

# Hurricane Season

## Hurricane Preparedness

### Before the storm arrives (now)

- Check the status of your flood insurance policy.
- Decide where you will go during an evacuation.
- Identify important papers and other items you do not want to lose (like family photos).
- If you "board up", insure you have the items needed (wood, nails, screws and a good battery powered drill). If you hire a person to do the work, confirm with them that they will do it [this year](#).
- Plan for several days after the hurricane, and stock up on things like bottled water and non-perishable foods to use in case there is no electric power.
- If you have a propane gas tank, make sure it is securely strapped down to prevent it from becoming a potential "bomb" in the event it is washed away.
- Make sure you have the Town vehicle ID sticker placed inside the drivers side of your windshield. If you do not have this displayed, you will not be allowed immediate access across the bridge after the storm has passed.

### When the Storm Nears (warning issued)

- Board up windows and doors if appropriate. Note that many homeowners do not do this at all. One factor in deciding what to do is the nearness of your home to other structures that might be damaged and thus create debris that could break a window on your home. It is not so much the wind that causes damage to windows, as it is the debris being tossed about. In any event, make sure your windows are securely locked. Many "hurricane veterans" place a rolled-up towel around windows to absorb some of the water that may enter in cracks. Others roll up area rugs near the threshold of each door to do the same.
- Keep in mind that wind will blow the rain vertically along your home outside walls, and potentially water will enter under the eaves of your home and pass into the attic. Roof vents (fans) are another location where water may enter.
- If you have dead bolts on your doors, lock them before you evacuate the house. If you don't have dead bolt locks, install them now -- not when a storm threatens. These help deter intruders at other times, as well as providing protection during high winds.
- Fill your bathtub with water in case Town water is not readily available after the storm. Remember there will also be water inside your hot water heater that may be used during an emergency.
- Secure outside items like chairs, swings, grills, toys and especially the 90-gallon garbage container so they are not blown away, creating "missiles" of damage.
- Many homeowners shut off water, propane gas and electricity to their homes when they leave. When you shut water off, do so only at the shut-off valve installed BETWEEN the Town Meter and your home. Do not tamper with the Town's Meter.
- Gas up your vehicles, pack flashlights, radios, blankets, first aid items, medications you may

need (or want), food, water, and anything else you may want to take with you.

### **When the Evacuation Order is Issued**

- Make final checks, secure your home (all locked up tight?) and leave in an orderly fashion. Under no circumstances elect to remain in your home. Not only is this unwise from a personal safety standpoint, the bridge will most likely be closed.
- If you are going to the identified evacuation center, go there immediately after departing the island. If you are going elsewhere, you may want to let friends know where you can be located. Beware that you may pay a considerably higher price than normal for a motel room nearby in the event of an evacuation.
- The Police Department will block the bridge and not allow anyone off or onto the island once the storm hits.

### **After the Storm**

- When you return to the bridge for re-entry, hopefully traffic will be moving across. To determine when re-entry will be allowed, check the Town's webpage, or call (910) 842-6488. Remember, when you want to cross the bridge you need a vehicle ID sticker to identify you as a property owner. If you do not have such, you will be asked to go to the evacuation site so that you can receive an ID sticker. The key to prompt re-entry is the vehicle ID sticker. **PUT IT ON YOUR VEHICLE NOW, IF YOU HAVE NOT ALREADY DONE SO.**
- Be patient with Town officials in the event there are delays in getting back onto the island. Your safety is primary, and no one other than authorized personnel will be allowed back onto the island until we are assured it is safe.
- Once you are allowed onto the island, go immediately to your property ONLY. Check for damage. Beware of electric wires, nails, broken glass, and other debris that might be hazardous. Check for spoiled food items, water leaks, etc.
- Notify your insurance agent of damage. Make temporary repairs as required to secure and make your property safe from further damage. Beware of people coming to you with "good deals" to make needed repairs. If you want, you may check with Town Hall to certify the credibility of contractors.

### **How to Get Information During the Storm**

A Commissioner and/ or another Town Representative will be located at the Brunswick County Emergency Operations Center during a storm that requires an island evacuation. Depending on circumstances, other Town officials, elected and otherwise, will re-locate to the Emergency Operations Center located on the mainland. There will be multiple telephone lines routed to that location.

Use common sense when hearing reports of massive damage from your local media outside of Southeastern North Carolina. Ask yourself "Is such reasonable, could that have really happened given the circumstances?"

Do not send email to the Town and expect an immediate reply. We will have little time to answer large amounts of email along with all the other things going on. We will attempt to post key information to our website and other social media. Keep in mind that our goal is to communicate to all property owners what's going on.

The key to all of this is to be patient. Thanks in advance.