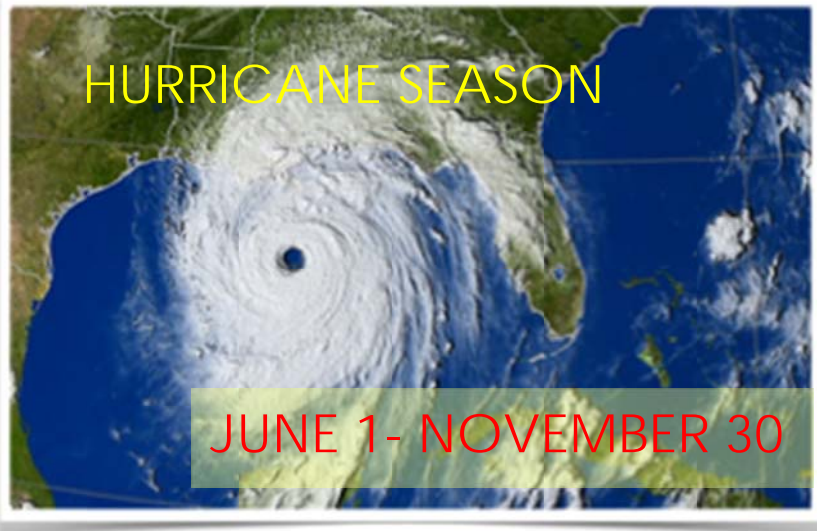

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS TIPS

[Useful Preparedness Links](#)

- FEMA.gov
- ready.gov
- nhc.noaa.gov
- emergency.cdc.gov



A NOTE FROM MR. THOMPSON

The start of the 2014 Hurricane Season is the perfect time to focus on our level of preparedness at all levels of government and especially within our own homes. Mother Nature can be quite unpredictable and though the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association predicts average or below-average hurricane activity this season, we all have a responsibility to stay vigilant in our planning and preparedness efforts.

In recent years, Federal preparedness investments have reached new milestones, allowing for enhanced capabilities for first responders. Response teams continue to develop, practice, and execute effective emergency preparedness and response operations, in addition to helping communities make essential infrastructure improvements that will help mitigate the damage of future disasters. As Congress begins consideration of the FY 2015 Appropriations legislation for the Department of Homeland Security, it is critical that support for these crucial programs continues. Gains achieved in recent years at State and local levels must not be lost; such efforts continue to pave the way for jurisdictions nationwide to better prepare for and respond to hurricanes and other disasters. In the meantime, I encourage those living in regions prone to hurricanes to prepare for the worst, even as they hope for the best.



Planning Ahead

- ✓ [Make a plan](#) and practice before a disaster happens. Know how to enhance your disaster plans to:
 - Accommodate those with [disabilities](#);
 - Make sure [pets](#) remain safe.
- ✓ Follow FEMA and your local government on Twitter and Facebook.
- ✓ Prepare a [disaster kit](#) that includes first-aid, non-perishable foods and plenty of drinking water.
- ✓ Learn how to perform basic life-saving skills, like [CPR](#).
- ✓ [Know the difference](#) between a *hurricane watch* and a **hurricane warning**.
- ✓ Download useful apps on your smart phone:
 - Hurricane Tracker App
 - Shelter Finder app
 - FEMA Disaster Assistance App
- ✓ Make sure data devices are fully charged and prepared. Upload password protected copies of key documents to a backup drive and secure it in a remote location.
- ✓ Build a list of contacts to alert in case of an emergency.

During an Emergency

- ✓ Stay informed — listen to TV, radio and continue to follow FEMA and your local government on social media.
- ✓ Stay indoors, away from windows and doors.
- ✓ Turn off propane tanks.
- ✓ Brace and secure all windows and doors. Secure outdoor objects or bring them inside.
- ✓ Take refuge in an interior room, closet or hallways on the lowest level.
- ✓ Keep food safe! Turn refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep doors shut.
- ✓ Know how to properly [evacuate](#) if local authorities instruct you to do so.



Recovery

- ✓ Continue listening to NOAA, FEMA and local news.
- ✓ Drive only if necessary.
- ✓ Inspect home for structural/content damage and take pictures for insurance purposes.
- ✓ Don't enter buildings if you smell gas, see a loose power line or question the building's infrastructure.
- ✓ Avoid drinking or cooking with tap water until you're sure it's not contaminated.
- ✓ Check refrigerator for spoiled foods — when in doubt, throw it out.
- ✓ **Never** use a generator indoors, even when using fans or opening windows. Carbon monoxide builds up quickly and can linger for hours, even after the generator is shut off.
- ✓ Use flashlights when entering dark buildings, never candles.
- ✓ If you cannot return to your home afterwards, text **SHELTER + zip** (e.g. SHELTER 12345) to **43362 (4FEMA)** to find the nearest shelter in your area.