

READY NEW YORK

Resources

NOAA All Hazards Radio

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) broadcasts National Weather Service forecasts, warnings, and more, 24 hours a day. For a minimal cost, you can purchase a special weather radio that gives instant access to the same weather reports and emergency information that meteorologists and emergency personnel use.

For more information about hurricanes and hurricane preparedness, consult the following resources:

NYC Office of Emergency Management
NYC.gov/oem

Federal Emergency Management Agency
www.fema.gov

NY State Emergency Management Office
www.nysemo.state.ny.us

National Hurricane Center/Tropical Prediction Center
www.nhc.noaa.gov

American Red Cross in Greater New York
 877-RED-CROSS
www.nyredcross.org

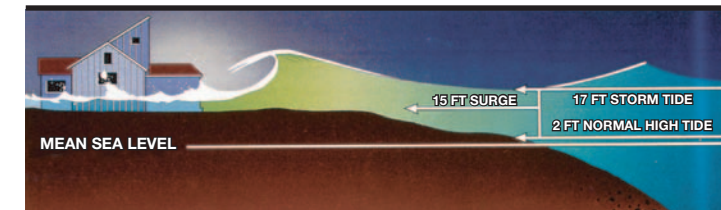
In the event of an approaching hurricane, call 311 or access NYC.gov for tips and information.

ONLY DURING EMERGENCIES, call 911



Many people believe that hurricanes only affect areas far south of New York. But coastal storms, including hurricanes, can and do impact the City. Unlike most coastal areas, New York City's immediate coastline is densely populated and highly developed, making the City among the most vulnerable to hurricane-related damage.

Recent research indicates that due to regional geography, hurricanes in New York City - though infrequent - can cause far more damage than hurricanes of similar strength in the southern United States. It's important to be prepared to respond quickly. The New York City Office of Emergency Management works to ensure the City is prepared for coastal storms and hurricanes. Read on to learn more about how you can prepare for a hurricane in New York City.



Storm surge diagram.

NOAA - National Weather Service

Coastal Storm Terms

Hurricane Season – June 1 to November 30*

Tropical Cyclone – An organized rotating weather system that develops in the tropics and has a warm center (or core) of low barometric pressure.

Tropical Storm – A tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 39-73 mph.

Hurricane – A tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 74 mph or greater.

Hurricane Watch – Issued for a coastal area when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 24-36 hours.

Hurricane Warning – Issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less. Hurricane conditions include winds of 74 mph or higher and/or dangerously high tides or waves.

*Historically, New York City's greatest potential for hurricanes is from August to October.

How is Hurricane Strength Measured?

Hurricanes are categorized according to wind strength using the **Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale**. A Category 1 storm has the lowest winds speeds, while a Category 5 has the strongest. Meteorologists and emergency managers use the scale to outline the potential damage of an associated categorized hurricane.

Type of Tropical Cyclone	Category	Potential for Damage	Wind Speed (in MPH)
Hurricane	1	Minimal	74-95
Hurricane	2	Moderate	96-110
Hurricane	3	Extensive	111-130
Hurricane	4	Extreme	131-155
Hurricane	5	Catastrophic	156+



Belt Parkway at Sunrise Highway, Queens, 1960.

Queens Borough Public Library - Long Island Division

Hurricanes and New York City



NEW YORK CITY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
 Michael R. Bloomberg, Mayor Joseph F. Bruno, Commissioner

Cover Photo: LaGuardia Field, Queens, 1950.
 Queens Borough Public Library - Long Island Division

Why Are Hurricanes So Dangerous?

No storm combines duration, size, and wind speed more destructively than a hurricane. With sustained winds of 74 mph or greater, hurricanes can flatten homes, topple trees, and turn loose objects into deadly projectiles. A hurricane's driving winds and torrential rains can cause massive and dangerous flooding in low-lying and poor-drainage areas.

Additionally, **storm surge**, the dome of seawater pushed forward by the oncoming storm, is among the hurricane's most hazardous features. In a major hurricane, storm surge could reach more than 30 feet in some parts of New York City. Aided by the hammering effect of the breaking waves, the surge acts like a giant bulldozer, sweeping away everything in its path.

How Can I Prepare Myself?

Before a hurricane strikes, there are several steps you can take to ensure you are prepared.

Assemble an Emergency Supply Kit.

Keep enough supplies in your home to survive for at least three days. If possible, keep these materials in an easily accessible, separate container or special cupboard.

Your supply kit should include:

- One gallon of drinking water per person per day
- Non-perishable, ready-to-eat canned foods, and a manual can opener
- First-aid kit, medications, and prescriptions
- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio, and extra batteries
- Whistle
- Iodine tablets or one quart of unscented bleach (for disinfecting water ONLY if directed to do so by health officials) and eyedropper (for adding bleach to water)
- Personal hygiene items: soap, feminine hygiene products, toothbrush, and toothpaste, etc.
- Sturdy shoes, heavy gloves, warm clothes, a mylar blanket, and lightweight raingear
- Extra fire extinguisher, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors
- Phone that does not rely on electricity
- Child care supplies or other special care items
- Portable cooler with ice
- Plastic garbage bags
- Plywood or other shuttering material for windows
- Other supplies and tools

Put Together a Go Bag.

Every household should consider assembling a Go Bag – a collection of items you may need in the event of an evacuation. Each household member's Go Bag should be packed in a sturdy, easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or suitcase on wheels.

A Go Bag should include:

- Copies of your important documents in a waterproof and portable container (insurance cards, birth certificates, deeds, photo IDs, proof of address, etc.)
- Extra set of car and house keys
- Credit and ATM cards, and cash, especially in small denominations. We recommend you keep at least \$50-\$100 on hand.
- Bottled water and non-perishable food such as energy or granola bars
- Flashlight, battery-operated AM/FM radio, and extra batteries. You can also buy wind-up radios that do not require batteries at retail stores.
- Medication for at least one week and other essential personal items. Be sure to change medications before they expire. Keep a list of the medications each member of your household takes and their dosages, or copies of all your prescription slips, and your doctor's name and phone number.
- First-aid kit
- Sturdy, comfortable shoes, lightweight raingear, and a mylar blanket
- Contact and meeting place information for your household, and a small regional map
- Child care supplies or other special care items

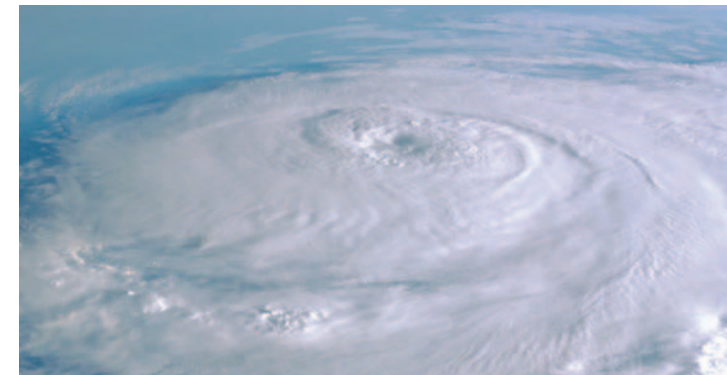
Prepare a Hurricane Disaster Plan.

Develop a plan with your household members that outlines what to do, how to find each other, and how to communicate in a hurricane. Determine if you should evacuate, where you will go, and when you will go.

NOTE: Even if your residence is not located in an hurricane evacuation zone, you may still face hurricane-related hazards such as high winds, rainfall flooding, and tornadoes. If you decide to stay at home during a storm, plan to make use of your Emergency Supply Kit and stay tuned to local TV and radio broadcasts for the latest information.

Will I Need to Evacuate?

New York City residents should take the time to find out if their residence, office, or school falls within the boundaries of a City hurricane evacuation zone, as a large part of the City is susceptible to storm surge. The best way to be prepared for the possibility of a hurricane evacuation is to know your evacuation zone, destination, and travel routes ahead of time. To see if your New York City address falls in an evacuation zone, enter the location in the **Emergency Management Online Locator System (EMOLS)** utility on the Office of Emergency Management's website at NYC.gov/emols, call **311**, or consult the map provided in this brochure.



Hurricane satellite image.

NOAA - National Weather Service

Where Should I Go?

If you must evacuate, **the City recommends evacuees stay with friends or family who live outside evacuation zone boundaries when possible.** However, for those who have no alternative shelter, the City has identified **evacuation shelters** throughout the five boroughs.

To ensure the most efficient use of resources, the City will ask all evacuees to report to a **reception center**. These centers are located throughout the five boroughs and are easily reached by car or public transportation. Once at the reception center, evacuees will be assigned to an evacuation shelter and transported there by bus or van.

To find out the location of your nearest reception center, use EMOLS at NYC.gov/emols, call **311**, or consult the map provided in this brochure, and you will be directed to the proper facility by bus, car, or subway.

When Should I Go?

In the event of an approaching hurricane, residents in designated evacuation zones may be instructed to evacuate. The City will communicate specific instructions to the public through local media. Residents may also call **311** to find out if they should evacuate.

What About My Pets?

Only service animals are allowed in evacuation shelters. Arrange to shelter your pets either at a kennel or with friends or relatives outside the surge area.



Coastal evacuation signs, which direct traffic to reception centers, are being installed along evacuation routes throughout the City.



Cross Bay Blvd. and 161st Avenue, Queens, 1991.

Jonathan Gaska, Queens CB 14

Before the Storm

Stay Informed. For the latest information about an approaching storm, stay tuned to TV and radio broadcasts, access NYC.gov, or call **311**.

Secure Your Home. If a tropical storm or hurricane watch is issued, take steps to ensure your home is safe.

- Bring inside loose, lightweight objects, such as lawn furniture, garbage cans, garden tools, and toys.
- Anchor objects that will be unsafe to bring inside, like gas grills or propane tanks. Turn off propane tanks.
- Shutter windows securely and brace outside doors.
- Place valuables in waterproof containers or plastic bags.

Help Others Prepare. Check on friends, relatives, and neighbors, especially those with disabilities or special needs, and assist them with their preparation, if possible.

If Asked to Evacuate, Do So Immediately.

The Office of Emergency Management works with the National Weather Service's National Hurricane Center and the National Weather Service office in Upton, NY, to monitor a storm's progress. Residents will be provided with specific information about which areas of the City should evacuate and when. The City will communicate specific evacuation instructions to the public through local media. Residents may also call **311** to find out if they should evacuate.

If You Must Evacuate:

If you are going to an evacuation shelter, pack what you need to live for several days, including:

- Your Go Bag.
- Sleeping bag, blankets, pillows.
- Auxiliary medical equipment.
- Food and water for service animals.
- If you own a vehicle, fill your gas tank.
- Turn off home electricity at the main switch.
- Shut gas valve at the appliance, not the main.
- Let friends, relatives, or neighbors know where you are going.