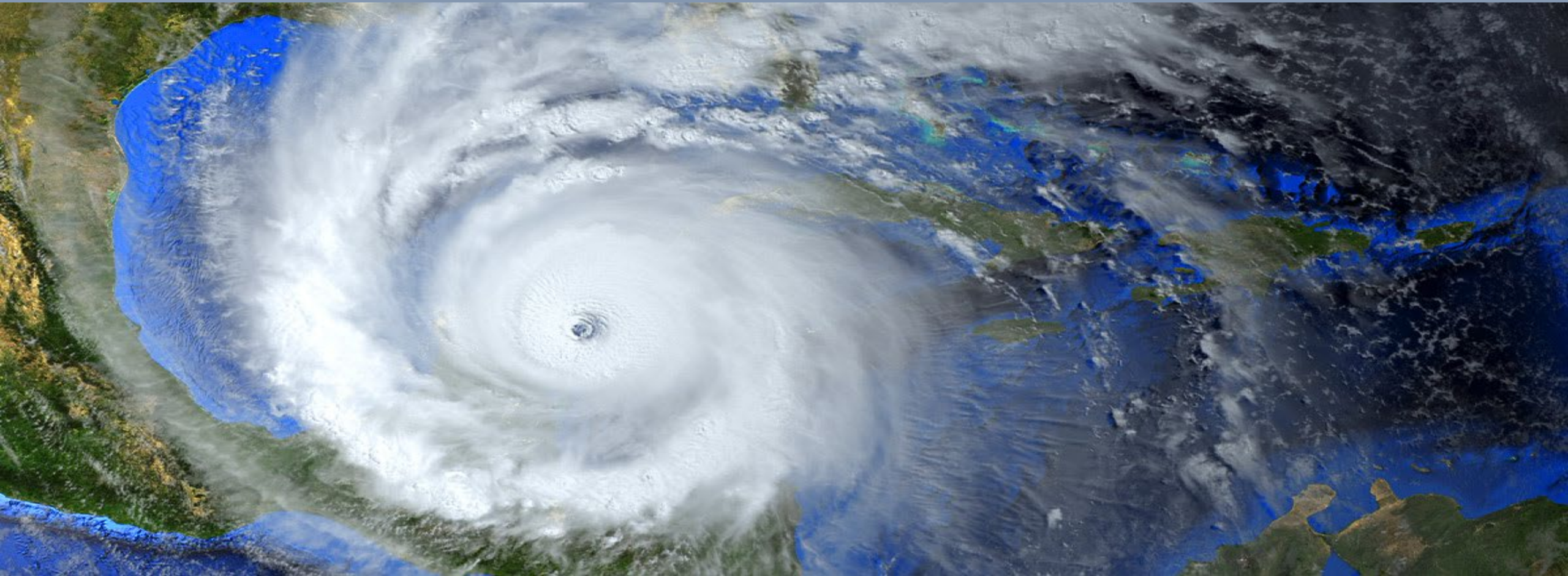


Protect Your Property This Season: Hurricane Preparedness Week



As Hurricane Preparedness Week begins, we would like to share some tips to help you protect your property for the upcoming season.

Hurricanes often cause extreme devastation – heavy rain and winds can result in storm surges, flooding, uprooting of trees, and severe damage to structures and vehicles. Each year, The Hartford helps thousands of customers restore their properties after hurricane and storm impacts.

We've listed some steps you can take before a hurricane hits:

- Create a disaster plan
- Secure your house or business
- Document your belongings
- Prepare your car
- Fill the bathtub with water

Although hurricanes do not happen as frequently as other natural disasters, such as earthquakes and tornadoes, they tend to be far more destructive and violent. Fortunately, there are things you can do to help protect your family, home or business from hurricane damage

Create a disaster plan.

Teach your family members or employees what to do during a hurricane and what to do if you must evacuate. Check with your town's Fire Department to find out what the evacuation route is. Knowing the evacuation routes is critical, especially if you live near the coast. Also, be sure to include an [emergency kit](#) in your plan.

General Equipment

- Bedding and/or sleeping bags
- First aid kit
- Flashlights
- Battery powered lantern, radio and alarm clock
- Extra batteries
- Sunscreen
- Water purification tablets
- Collapsible water containers
- Cooking Items

Cooking Items

- Camping cookware pots, pans, cooking utensils
- Camp stove or BBQ and fuel
- Aluminum foil
- Disposable plates, cups, eating utensils
- Napkins and paper towels
- Manual can opener
- Plastic zip-lock bags (can also be used to keep other items dry)
- Personal Items

Personal Items

Medication to last a few weeks, plus prescriptions
Extra glasses or contact lenses
Toilet paper
Toiletries
Clothes
Rain gear
Books, magazines, games, toys

Babies

Disposable diapers
Baby wipes
Formula or food
Toys and blankets

Pets

Food and treats
Leash, collar or harness
Pet crate
Bedding
Medications, if your pet needs them
Toys

Food

Water, 1 gallon per person per day to last a few days
Canned food-soups, fruit, vegetables, meat/fish and milk
Snack foods chips, cookies, candy, dried fruit, nuts, granola bars
Powered or single serving drinks soda, drink boxes, sports drinks
Peanut butter and jelly
Instant coffee and tea

Secure your house or business. You can help mitigate damage to your house or business with a little preparation. Before hurricane season starts, consider trimming branches that are hanging over your house and removing trees that could fall on your house. In the days before a hurricane, be sure to do the following:

- **Shut and lock all windows and doors.** Lower all storm windows so that heavy rains can't flood window boxes. Also, place an X with masking tape over large glass windowpanes and doors. This will help keep glass from falling into your home or business if the window cracks during the storm.
- **Move objects indoors or anchor them outside.** If possible, move outdoor furniture indoors. This includes items such as grills, table and chairs. If you have a stack of wood, cover it with a tarp and secure the tarp to the ground with stakes.
- **Inspect drains and pipes.** Make sure roof and floor drains are functional and clear of debris. Heavy rains and winds can bring down lots of leaves that can cause your drains to overflow.

Document your belongings. Take photographs of your possessions before the storm hits in case you need to document damage afterwards. Photograph your home, business, deck (if you have one) and any outdoor landscaping or architecture. Photograph any vehicles you have as well.

Prepare your car. Fill your gas tank and check your tires. Put emergency supplies in your car. Also, back your car into its parking space so, if you need to evacuate, you can pull straight out.

Fill the bathtub with water. Line your bathtub with plastic sheeting and fill it before the hurricane. You should not use this for drinking water, but it can be helpful to have this if your water supply is cut off and you need to clean dishes, clothes or add water to flush toilets.

During a Hurricane

Get to the safest room. Take shelter in the safest room in your house and stay there until the storm is over. In most cases, the safest place to be is your basement. If your house doesn't have a basement, then there are a few other options to consider. Stay in a room that is in the center of your house and has the fewest windows. You can also choose a bathroom or a closet. Also, try to stay on the first floor. If you stay in a room with windows, keep as far away from them as possible.

Tune in to the radio or weather channel. Keep your television turned to the weather channel for as long as you can. If you lose power, tune in to a local or NOAA radio station using the battery-powered radio in your [emergency kit](#). This will help you stay current on the status of the storm and any evacuation notices. Remember, the eye of the storm passing over your location can make it seem like the hurricane is over but, you can't be sure until you hear it reported by authorities via news, weather or emergency channels.

Stay entertained. The hurricane can last a while and this can become mentally exhausting, especially for children. Stay entertained by playing board or card games or reading books. If your power goes out, to avoid the threat of fire, don't use candles. Use only flashlights and battery operated lanterns for illumination.

After a Hurricane

Wait for confirmation. Don't assume the hurricane is over because the severe weather has died down. This could just be the eye of the storm. Wait until the news, weather channel or NOAA radio station confirms that the hurricane has passed and it is safe to leave your house.

Stay safe. There may be a lot of damage to your house, property and town's utilities services. Here are a few tips to help keep you and your family safe after a hurricane:

- Don't walk around barefoot.
- Don't enter a building or home that is flooded.
- Don't drink tap water until you have confirmation that it isn't contaminated.
- Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads. Roads may be washed away under the floodwater.
- Stay away from any wiring that appears loose or damaged.

Assess Damage. Take photos of everything that is damaged. Create a list of all items damaged or missing as a result of the hurricane. Contact your insurance company immediately to report the damage and file a claim.

Hurricane damage can range from a flooded basement and downed tree branches to obliterated cities. Although hurricanes are not as frequent as other natural disasters, they are a serious threat. Use this information to prepare your home or business and help keep your family safe during and after a hurricane.