

A Citizen's Guide to Hurricane Emergency Preparedness



Get A Kit ** Make A Plan ** Stay Informed

Hurricanes, Floods & Tornadoes

These are all things we prefer not to think about and hope will never happen. Unfortunately, emergencies and disasters are part of and may impact all of our lives.



Here in coastal North Carolina (NC) we are vulnerable to a variety of hazards including hurricanes, floods, and tornadoes. All of these types of events impacts thousands of citizens across the country annually with significant financial impacts and tragic losses. We as citizens have the ability to reduce the impact on ourselves and our community.



After an emergency, Surf City disaster officials will be working diligently to manage the effects of the emergency or disaster. In your planning. You should assume that basic services such as electricity, water, gas, telephones, and sewer may not be available for some time. This is why it is critical for everyone to Get a Kit, Make a Plan, and Stay Informed.



The Difference We Can Make In Being Prepared

Through preparedness, local governments can be better positioned to fulfill their obligation to respond to disasters in a timely, effective, and safe manner; to better protect lives and preserve property. Equally as important is that you take the necessary steps to ensure the health and safety of you and your family.

The Citizen's Guide To Emergency Preparedness

This guide has been developed by the Town of Surf City to assist our residents, businesses, and guest better prepare to safely face a variety of emergencies. Everyone's needs and abilities are unique, but everyone can participate in taking important steps to prepare for all kind of emergencies and put plans into place. By evaluating your own personal needs and making an emergency plan, you can be better prepared to tackle any situation.

This guide provides specific information for the hazards we face and is designed to help you develop your own personal emergency plan with the aid of checklists and sections for you to fill in your individualized plan information.

We hope you will find the information provided helpful, and that you will not hesitate to contact us with any questions.



What Do You Need To Do To Prepare?

- Learn the threats that we face on Topsail Island, what to anticipate from each and what plans the Town has.
- Know what actions and precautions you should take before, during, and after an emergency.
- Use common sense, follow official instructions and stay informed.
- Take a first aid and CPR course.
- Build an emergency kit. (Appendix A)
- Make a plan and know your evacuation routes.

Hurricanes

If we look at past hurricane events, they will show us that lack of hurricane awareness and preparation are common threads among all major hurricane disasters. By knowing your level vulnerability, developing an emergency plan and keeping an emergency kit, you can reduce the effects of a hurricane's impact on you and your family.

There are many hazards associated with hurricanes, including storm surge, heavy rainfall, inland flooding, high winds, tornadoes, and rip currents. Of these, storm surge has the most potential for loss of life on the coast. Storm surge is an abnormal rise in sea level accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm. The advancing surge combines with the normal tides and increases the water level to heights that will impact roads, homes, bridges, and other critical infrastructure. This rise of water can cause severe flooding in coastal areas, particularly when the storm tide coincides with the normal high tide.

Hurricanes are classified into five categories based on their wind speed, central pressure, and damage potential.

Category	Wind Speed (mph)	Damage
1	74-95	Very dangerous winds will produce some damage
2	96-110	Extremely dangerous wind will cause extensive damage
3	111-129	Devastating damage will occur
4	130-156	Catastrophic damage will occur
5	> 156	Catastrophic damage will occur

Tropical Storms have all the characteristics of a hurricane, including storm surge, with winds being 39 to 73 mph.



Am Radio: Listen to 1610am, 1620am, and 1640am once the storm arrives.

The National Hurricane Center uses watches and warnings to inform the public of possible impacts from a storm. Familiarize yourself with the terms used to identify a tropical weather threat.

Tropical Storm Watch:

An announcement that sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph are possible within the specified area within 48 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone.

Tropical Storm Warning:

An announcement that sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph are expected somewhere within the specified area within 36 hours in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone.

Hurricane Watch:

An announcement that sustained winds of 74 mph or higher are possible within the specified area in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the Hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical storm force winds.

Hurricane Warning:

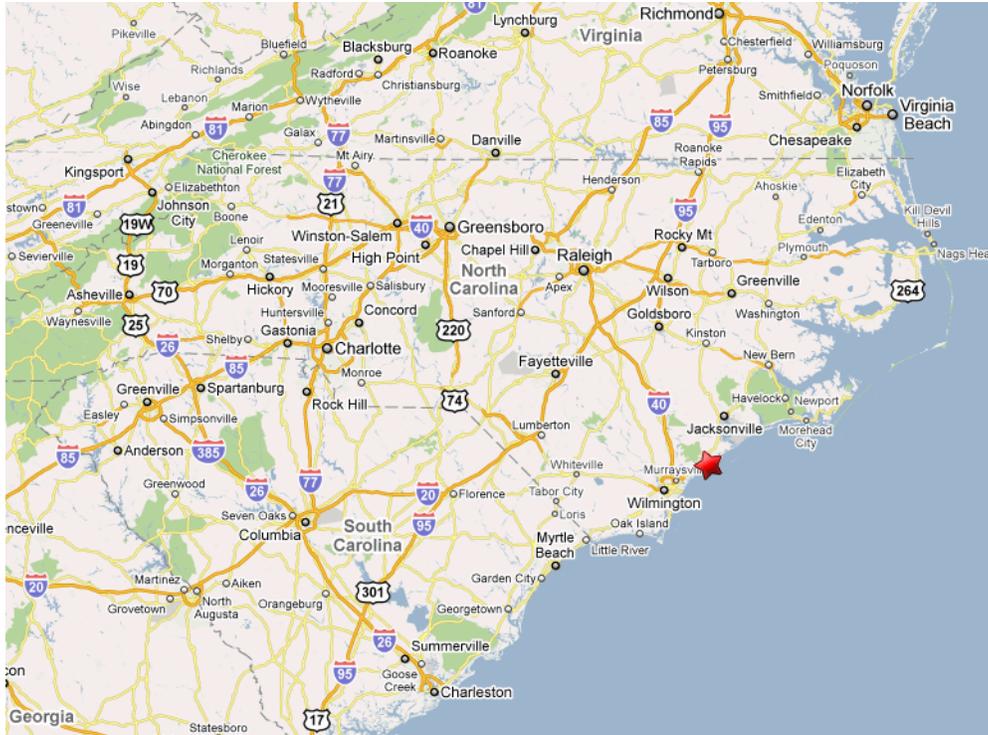
An announcement that sustained winds of 74 mph or higher are expected somewhere within the specified area in association with a tropical, subtropical, or post-tropical cyclone. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds. The warning can remain in effect when dangerously high water or a combination of dangerously high water and waves continue, even though winds may be less than hurricane force.



Unlike locations further inland, any tropical weather (tropical depressions, tropical storms, and hurricanes) is cause of concern on the island because most of the island is close to or at sea level, where storm surge and wind shear pose a greater threat.

Evacuation Information

The Town of Surf City's Mayor may authorize an evacuation of the island, or the Governor of North Carolina may require a mandatory evacuation. You are encouraged to evacuate well before such actions take place if you deem it necessary. Prepare now. Know how you will travel and where you will go if you are evacuated, anticipate what roads you will travel on, and make plans that will accommodate young children, the elderly, and pets if necessary. If you plan on using a public shelter, be aware they will not all accommodate pets.



What are the evacuation routes?

The North Carolina State Hurricane Evacuation Plan recognizes Interstate 40 as the safest and most effective route for hurricane evacuation. This plan calls for traffic on Interstate 40 to be reversed away from the beaches, allowing for more access.

Where will you go?

When planning on an evacuation destination, consider staying with friends or relatives. Factor in the additional fuel that will be used during stop-and-go traffic that is often common in evacuations, and the additional time it could take to reach your destination.

How will you get there?

Are you going to self-evacuate or will you need assistance? If you don't have reliable transportation of your own, you must plan in advance what options may be available through your neighbors or local transportation authority.

Where will you stay?

If you choose to stay in a shelter, be aware that the only very basic needs will be provided for you. You will need to bring your own clothes and something to sleep on, at least. You may consider packing a shelter kit ahead of time. You should also be aware that most public shelters do not accept pets, so you must make arrangements for your animals. If you need additional accommodations, ensure the location where you are staying can accommodate those needs and let them know what those special needs are.

- Onslow County Emergency Management Shelters 910-347-4270
- Pender County Emergency Management Shelters 1-800-989-2721



Return & Re-Entry

You may hear conflicting reports from the media about returning to Surf City and Topsail Island after an evacuation. Even if you hear the Governor has rescinded the evacuation order, the final authority for allowing property owners to return to the island is the Mayor of the Town of Surf City, NC.

Once the evacuation order has officially been lifted, all details about re-entry to the island, including priority staged re-entry will be announced. You can check the webpage at www.townofsurficty.com and check social media (ie: facebook and twitter). Make sure to have your valid hurricane re-entry permit securely on your person for re-entry.

Re-Entry Stages:

In the event the island is evacuated, delay return until recommended or authorized by local authorities. Re-entry will occur by a tiered approach based to facilitate an orderly re-entry.

Re-Entry Stages:

I. Priority One:

- Essential Personnel

Essential Personnel include essential utilities, government, medical, and damage assessment personnel. Essential personnel will receive a Priority One Critical Personnel Pass for re-entry from the Surf City Town Council.

II. Priority Two

- Essential Personnel for Critical Businesses Type I & Property Owners

Property Owners will be allowed re-entry with a valid Town of Surf City Hurricane Re-Entry Pass (located on their vehicle windshield). Critical businesses (property managers & contractors) will be permitted with a valid Town of Surf Key.

III. Priority Three

- Essential Personnel for Critical Businesses Type II

Type II Critical businesses include but are not limited to businesses such as food service/supply, pharmacies, banks, gas stations, building supplies, insurance agents, and hotels will be permitted with a valid Town of Surf City Key or current pay check stub and valid driver's license.

IV. Priority Four

- General Public, Tenants, Visitors

No Re-Entry pass is needed for Priority Four.

Debris Removal

If a natural disaster strikes and generates all kinds of debris ranging from building materials, tree limbs, and sand, the Town has a debris plan to deal with it. Our debris management plan shall help to prepare for and guide the Town's debris operations during our response and recovery efforts. The Town has established plans to remove, reduce, and dispose of disaster-generated debris.

In the event of a major storm, our first priority is to clear debris from the roads for emergency personnel and to provide access to critical sites and for utility companies. After the major roads have been cleared, then key routes based on priority of use, from major thoroughfares to side streets will be cleared for access. Residents should be aware that it may take some time before all residential street are cleared of debris and standing water.

- Residents may expect that all debris will not be collected at once. Collection efforts will continue until it is determined that all storm-related debris has been satisfactorily removed.
- The Town will pick up disaster-related storm debris placed along the edge of road on all publically-maintained roads and private roads where right-of-entry has been granted.



Tips for Debris Removal:

1. Do not attempt to handle debris near downed power lines. Contact Jones Onslow Electric at 910-353-1940 if you have questions about the status of lines near your home.
2. Debris collectors will be responsible for addressing different types of debris at different times.
3. Place separated debris alongside the curb or edge of pavement as soon as possible after the storm.
4. Keep debris away from utilities such as fire hydrants, cable, or telephone boxes.

Follow the Town's website after a storm to find out details about debris removal:
www.townofsurfcity.com and Facebook page.

Appendix A

Emergency Supply Kit

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First Aid Kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter in a place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Can opener for food
- Local Maps
- Identification
- Prescription Medication
- Personal hygiene items
- Pet food and water
- Cash or travelers checks and change
- Change of clothes
- Matches
- Books and games for children
- Baby formula and diapers
- Household chlorine bleach and a medicine dropper (When diluted nine part water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 16 drops of regular household bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented or color safe bleaches or with added cleaners.)