

# Storm Watch

## How to prepare your family and property for severe weather

### Outside

**1. Trim dead or weak branches from surrounding trees.** Do not leave them for curbside pickup during a storm watch.

**2. Moor boat securely, store it upside down against a wall or move it to a safer place.** Remove canvas. Anchor a boat trailer with strong rope.

**3. Protect your windows with custom-fit shutters or 3/4-inch plywood.** Check with your local building inspector.

**4. Keep roof drains clear.**

**5. If you live in a flood-prone area, elevate or move structures to higher ground.**

**6. Bring indoors objects that may be blown or swept away,** such as lawn furniture, trash cans, children's toys, garden equipment, clotheslines and hanging plants.

**7. Lower water level in pool 6 inches. Add extra chlorine.** Turn off electricity to pool equipment and wrap up any exposed filter pumps with a waterproof covering.

**8. Plan how to take care of your pets. Leave them with a friend.** If you must evacuate, it is best to take your pets with you, but most shelters will not allow them. Large animals in barns should have plenty of food and water.

**9. If a storm is pending, fuel your vehicle.**

**10. Keep a smaller Disaster Supplies Kit (see next page) in the trunk of each car.**

**11. Keep sliding glass doors wedged shut in high wind.**

**12. If you use a portable generator, make sure you know what loads it can handle,** including start-up wattage. If you connect the generator to household circuit, you must have a double-pole, double-throw transfer switch installed between the generator and outside power, or the "back-feed" could seriously harm or kill utility line workers.

**13. Take down outdoor antennas, after unplugging televisions.**

### Inside

**14. Store valuables in a waterproof container at the highest point in your home.**

**15. Make two photocopies of vital documents and keep the originals in a safe deposit box.** Keep one copy in a safe place in the house, and give the second copy to someone out-of-town. Vital documents include birth and marriage certificates, tax records, credit card numbers, financial records, wills and trusts.

**16. Install smoke alarms on each level of your home,** especially near bedrooms. Use the test button to test them once a month. Replace batteries at least once a year.

**17. If you have special needs and require evacuation assistance in the event of a weather-related emergency,** you should register with your county's emergency management office.

**18. Fill bathtubs, sinks, and jugs with clean water in case water becomes contaminated.**

**19. Pick a "safe" room in the house, usually a first-floor interior hallway, room or closet without windows.**

### Resource information

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)**  
500 C Street, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20472  
Phone: (800) 480-2520  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

**American Red Cross**  
Attn: Public Inquiry Office  
431 18th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
Phone: (202) 639-3520  
[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

### A Disaster Supply Kit (recommended by the American Red Cross)

Have enough disaster supplies for 2 weeks ready. Keep items in airtight plastic bags. Replace stored food and water every six months. Rethink your kit and family needs at least once a year. (Replace batteries, update clothes, etc.) Ask your physician or pharmacist about storing prescription medications.

Emergency food & drinking water	Lantern with extra fuel
At least one change of clothes	Manual can opener
Baby food, diapers & formula	Matches
Batteries	Medicines, glasses or contact lens supplies
Bleach (without lemon or additives)	Mosquito repellent
Books, magazines, cards & games	Personal identification
Butane lighters	Pet food
Cash & credit cards	Phone numbers of places you could go.
Camera & film	Plastic trash bags
Car keys	Radio (battery-operated) or TV
Charcoal & lighter fluid	Rope (100 ft.)
Clock (non-electric)	Sleeping bags, pillows & blankets
Cooler (with ice)	Soap & shampoo
Duct & masking tape	Sturdy shoes
Extension cords	Toilet paper & towelettes
Fire extinguisher	Tool kit including hammer, crowbar, nails, saw, gloves, etc.
First Aid kit	Water purification tablets
Flashlight	
Grill or camp stove	
Heavy plastic (for roof if damaged)	

### If you must evacuate

leave as quickly as possible. Unplug your appliances, but leave on your refrigerator. Turn off the main water valve. If time allows, move furniture to a higher place. Take sleeping bags, blankets, warm protective clothing, emergency supplies, eating utensils and identification showing proof of residency. Tell somebody where you are going.

