

# Hurricane Safety

## What's at Stake

Hurricanes can be devastating, affecting the safety and well-being of individuals and families. Hurricanes destroy homes and businesses, cost lives, separate families and cause financial instability.

## What's the Danger

Hurricanes pose a number of hazards. Some people may lose their lives or be severely injured. Others may lose their homes or businesses or places of work. Power lines, roads, bridges and buildings may be damaged or weakened so that they can't be repaired, but must be replaced. Our ability to provide for those displaced by a hurricane may be inadequate. The impact of a hurricane can have long reaching effects on the ability of businesses to rebuild and restore financial stability to the workers affected by the storm. Some businesses and workers may decide not to rebuild, but to leave after a hurricane, further weakening the economic stability of the region

## How to Protect Yourself

The best way to protect yourself from the effects of a hurricane is to be prepared. You should cooperate with your employer in developing a hurricane plan. This includes evaluating your facility and the environment surrounding it. Then use that information to create an emergency plan that can be put into place to protect your co-workers and your business in the event of a hurricane.

Some of the steps that can be taken to prepare for a hurricane include:

1. Make sure to secure your property. Protect windows with

storm shutters or 5/8" marine plywood that is cut to fit and ready to install.

2. Install straps or clips to secure the roof to the frame of the structure.
3. Make sure that all shrubs and trees are well trimmed, with no loose branches; remove trees that could be knocked over by strong winds or excessive rain.
4. Make sure that the gutters are secure and clear of debris.
5. Consider building a safe room for employees who must be at work.
6. Establish evacuation routes.
7. Develop active employee lists.
8. Establish emergency communication methods, including alternatives to the use of phones.
9. Establish working groups with specific tasks to perform before, during and after the hurricane.

## Final Word

Over the past decade we have learned about the dangers posed by hurricanes. These dangers are magnified if we are not prepared to deal with the storm in advance and to respond to the needs of those affected by the storm after the wind and rain stop. Doing your part in a strong emergency plan is a good way to prepare for a hurricane.