

Prepare well for the hurricane season in these times of a pandemic

PREPARE

Recommendations to prepare for the hurricanes

- Start preparing now or as soon as possible.
- If needed, make a financial plan and buy what you need little by little to be prepared
- Make sure to store drinking water and non-perishable food.
- Check and do what is needed to protect your home (roofs, windows, doors and storm shutters).
- Make an individual and family plan in advance that includes safe spaces inside the house.
- If your home cannot be made safe or if you live in a flood-prone zone, plan an alternative safe place.
- Keep an emergency backpack. Include batteries, flashlights, radio, first aid kit, medications, whistles, water, cash, mosquito repellent, disinfectants, pet food, important documents and other essential materials. Additionally, keep solar/battery powered gadgets like phone chargers, radio, lights.
- Keep key items safe in waterproof bags/boxes.
- Keep enough fuel to operate vehicles and/or electric generators.
- Store inflammable items like hand sanitizer, alcohol, lighter fluid, propane, and petrol in a dry, well-ventilated area, in their approved can and use inflammables and generators safely. Do not store more than 25-gallons of inflammables.
- Keep a list of contacts from different agencies and resources in case of an emergency (Family, Health Department, emergency room, fire department, police, community organizations, FEMA, among others).

In the PREPARE study, 48% of the people who reported having prepared poorly, had a negative impact on health due Hurricane Maria; only 29% who prepared better reported an impact.

Hence the more you prepare, the hurricanes are less likely to have a less negative impact on your health. This is especially important during COVID-19 pandemic.

Additional recommendations related to COVID-19

- If you need to evacuate, this is a priority over COVID-19 fears, but try to follow the preventive measures of COVID-19 such as social distancing, wearing a mask, and respiratory hygiene.
- Keep hand sanitizer or alcohol (at least 70%) as an alternative to handwashing if drinking water service is interrupted.
- Change and dispose your mask after every use, or if it gets soiled or wet.
- If you don't have a mask, use a cloth to cover both your nose and mouth. DO NOT cover the mouth of children under 2 years of age or someone with respiratory distress.
- Locally, health and emergency services are limited and burdened by the pandemic. Prepare ahead of time by asking for prescriptions and other medications, and any other medical devices you may need.

If you feel overwhelmed or highly disturbed, seek help.

Call PAS LINE: ASSMCA 1-800-981-0023

Tips for managing food

- Buy dry, canned and non-perishable food in advance, store them in a readily accessible area.
- Fill plastic bags and bottles with water (around $\frac{3}{4}$ of capacity) and freeze them to help keep your food cold and fresh after a power loss.
- Freeze food that will not be used immediately, such as leftovers, produce, etc.

- Store the food very closely together as possible in the freezer.
- Avoid food wastage by planning your meals, buying perishables judiciously, freezing or donating unused food while it is fresh.

Tips for water management and consumption

- Store the water you normally drink for the hurricane. Keep filters, chlorine, and means to boil water without power (i.e portable gas-stove).
- Also store enough water for surface cleaning and frequent handwashing.
- After a hurricane, avoid consuming raw- sewage water or from the river.
- If you cannot access clean water, purify the best accessible water as below.
- Tap water can be boiled for one minute, before consumption.
- Apply 2-drops of chloride disinfectant to 1-liter of water, and let it rest for 30-minutes before use.
- Try Sodis method as a last resort. Get hold of a 0.5-2.0L plastic bottle and clean thoroughly with detergent. Fill it with the accessible water and shake it to allow oxygenation. Put it on the roof of your house. If is sunny, wait 6-hours. If's cloudy, wait 2-days.
- Bottled water is an alternative, but it is more expensive for the individual and is not sustainable for the planet.

For more information, please visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/es/disasters/hurricanes/covid-19/prepare-for-hurricane.html>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u7rLK079soQ&t=9s>

<http://ccrhp.rcm.upr.edu/?q=water>