



ALABAMA WING CIVIL AIR PATROL

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2005

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Hurricane Preparedness

Confessions from a Professional Worrier

I confess to being a Professional Worrier. My family and I moved to Huntsville from Southern California in 1987. Because I taught 25 miles from home there, a long 25 miles of LA freeways, I worried about what would happen in case of an earthquake. I prepared my earthquake kit for the car—including extra pairs of tennis shoes. (I still carry a pair in the car.) I made arrangements with the parents of my children's friends to pick them up from school and shelter them until Gene could get home from work. I was not going to get home soon; school teachers were "nationalized" and required to stay in place until released by the governor; besides, walking home from central Los Angeles was not possible. I was prepared for the Great American Earthquake.

We missed the '74 outbreak of tornadoes which swept across Alabama. We were only near the '89 tornado that came through Huntsville. But I learned to be prepared for tornadoes and I have my weather radio and my "stuff" to be self sufficient for three to five days if necessary.

Because I will miss the full effects of a hurricane, I personally do not have to be prepared to face the onslaught of wind, rain and surge. The remnants may come through Huntsville, but probably not the hurricane itself.

This edition of the Alabama Wing Newsletter is a result of my being a Professional Worrier. And even though Dennis has already hit the coast, I still want to send this out to the squadrons. My hope is that it will help those of you who will face the hurricane be prepared. My sincere thank you to Gary Faltinowski who is the Assistant Director NC Division of Emergency Management, Information & Planning Section Chief for the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. He has granted permission for me to reproduce their web page "Eight Steps to Family Preparedness" for this newsletter. I found nothing better in my search for information.

Major Pat Mitcham, Director of Public Affairs, Alabama Wing Civil Air Patrol.



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It wasn't raining when Noah started building the ark!

The Eight Steps of Hurricane / Major Storm Preparation

Step 1 Respect Nature

Weather events, such as hurricanes, are powerful and dangerous. In fact, hurricanes and typhoons kill thousands of people worldwide every year and cause billions of dollars in property damage. Don't underestimate the weather's power. Having a healthy respect for hurricanes, tornados, winter storms and severe weather in general is the first step to being prepared.

Step 2 Decide Whether to Go or Stay

You must first decide if you will evacuate your home or stay and ride out the storm. Such a decision should be a family decision and must include considering such factors as:

- Are you in a storm surge or flood zone?
- Is your home structurally capable of withstanding hurricane force winds?
- Do the openings in your home, such as the windows, sliding glass doors, and jalousie doors, have shutters to keep the powerful winds and rain out?
- Do any of your family members have special medical needs that will require help you cannot provide?
- Is your home capable of providing a "livable" environment after the storm when all utilities are lost?

Step 3 Make a Personal Plan

Whether you decide to evacuate or stay in your home to ride out a storm, you must get your family together to develop a family disaster plan. There simply won't be time to think of everything

when a storm gets close. You will be surprised at the number of issues that need to be discussed once you sit down and start listing them.

If you are going to evacuate:

- Where will you go?
- Will you be using a local shelter?
- Where is the shelter located?
- What route will you drive to get there?
- How long will it take to pick up everyone?
- What will you need to bring with you? (Think 3-day Survival Kit)
- How will you care for your pets?
- What property security needs to be done?
- Will you need to notify other family members where you will be?

If you are going to stay:

- Do you have shutters for all windows and openings?
- How long will it take to put up shutters or boards?
- Is rising water an issue in your home?
- How will you cope with any family members with special medical needs?
- What special supplies and food will you need to have on hand?
- Do you need to have any special equipment available for after the storm?
- Do you have a safe place for important documents?
- Should you notify any out-of-area relatives that you are staying?
- Are you prepared to live without utilities and normal services for as long as two weeks after the storm?

Step 4 Prepare Your Property in Advance

The time to begin acquiring shutters and protection for your home is now. All openings of your home need to have protection to keep fierce winds and rain out of the building. Experience proves that a home that does not have protected openings is at grave risk for serious damage.

Trees need to be trimmed to minimize the damage they may cause to your home or someone else's. Vehicles left out in the open are often overturned by high winds. If you do not have a garage or carport, locate a protected spot to park your vehicles. A good location might be on the leeward side of the house, away from the main force of the wind.

Identify loose items located outside, such as lawn furniture, grills, toys, yard equipment, etc., that should be brought inside before a storm. When picked up by high winds, these items can become deadly missiles.

Examine your home to see if hurricane straps and connectors were installed to roof trusses, rafters and framing members. Homes that do not have such protective reinforcement are at risk of losing roofs and walls to strong hurricane force winds.

Step 5 Store Up 14 Days of Supplies and Equipment

The experiences of Hurricanes Hugo, Bertha and Fran have taught us that we need to be prepared to live without our utilities and basic services for up to two weeks or more. Most of us are ill-prepared to do so. It is not immediately obvious what we would need for such an adventure. A useful exercise may be to try to live for one day **without** your utilities and begin making a list of essential items that become evident. Parents should try an occasional "one-day camp in" with their children. This will make it less traumatic for children (and their parents) when they are forced to live without all the things we take for granted. The following list should provide a start on this Step:

- Food (canned, dry, non-perishable)
- Baby needs - formula, diapers
- Water (bottled or home-filled before the storm. One gallon/person/day)
- Canned sodas
- Disposable plates, cups, utensils
- Plastic garbage bags
- Medicines - RX as well as aspirin
- First Aid supplies
- Mosquito repellent
- Bleach
- Pet food
- Bedding (1 blanket or sleeping bag per person)
- Cooler
- Non-electric can opener
- Ice
- Dry goods (TP & paper towels)
- Toiletries
- Flashlight w/ spare batteries
- Portable Radio or TV w/ spare batteries
- Clean clothes and sturdy shoes
- Clothes & dish detergent
- Clothesline and pins
- Games cards & quiet toys
- Camp stove & fuel
- Lantern & fuel (not candles)
- Fire extinguisher - ABC type
- Gloves & goggles
- Small tools
- Cleaning supplies
- Brooms & mops
- Pails and buckets
- Ladders
- Plywood & nails
- Rakes & shovels
- Chain saw, gas & oil
- Duct and masking tape
- Rolls of plastic
- Wheelbarrow
- Battery operated clock
- Butane lighter or matches
- Axes, hatchets, pruners
- Rope

It is also important to fuel all vehicles before the storm hits. In addition, remember to get to the ATM or bank and secure some cash since banks will probably be closed for some time after a severe storm. Finally, keep a photo I.D. that also shows your home address. This may become important when asking a police officer or National Guardsman for permission to re-enter your neighborhood.

Step 6 Rehearse Your Plan

The best plan in the world won't do you or your family much good if no one can remember it. When a major storm approaches, things need to happen fast. There are usually too many tasks to be done by one person. Many people will be tied up at their workplace for some time prior to the storm's arrival. *{Emergency Management personnel and emergency responders will be tied up during and for several days following any major weather event.}* The only real way to ensure

that everything gets done is to assign everyone in your family a list of preparation activities, or allot a substantial amount of lead time if you don't have anyone to help you.

Try actually putting up shutters one weekend to determine how long the process really takes. For those who will be evacuating, actually practice the drive to the shelter, including stops along the way to pick up other family members and friends. Driving time may be extended by hours when the real thing comes along, so be sure to plan accordingly. During Hurricane Andrew, many people discovered that what had been a 15-minute drive to the shelter actually took four hours because of the massive traffic jams.

Step 7 Watch Weather Reports Closely

Storms and weather fronts, especially tornados and hurricanes, can move very quickly. Hurricanes typically move at a forward speed of 8 to 25 miles per hour. While this may seem quite slow, such movement can advance an approaching storm up to 200 miles during the course of a normal work day. As a hurricane or other storm moves closer to you area, begin monitoring the weather reports every hour. Don't get caught by surprise by not taking advantage of the excellent media coverage of weather related events.

Step 8 Take Action

A growing concern of hurricane forecasters and emergency management officials is the problem of many people refusing to take action until a definite hurricane or severe storm warning is issued. Don't cut it too close. Numerous hurricanes have brushed by our coast or hovered off-shore for days. Such storms have been within one day of landfall if their directions had changed. This does not allow adequate time for preparation or evacuation. **Good judgement and early action are everyone's responsibilities!**

When the time comes for action, do so without hesitation. There is never enough time to get ready for nature's fiercest weather. Give yourself and your family a head start. It's worth it!

Some final thoughts for those who work outside the home --

- What is your organization's hurricane / severe storm plan and how do you fit in?
- Will you be asked to stay at work during weather emergencies?
- If you are required to stay, when will you be allowed to return home?
- If you are at home, when should you report to work?
- What personal equipment or supplies do you need to bring with you?
- Is your workplace secure from storm damage?
- What skills or talents outside of your normal job role can you bring in to assist following a severe storm?
- Will your family be able to cope with the storm aftermath in your absence?
- Do you have any recommendations for hurricane / severe storm preparedness in your department?
- If your work operation is closed down for several weeks, how will you handle the loss of pay? Will people at your work place be laid off if the business cannot get back in operation for an extended time?

<http://www.ncem.org/PIO/8steps.htm>

Hurricane Dennis

Hurricane Dennis did not do nearly as much damage as expected but it still kept us very busy. As I write this, we have a plane up taking pictures of the coast line for Baldwin County EMA and tomorrow morning another Alabama Wing aircraft will be supporting the US Army Corps of Engineers. Leading up to, during, and following the storm we manned positions as the State EOC as well as the Baldwin County EOC. During evacuation we flew and photographed the evacuation routes for the State EMA as well as Baldwin County. Since then we have had several ELT missions in various parts of the states. Just yesterday three separate ELTs were located and turned off in the Ozark and Birmingham areas and as more boats and planes are moved back into place we may see more.

I want to thank not only those that participated in the mission but also those that indicated a willingness to serve if needed. I want to especially thank the Baldwin County Composite Squadron for assisting me at the EOC and making my time there beneficial and our hurricane response more timely.

Lt.Col. Dennis Flowers
Alabama Wing Director of Emergency Service

Our Deputy Director for Safety, Lt Cathy Carter, researched and provided FEMA websites you may want to search for information on **Hurricanes, Floods, and Tornadoes**. Other sites that she found relating to other hazards will be made available in other newsletters. Additionally, **IS-22, Are You Ready? a Citizen Preparedness Guide** is available for squadron to use or for individuals to use. See Lt Carter for additional information; she has the books available. An on-line test can be used to obtain CEUs and/or a certificate of completion.
<http://training.fema.gov/EMIWeb/IS/is22.asp> This is the URL for the IS-22 Course.

FEMA Hazard Preparedness URLs

Against the wind: Protecting Your Home from Hurricane and Wind Damage.
www.fema.gov/txt/hazards/hurricanes/survivingthestormhurricane.text

Safety tips for Hurricanes: Publication for teachers and parents for presentation to children. To order, call 1.800.480.2520

After a Flood: The First Steps: Information for homeowners on preparedness, safety, and recovery from a flood. www.fema.gov/hazards/floods/aftflood.shtm

Homeowner's guide to Retrofitting: Six Ways to Protect Your House From Flooding. A detailed manual on how to protect your home from flooding. www.fema.gov/hazards/hurricanes/rfit.shtm

Repairing Your Flooded Home. This 362 page publication provides a step-by-step guide to repairing your home and how to get help after a flood disaster.
www.fema.gov/hazards/floods/lib234.shtm

Disaster Preparedness Coloring Book Coloring book for ages 3-10. Also available in Spanish.
www.fema.gov/pdf/library/color.pdf

Before Disaster Strikes. Contains information on how to make sure you are financially prepared to deal with a natural disaster. Also available in Spanish. www.fema.gov/library

The Adventures of Julia and Robbie: Disaster Twins. A collection of disaster related stories. Includes information on preparedness and how to mitigate against disasters.
www.fema.gov/kids/twins

FEMA for Kids Provides information about what FEMA has to offer children. The emphasis is on fema.gov www.fema.gov/kids

Food and Water in an Emergency. If an earthquake, hurricane, winter storm, or other disaster strikes your community, you might not have access to food, water and electricity for days, or even weeks. By taking some time now to store emergency food and water supplies, you can provide for your entire family. www.fema.gov/pdf/library/f&web.pdf

Helping Children Cope with Disaster. Helps families understand how to help children cope with disaster and its aftermath. www.fema.gov/rrr/children.shtm

Heat Wave: A Major Summer Killer. An online brochure describing the heat index, heat disorders, and heat wave safety tips. www.nws.noaa.gov/om/brochures/heat_wave.html.

Alabama Emergency Management Agency/Disaster Web Site. Press releases. Reports and images when available are at this URL.
<http://207.157.116.10/disaster/>

United States Preparedness URL
www.ready.gov

<http://www.disastercenter.com/> This is a non-government site with information on a variety of disaster situations. It appears to be a site run by an individual. Lots of information and additional links.

American Red Cross: Hurricane Awareness Page. General information about Hurricanes
<http://www.redcross.org/news/ds/0305hurricane>

American Red Cross: Hurricane Safety
http://www.redcross.org/general/0,1082,0_587_1613,00.html

For Children of All Ages: A multi-media site designed for those who work with and for children, although the information is good for all ages.
<http://www.surfnetkids.com/hurricanes.htm>

A 72 page PDF on Hurricanes with the emphasis on mariners. A technical, military-developed site for those who prefer a scientific manner. Excellent maps and radar pictures
<https://www.nlmoc.navy.mil/trg/marine.pdf>

From Insurance Information Institute On the left hand frame there is a spot to download a free home inventory list. This is a site done for and by the insurance industry.
<http://www.iii.org/media/publications/brochures/hurricane/>

National Weather Service: The Hurricane Awareness Page. Historical hurricanes and current events.
<http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/hurricane/index.shtml>

National Hurricane Center website: Tropical Prediction Website. Where is the hurricane going? What is the predicted timeline? For those who like “graphics.”
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>

Hurricane News and Tracking (Non-government)
<http://www.hurricanetrack.com/>

Weather Service – a variety of maps available: This has a variety of forecast maps. Watches and Warnings nationwide.
<http://iwin.nws.noaa.gov/iwin/graphicsversion/bigmain.html>

National Weather Service **Birmingham**
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/bmx/>

National Weather Service **Huntsville**
<http://www.srh.noaa.gov/hun/>

National Weather Service **Mobile**
<http://www.srh.weather.gov/mob/>

National Weather Service **Tallahassee**
<http://www.srh.weather.gov/tlh/>

Plymouth State Weather Site:
GOES Satellite maps Tropical Weather Maps. A wealth of Scientific Information.
http://vortex.plymouth.edu/home_no_frame.html

The Weather Underground: Current Weather and predictions. One page contains the computer models, which are estimates, but when “they” all point the same way....
<http://www.weatherunderground.com/>

Commercial Weather Site
<http://www.intellicast.com/>



Fact Sheet

September 17, 2003

Contact: HHS Press Office
(202) 690-6343

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS TIPS

This fact sheet contains health and safety tips for families preparing for a hurricane from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and its agencies, including the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Food and Drug Administration.

Hurricanes and Your Health and Safety

- The great majority of injuries during a hurricane are cuts caused by flying glass or other debris. Other injuries include puncture wounds resulting from exposed nails, metal, or glass, and bone fractures.
- State and local health departments may issue health advisories or recommendations particular to local conditions. If in doubt, contact your local or state health department.
- Make sure to include all essential medications -- both prescription and over the counter -- in your family's emergency disaster kit.

Water Quality

- Hurricanes, especially if accompanied by a tidal surge or flooding, can contaminate the public water supply. Drinking contaminated water may cause illness. You cannot assume that the water in the hurricane-affected area is safe to drink.
- In the area hit by a hurricane, water treatment plants may not be operating; even if they are, storm damage and flooding can contaminate water lines. Listen

- for public announcements about the safety of the municipal water supply.
- If your well has been flooded, it needs to be tested and disinfected after the storm passes and the floodwaters recede. Questions about testing should be directed to your local or state health department.

Water for Drinking and Cooking

- Safe drinking water includes bottled, boiled, or treated water. Your state or local health department can make specific recommendations for boiling or treating drinking water in your area. Here are some general rules concerning water for drinking and cooking. Remember:
 - do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash and prepare food, or make ice.
 - if you use bottled water know where it came from. Otherwise, water should be boiled or treated before use. Drink only bottled, boiled, or treated water until your supply is tested and found safe.
 - boiling water kills harmful bacteria and parasites. Bringing water to a rolling boil for 1 minute will kill most organisms.
 - water may be treated with chlorine or iodine tablets, or by mixing six drops (1/8 teaspoon) of unscented, ordinary household chlorine bleach (5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite) per gallon of water. Mix the solution thoroughly, and let stand for about thirty minutes. However, this treatment will not kill parasitic organisms.
- Containers for water should be rinsed with a bleach solution before reusing them. Use water storage tanks and other types of containers with caution. For example, fire truck storage tanks, as well as previously used cans or bottles may be contaminated with microbes or chemicals. Do not rely on untested devices for decontaminating water.

Food Safety

- Do not eat any food that may have come into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- Discard any food not in a waterproof container if there is any chance that it has come into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- Undamaged, commercially canned foods can be saved if you remove the can labels, thoroughly wash the cans, and then disinfect them with a solution consisting of one cup of bleach in five gallons of water. Re-label your cans, including expiration date, with a marker.
- Food containers with screw-caps, snap-lids, crimped caps (soda pop bottles), twist caps, flip tops, snap-open, and home canned foods should be discarded if they have come into contact with floodwater because they cannot be disinfected.
- For infants, use only pre-prepared canned baby formula. Do not use powdered formulas prepared with treated water.

Frozen and Refrigerated Foods

- If you will be without power for a long period:
 - ask friends to store your frozen foods in their freezers if they have

- electricity;
- see if freezer space is available in a store, church, school, or commercial freezer that has electrical service; or
- use dry ice, if available. Twenty-five pounds of dry ice will keep a ten-cubic-foot freezer below freezing for 3-4 days. Use care when handling dry ice, and wear dry, heavy gloves to avoid injury.
- Your refrigerator will keep foods cool for about four hours without power if it is unopened. Add block or dry ice to your refrigerator if the electricity will be off longer than four hours.
- Thawed food can usually be eaten if it is still "refrigerator cold," or re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals.
- To be safe, remember, "When in doubt, throw it out." Discard any food that has been at room temperature for two hours or more, and any food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.

Sanitation and Hygiene

It is critical for you to remember to practice basic hygiene during the emergency period. Always wash your hands with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected:

- before preparing or eating
- after toilet use
- after participating in cleanup activities; and
- after handling articles contaminated with floodwater or sewage.

If there is flooding along with a hurricane, the waters may contain fecal material from overflowing sewage systems and agricultural and industrial waste. Although skin contact with floodwater does not, by itself, pose a serious health risk, there is risk of disease from eating or drinking anything contaminated with floodwater.

If you have any open cuts or sores that will be exposed to floodwater, keep them as clean as possible by washing them with soap and applying an antibiotic ointment to discourage infection. If a wound develops redness, swelling, or drainage, seek immediate medical attention.

Do not allow children to play in floodwater areas. Wash children's hands frequently (always before meals), and do not allow children to play with floodwater-contaminated toys that have not been disinfected. You can disinfect toys using a solution of one cup of bleach in five gallons of water.

Immunizations

Outbreaks of communicable diseases after hurricanes are unusual. However, the rates of diseases that were present before a hurricane may increase because of a lack of sanitation or overcrowding in shelters. Increases in infectious diseases that were not present before

the hurricane are not a problem, so mass vaccination programs are unnecessary.

If you have wounds, you should be evaluated for a tetanus immunization, just as you would at any other time of injury. If you receive a puncture wound or a wound contaminated with feces, soil, or saliva, have a doctor or health department determine whether a tetanus booster is necessary based on individual records.

Specific recommendations for vaccinations should be made on a case-by-case basis, or as determined by local and state health departments.

Mosquitoes

Rain and flooding in a hurricane area may lead to an increase in mosquitoes. Mosquitoes are most active at sunrise and sunset. In most cases, the mosquitoes will be pests but will not carry communicable diseases. It is unlikely that diseases which were not present in the area prior to the hurricane would be of concern. Local, state, and federal public health authorities will be actively working to control the spread of any mosquito-borne diseases.

To protect yourself from mosquitoes, use screens on dwellings, and wear clothes with long sleeves and long pants. Insect repellents that contain DEET are very effective. Be sure to read all instructions before using DEET. Care must be taken when using DEET on small children. Products containing DEET are available from stores and through local and state health departments.

To control mosquito populations, drain all standing water left in open containers outside your home.

Mental Health

The days and weeks after a hurricane are going to be rough. In addition to your physical health, you need to take some time to consider your mental health as well. Remember that some sleeplessness, anxiety, anger, hyperactivity, mild depression, or lethargy are normal, and may go away with time. If you feel any of these symptoms acutely, seek counseling. Remember that children need extra care and attention before, during, and after the storm. Be sure to locate a favorite toy or game for your child before the storm arrives to help maintain his/her sense of security. Your state and local health departments will help you find the local resources, including hospitals or health care providers, that you may need.

More information about hurricane preparedness activities is available at <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/hurricanes.asp>.

The following article has been sent for inclusion as soon as possible. The regular, quarterly newsletter will be in September. This information needs to be out now.

Subject: GLASS COCKPITS REQUIRE TRAINING INVESTMENT

GLASS COCKPITS REQUIRE TRAINING INVESTMENT

The advent of glass cockpits in small general aviation aircraft creates exciting possibilities for easy-to-fly approaches, increased situational awareness, and safety--not to mention the fact that they look really neat. But to get the most out of a glass cockpit, manufacturers are recommending intensive training. So pilots new to the world of glass- cockpit flying should be prepared to invest time and money in making the transition. How much time and money? A recent Cessna-approved checkout in a Cessna 182 with the G1000 glass cockpit system cost a renter \$1,300 for six hours in the air, five hours of formal ground instruction, and many more in pre- and post-flight discussions. New Cirrus owners spend eight hours in self-study, four hours in ground school, and 10 hours in the airplane learning their new Avidyne displays. Chelton Flight Systems officials are considering 11 hours of ground training and 14 in the air.

For additional insights on glass cockpits, see the AOPA Air Safety Foundation's "Technically Advanced Aircraft Special Report"

<http://www.aopa.org/asf/publications/topics>



Some of this newsletter is repetitive, but this season is predicted to be as much “fun” as last season and we truly want to be prepared. I hope that I have taken the work out of looking for information for you. Lt Carter has given me many other sites from FEMA that I will be sharing with you in other newsletters. My hope is that there is not so much information that it is overwhelming.

Please take time to look at them. Bookmark the ones that are important to you and your family. Trash the rest. Again my thanks to Gary Faltinowski who is the Assistant Director NC Division of Emergency Management, Information & Planning Section Chief for the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management. for granting me permission to reprint the *Eight Steps*.