

**POLK COUNTY, TEXAS  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date: June 1, 2019

Contact: Polk County Office of Emergency Management  
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**HURRICANE SEASON IS HERE!**

Hurricane Season is here! Are you prepared?

- Know your hurricane risk: Our area is at risk for high winds, thunderstorms, flooding, and power outages during a hurricane.
- Have an evacuation plan that you have discussed with your family. The evacuation routes in Polk County are: State Highway 146, US Highway 59, and US Highway 287 West.
- Assemble disaster supplies including food, water, medication, batteries and cash \*before\* an emergency. Be sure to keep your gas tank full through the hurricane season which ends November 30<sup>th</sup>. Watch this video to prep a Go Bag, it's scary simple: <https://youtu.be/Htgqb0pwrlQ>.
- Prepare financially: Set aside a small amount from each paycheck for your emergency savings.
- Check your insurance coverage: Are you covered for high winds, damage, and flooding? It takes 30 days for flood insurance to begin <https://www.floodsmart.gov/>. Don't wait until it's too late! Flood insurance is also an option for renters. Snap photos of important documents and save them in a secure place to access during an emergency. <https://youtu.be/i3MfRpND5gk>.
- Strengthen your home: Trim trees and shrubs. High winds can turn branches into projectiles during a storm. Make sure the roof of your home and business is properly maintained. When constructing consider elevating, using flood damage resistant materials, and installing storm shutters. Prepare now by cleaning out drains, gutters, and ditches to keep water from backing up into your home.
- Check on your neighbors: Almost half of Americans expect to rely on their neighbors after a disaster...do you know yours?
- Make an emergency plan: Preparing the family for an emergency is as simple as a conversation over dinner. Get started now.
- Sign up for local emergency alerts: Visit <https://alertmepolkcounty.bbcportal.com/> today to sign up for alerts from Polk County.

For more tips and information visit: <https://www.ready.gov/hurricanes>

See the attached FEMA handout for more hurricane preparedness information.

# BE PREPARED FOR A HURRICANE

Threats from hurricanes include powerful winds, heavy rainfall, storm surges, coastal and inland flooding, rip currents, tornadoes, and landslides.



FEMA

FEMA V-1006/ May 2018

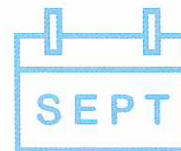
Hurricanes are massive storm systems that form over warm ocean waters and move toward land. The Atlantic hurricane season runs June 1 to November 30. The Pacific hurricane season runs May 15 to November 30.



Can happen along any U.S. coast or territory in the Atlantic or Pacific



Can affect areas more than 100 miles inland



Most active in September

## IF YOU ARE UNDER A HURRICANE WARNING, FIND SAFE SHELTER RIGHT AWAY



Determine your best protection for high winds and flooding.



Evacuate if told to do so.



Take shelter in a designated storm shelter or an interior room for high winds.



Listen for emergency information and alerts.



Only use generators outdoors and away from windows.



Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters.

# HOW TO STAY SAFE WHEN A HURRICANE THREATENS



## **Know your area's risk of hurricanes.**

**Sign up for your community's warning system.** The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

**If you are at risk for flash flooding,** watch for signs such as heavy rain.

**Practice going to a safe shelter** for high winds, such as a FEMA safe room or ICC 500 storm shelter. The next best protection is a small, interior, windowless room in a sturdy building on the lowest level that is not subject to flooding.

**Based on your location and community plans,** make your own plans for evacuation or sheltering in place.

**Become familiar with your evacuation zone,** the evacuation route, and shelter locations.

**Gather needed supplies for at least three days.** Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Don't forget the needs of pets.

**Keep important documents in a safe place** or create password-protected digital copies.

**Protect your property.** Declutter drains and gutters. Install check valves in plumbing to prevent backups. Consider hurricane shutters. Review insurance policies.



**If told to evacuate, do so immediately.** Do not drive around barricades.

**If sheltering during high winds, go to a FEMA safe room,** ICC 500 storm shelter, or a small, interior, windowless room or hallway on the lowest floor.

**If trapped in a building by flooding, go to the highest level of the building.** Do not climb into a closed attic. You may become trapped by rising flood water.

**Listen** for current emergency information and instructions.

**Use a generator or other gasoline-powered machinery ONLY outdoors** and away from windows.

**Do not walk, swim, or drive through flood waters.** Turn Around. Don't Drown.\* Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock you down, and one foot of moving water can sweep your vehicle away.

**Stay off bridges over fast-moving water.**



**Listen to authorities for information** and special instructions.

**Be careful during clean-up.** Wear protective clothing and work with someone else.

**Do not touch electrical equipment** if it is wet or if you are standing in water. If it is safe to do so, turn off electricity at the main breaker or fuse box to prevent electric shock.

**Avoid wading in flood water,** which can contain dangerous debris. Underground or downed power lines can also electrically charge the water.

**Save phone calls for emergencies.** Phone systems are often down or busy after a disaster. Use text messages or social media to communicate with family and friends.

**Document any property damage** with photographs. Contact your insurance company for assistance.

## **Take an Active Role in Your Safety**

Go to **ready.gov** and search for **hurricane**. Download the **FEMA app** to get more information about preparing for a **hurricane**.

