

TOWN OF HILTON HEAD ISLAND

# guide to

— emergency preparedness field guide



GET A kit + MAKE A plan + STAY informed

# HURRICANES EARTHQUAKES TORNADOES FLOODS



# WILDFIRES

The Lowcountry is vulnerable to a variety of hazards including hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, earthquakes, wildfires, hazardous materials incidents, terrorism, power outages, and resource shortages.



In your planning, you should assume that basic services such as electricity, water, gas, and telephones may not be available for some time. This is why it is critical for everyone to:

## GET A KIT, MAKE A PLAN, AND STAY INFORMED.

The Town of Hilton Head Island's Emergency Management Division developed this Field Guide to help you prepare for all kinds of emergencies. You can use this guide to make an emergency plan based on your personal needs or situation. It includes helpful checklists and sections for you to fill in with your individualized plan information.

## WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW AND DO BEFORE A DISASTER STRIKES

- Learn the threats that we face on Hilton Head Island.
- Know what actions and precautions YOU should take before, during, and after an emergency.
- Use common sense, follow official instructions and stay informed.
- Take a first aid and CPR course.
- Build an emergency kit.
- Use this Field Guide to Make a Plan

# HURRICANES

By knowing your vulnerability, developing an emergency plan and keeping an emergency kit, you can reduce the effects of a hurricane's impact on you or your family.

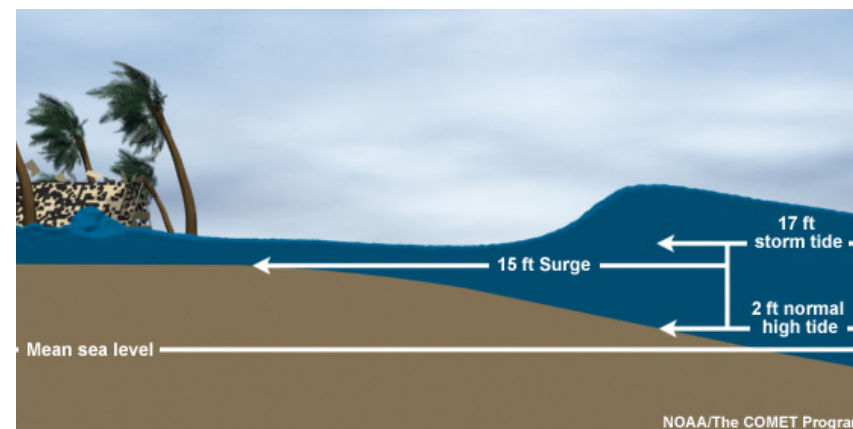
Storm surge, heavy rainfall, inland flooding, high winds, tornadoes, and rip currents are hazards associated with hurricanes. Of these, storm surge has the most potential for loss of life on the coast.

Hurricane categories do not account for storm surge.

## Category Wind Speed (mph) Damage

| Category | Wind Speed (mph) | Damage  |
|----------|------------------|---|
| 1        | 74 - 95          | Very dangerous winds will produce some damage         |
| 2        | 96 - 110         | Extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage |
| 3        | 111 - 129        | Devastating damage will occur                         |
| 4        | 130 - 156        | Catastrophic damage will occur                        |
| 5        | > 156            | Catastrophic damage will occur                        |

Storm surge is an abnormal rise in sea level accompanying a hurricane or other intense storm. This advancing surge combines with the normal tides and increases the water level to heights that will impact roads, homes, and other critical infrastructure. This rise of water can cause severe flooding in coastal areas, particularly when the storm tide coincides with the normal high tide.



# EVACUATION INFORMATION

Only the Governor of South Carolina has the authority to order an evacuation for the entire Island. **Prepare now.**



## PLANNING YOUR EVACUATION:

- Know how you will get there.
- Know the evacuation routes or roads you plan to take.
- Know where you will go.
- Make plans that will accommodate young children and pets if necessary. If you plan on using a public shelter, be aware that it may not accommodate pets.
- Have a Plan "B."

## PALMETTO BREEZE

- Call 843-757-5782 for pre-storm transportation.
- Register for a ride through the Hurricane Evacuation Assistance Registry at [www.palmettobreezetransit.com/hurricane-evacuation-information](http://www.palmettobreezetransit.com/hurricane-evacuation-information)



# EARTHQUAKES

## WHAT TO DO TO PREPARE YOUR HOME:

- Fasten shelves and appliances securely to walls.
- Place large, heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Store glass, china and other breakable items on lower shelves or in drawers.
- Repair defective electrical wiring or leaky gas fixtures. These present major post-earthquake fire risks.
- Repair any deep cracks in your foundation or ceiling. Get expert advice if these are discovered.

## DURING AN EARTHQUAKE



## FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- FEMA – [www.ready.gov/earthquakes](http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes)
- Red Cross – [www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/earthquake](http://www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/earthquake)
- US Geological Survey – [www.usgs.gov/natural-hazards/earthquake-hazards/science/prepare?qt-science\\_center\\_objects=0#qt-science\\_center\\_objects](http://www.usgs.gov/natural-hazards/earthquake-hazards/science/prepare?qt-science_center_objects=0#qt-science_center_objects)



# TORNADOES

## ACTIONS TO CONSIDER

- Determine in advance where you will take refuge.
- Underground shelters are uncommon on the Island; take shelter in an interior room or hallway on the lowest floor of a building.
- Stay away from windows, doors, and outside walls.
- Avoid auditoriums, cafeterias, and gymnasiums that have wide span roofs.
- DO NOT stay inside a trailer or mobile home! If possible, move to a building with a strong foundation.
- DO NOT get under an overpass or bridge.



## IF YOU ARE OUTSIDE AND THERE IS NOT A SAFE SHELTER NEARBY:

- Go to your vehicle, buckle your seat belt and drive to the closest sturdy shelter.
- If conditions worsen and your vehicle is being hit by debris, pull over and park. Stay in the car with the seat belt on. Put your head down below the windows; cover your head with your hands and a blanket, coat or other cushion if possible.
- If you can safely get noticeably lower than the level of the roadway, leave your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.
- Do not get under an overpass or bridge. You are safer in a low, flat location.
- Watch out for flying debris.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- FEMA - [www.ready.gov/tornadoes](http://www.ready.gov/tornadoes)
- National Weather Service - [www.weather.gov/safety/tornado](http://www.weather.gov/safety/tornado)
- SC Emergency Management Division - [www.scemd.org/prepare/types-of-disasters/tornadoes/](http://www.scemd.org/prepare/types-of-disasters/tornadoes/)



# FLOODS AND TSUNAMIS

## FLOOD

Whether during a hurricane, tropical storm, or simple rainstorm, flooding may affect large portions of the Island. One of the most proactive measures you can take as a homeowner is to purchase flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Remember to avoid contact with flood water. Never walk through or drive on flooded roads. Assume all flooded water is contaminated and thoroughly decontaminate anything that becomes wet. Be prepared to shelter in place using your emergency kit.

## TSUNAMI

A tsunami is a vast volume of seawater in motion, extending from the surface to the ocean floor. Tsunamis can travel at speeds of up to 600 mph (jet speed) in deep water; the characteristics of the ocean floor affect them. In shallow water, tsunamis slow down, bunch up, and can get enormously tall as they approach coastlines.



## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Town of Hilton Head Island - [www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/flood/](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/flood/)
- Flood Plain Administrator - 843-341-4757
- NFIP - [www.fema.gov/flood-insurance](http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance)

# FIRES

Use this checklist to determine how safe your home is from fires.

- Are exits clear and unobstructed?
- Are extension cords in good condition (not frayed or cracked) and only used as temporary wiring?
- If multiple items need to be plugged in, is a surge protector being used?
- Are fire extinguishers visible and accessible?
- Is combustible rubbish removed from the building on a regular basis?
- Are oily rags and combustible chemicals stored in a container that limits oxygen or is filled with water?
- Do you have working smoke alarms?
- Are attic, closets, and other storage areas kept neat and clean?
- Do you test your smoke alarm batteries monthly and change the batteries twice a year?
- Do you have your chimney and furnace/AC unit cleaned and serviced yearly?
- Are propane tanks stored outside the house?
- Is your address number clearly visible from the street?



# EMERGENCY SUPPLY CHECKLIST

You should be prepared to provide your own basic necessities for up to five days. Modify this list to suit your own personal needs. Consider the individual needs of each person you are preparing for.

- One gallon of water per person per day
- Nonperishable food
- Manual can opener
- Eating supplies (plates, napkins, and utensils)
- Baby supplies such as formula, bottles, and diapers
- Books, toys, games or other activities
- Food and water for pets
- Shot records for your pets
- First aid kit
- Emergency reference material (first aid book)
- Clothing for several days
- Credit card and cash
- A whistle or air horn to signal for help
- Battery operated or hand crank radio
- Flashlights and batteries
- Basic tool kit and work gloves
- Spare pair of reading or prescription glasses
- Air mattress and sheets
- Toilet paper, moist towelettes, garbage bag and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, hand sanitizer, female hygiene supplies
- Local, regional, and state maps
- Dust mask
- Cell phone with charger





# ADDITIONAL ITEMS TO CONSIDER

Some items that you will need in an emergency kit may be too difficult to maintain within the kit. However, they should be readily available in your home if you need to shelter in place or evacuate. Some of those items include:

- A list of a personal network of people who can help you in an emergency or evacuation.
- Information from your oxygen supply company about its emergency plans and how you will maintain your supply of oxygen.
- Functional need items such as a walker, oxygen, wheelchair, or hearing aid.
- Written instructions regarding your care if you have any special care needs.
- Instructions for the use of special medical equipment. Teach people in your network how to use the equipment
- 30-day supply of your prescription medications.
- Style and serial number of any medical devices.
- Laptop or tablet and accessories.
- Size and weight of any special medical equipment.
- Patch kit for tires.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Federal Emergency Management Agency:** [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)
- **FEMA Ready:** [www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- **National Red Cross:** [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)
- **Lowcountry SC Red Cross:** [www.redcross.org/local/south-carolina.html](http://www.redcross.org/local/south-carolina.html)
- **Palmetto Breeze:** [www.palmettobreezetransit.com](http://www.palmettobreezetransit.com)
- **National Alliance for Mental Illness:** [www.namilowcountry.org](http://www.namilowcountry.org)
- **SC Department of Health and Environmental Control:** [www.scdhec.gov/disaster-preparedness](http://www.scdhec.gov/disaster-preparedness)



# IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

If you are leaving your home to evacuate, it is a good idea to bring copies of important documents.

Before hurricane season, review and upgrade any of your existing insurance policies.

## LOCATION OF IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS:

- Passports
- Social Security cards
- Immigration Documents
- Insurance policies
- Licenses
- Car titles and registrations
- Wills
- Contracts
- House plans
- Mortgage and property deeds
- Immunization and other medical records
- Bank account numbers
- Birth certificates
- Marriage certificates
- Adoption Decrees
- Death certificates
- Deeds
- Stocks and bonds
- Prescriptions
- Recent tax returns
- Military records
- Important photographs and other irreplaceable documents
- Backup computer files on a portable drive
- Photos of valuables in your home
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# COMMUNICATION PLAN

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## OUT OF AREA PRIMARY CONTACT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## OUT OF AREA SECONDARY CONTACT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## PHYSICIAN #1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## PHYSICIAN #2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

# COMMUNICATION PLAN

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## INSURANCE HOME

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## INSURANCE AUTO

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOOL #1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## SCHOOL #2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_



# COMMUNICATION PLAN

## VETERINARIAN

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## OTHER CONTACT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## OTHER CONTACT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_

## OTHER CONTACT

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other info \_\_\_\_\_



# EVACUATION DESTINATIONS

## PRIMARY DESTINATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Info \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Driving Time \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Room Cost \_\_\_\_\_

## ALTERNATE DESTINATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Info \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Driving Time \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Room Cost \_\_\_\_\_

## ALTERNATE DESTINATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Other Info \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Driving Time \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Room Cost \_\_\_\_\_



# PETS + SERVICE ANIMALS SUPPLY CHECKLIST

You should be prepared to provide your own basic necessities for at least three days during a disaster. Make the same preparations for pets or service animals. Do not leave your pet behind.

Modify this list to suit the needs of your pet(s) and/or service animal(s).

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food, water, and treats for three days                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Contact information for a veterinarian at your evacuation location |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Food, water bowl, and manual can opener                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Certification or documentation for service animals                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proof of vaccination and medical records                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Current photo of the animal with the owner                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian emergency plans and emergency contact information | <input type="checkbox"/> Crate, bed, and/or blanket, and toys                               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> First aid kit, extra leash, and collar                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Litter, pan, and plastic bags                                      |

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Hilton Head Humane Association:**  
[www.hhhumane.org/](http://www.hhhumane.org/)  
843-681-8686
- **SC Association of Veterinarians:**  
[www.scav.org/scvrc](http://www.scav.org/scvrc)  
1-800-441-7228
- **South Carolina Animal Care and Control:**  
[www.scacca.org/](http://www.scacca.org/)  
803-238-7438
- **Beaufort County Animal Control Office:**  
[www.beaufortcountysc.gov/animal-services/index.html](http://www.beaufortcountysc.gov/animal-services/index.html)  
843-255-5010



# EMERGENCY NUMBERS & SOURCES

Stay up-to-date by obtaining information from reliable sources.

## SIGN UP FOR EMERGENCY ALERTS

- **Town of Hilton Head Island:**  
[www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/services/subscribe.cfm](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov/services/subscribe.cfm)
- **Nixle text alerts:**  
[local.nixle.com/register/](http://local.nixle.com/register/)

## WEBSITES

- **The Town of Hilton Head Island:**  
[www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov](http://www.hiltonheadislandsc.gov)
- **The Town of Hilton Head Island YouTube Channel:**  
[www.youtube.com/c/TownofHiltonHeadIslandSC](http://www.youtube.com/c/TownofHiltonHeadIslandSC)
- **Beaufort County Emergency Management:**  
[www.bcsco.net/our-agency/emergency-management-division/](http://www.bcsco.net/our-agency/emergency-management-division/)
- **South Carolina Emergency Management Division:**  
[www.scemd.org](http://www.scemd.org)
- **SCDOT Traveler Information System:**  
[www.511sc.org](http://www.511sc.org)
- **National Hurricane Center:**  
[www.nhc.noaa.gov](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov)
- **National Weather Service Charleston:**  
[www.weather.gov/chs/](http://www.weather.gov/chs/)
- **SC Insurance Association:**  
[www.scinsurance.net/](http://www.scinsurance.net/)
- **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA):**  
[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)
- **National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP):**  
[www.fema.gov/flood-insurance](http://www.fema.gov/flood-insurance)
- **American Red Cross:**  
[www.redcross.org/](http://www.redcross.org/)

# EMERGENCY NUMBERS & SOURCES

## PHONE NUMBERS

- **Hilton Head Island/Beaufort County Hurricane Re-Entry Hotline:** 833-254-6400
- **Town of Hilton Head Island:** 843-341-4600
- **Beaufort County Emergency Management:** 843-255-3200
- **Beaufort County Re-Entry Hotline:** 1-800-963-5023
- **SC Department of Transportation:** 855-GO-SCDOT • 855-467-2368
- **SC 511 Traveler Information System:** 511 on your cell phone.
- **Hispanic Outreach of SC:** 803-419-5112
- **Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce:** 843-785-3673
- **Beaufort Regional Chamber of Commerce:** 843-525-8525
- **Palmetto Breeze:**  
Pre-storm transportation  
843-757-5782  
During an evacuation  
843-255-4000

## SOCIAL MEDIA

- **The Town of Hilton Head Island on Twitter** [@TownofHHI](#)
- **The Town of Hilton Head Island on Facebook** [@TownofHHI](#)
- **The Town of Hilton Head Island on Flickr** [@TownofHiltonHeadIsland](#)
- **Beaufort County on Twitter** [@bftcountysc](#)
- **Beaufort County Government SC on Facebook** [@beaufortcountysc](#)
- **South Carolina Emergency Management Division on Twitter** [@SCEMD](#)
- **South Carolina Emergency Management Division on Facebook** [@SCEMD](#)
- **South Carolina Department of Transportation on Twitter** [@SCDOTPress](#)



# QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

## SHELTER IN PLACE EMERGENCY KIT

Prepare a shelter-in-place kit containing the following:

- A battery-operated AM/FM radio with spare batteries
- Flashlight with spare batteries
- Food and bottled water (one gallon per person per day)
- Towels
- Toys for young children
- First-aid kit and medicine
- Other items essential for your family's survival
- Include food and water for your pets
- Consider sanitary arrangements for your family and pets.

## EVACUATION SUPPLY KIT

- Food and water for three days (one gallon per person per day) and/or special dietary foods
- Toiletry items (soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo)
- Prescription medicines, medical equipment and important medical records

- Clothing for several days
- Blankets, pillows, and towels
- Identification and important papers
- Checkbook, credit card and cash
- Flashlights with extra batteries and phone chargers
- Baby supplies
- Pet supplies

## OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Have a good road map.
- Know how to safely shut off electricity, gas, and water.
- Secure all loose yard items.
- Move valuable items to inner rooms or upper floors.
- Check your refrigerator and freezer for perishable items.
- Unplug major appliances to avoid damage from lightning strikes or power surges.
- Consider obtaining and pre-drilling plywood to board up windows of your home.



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**HILTON HEAD ISLAND FIRE RESCUE**  
**2023**

