

PREPAREDNESS TIPS – BEFORE THE STORM

FOR YOUR RESIDENCE:

- Using a hose, blast it at your doors and windows to check for any signs of water inside-if so, caulk and seal those areas
- Move furniture, etc. away from windows and doors and several inches off the floor so if doors and windows break during a storm, your items remain dry
- Use ceiling and floor bolts to anchor double doors
- Brace and reinforce garage door
- Place latches on attic access panels to secure them and prevent stored items and insulation from coming into your house
- Secure or bring inside your outdoor items – remember to secure or remove satellite dishes, radio and TV antennas on roofs
- Be sure to have correct wrench to shut off gas and water to house-keep them available
- If you are going to use generator, be sure to ground it properly, know how to use it, know how to store fuel for it safely, have the correct GFCIs for it and the correctly-rated extension cords for it – Arrange a shed/shelter for it that lets exhaust fumes go out but keeps it away from rain, etc. Teach everyone in your family how to operate it safely. Do all this ahead of time and also plan what you are going to plug into it.
- Contact city or county public utilities and ask for lots of free sandbags – Fill them and keep them ready in case you need them – put outside doors when storm advisories heard (At end of season, empty and return them)
- Use barrel bolts on all four sides of entry doors
- Know how to use tools and repair equipment
- If you have window air conditioners, be sure to anchor them down since they can be blown out of place fairly easily during storm
- Don't store gasoline in your garage or anything attached to or close to your house
- Keep a personal “Emergency Preparedness Household Guide” filled out and available – list how many amps each appliance uses, what circuit breakers control what, radio frequencies, generator information, phone numbers, notes, etc.
- Have a supply of heavy-duty contractor trash bags to use to store pictures, compute equipment, TV, etc.
- If you use oil lamps and keep oil in them all the time, wrap them in plastic wrap to keep accumulation of dust and dirt away – remove plastic wrap and discard before lighting
- Open and close all windows in your home to be sure you can use them to escape through should a tree fall on your home and prevent normal exit
- Add downspout extenders so downspout water doesn't wash out your garden
- Use natural fiber rope to tie supports to trees – nylon loosens
- Keep all hurricane equipment in one place so it will be easy to locate

- Check rain gutters
- Use metal strapping or special connectors to secure roof to wall plates or studs
- Check property for weak spots, e.g. doors, windows, roof, trees and shrubs
- Cut air channels through trees to save them and trim shrubs
- Make or update inventory of household including home, basement, garage, shed, etc. – take pictures if possible of items
- Check with your insurance agent and review your coverages to be sure that not only do you understand them but that they are adequate and updated