feral, stray, ill, or hungry animals move to higher dry ground, too. If you must be outside, use bug repellent and stay alert for aggressive animals or potentially dangerous wildlife.

- If there is a power outage, turn off or unplug major appliances and other devices to avoid damage from electrical surges when power is restored.
- If using a generator during an extended power outage, make sure it is in a well ventilated area (NOT indoors) away from open doors and windows to avoid deadly carbon monoxide.
- Food Safety – turn refrigerators and freezers to their coldest settings before the power goes out and only open them when necessary; food can stay frozen for 24 hours in a partially full freezer and up to 48 hours if it is full and tightly packed (consider placing reusable containers 90% filled with water and loosely capped in the empty spaces of your freezer for efficiency); if food does defrost, use it within a day or two (never refreeze thawed food); keep a thermometer in the refrigerator – if unsure, don't risk bacterial illness, throw it out.

Know your evacuation zone – go to the Nassau County Emergency Management Website ([www.nassaufl-em.com](http://www.nassaufl-em.com)) or use the Property Appraiser's Website to enter specific addresses, view the map, and get a customized report for your location.

More emergency preparedness information can be found at [www.floridadisaster.org](http://www.floridadisaster.org)

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