



Southampton Township Office of Emergency Management



5 Retreat Road, Southampton, NJ 08088

Southampton Twp. Natural Disaster Information and Actions

Hurricane Information and Actions

A **Hurricane Watch** is issued for a coastal area when there is a threat of hurricane conditions within 24 – 36 hours. It means you must take actions to obtain supplies, secure your home and prepare to evacuate.

A **Hurricane Warning** is issued when hurricane conditions of strong winds, high water and storm surge are expected in a specified coastal area in 24 hours or less. It means you must take action for your safety.

Pre – Evacuation Actions

- ❖ Fill your car with gas, check car battery and oil; flashlight and radio batteries.
- ❖ Put your survival kit together and refill prescription drugs and obtain special medications (e.g. insulin).
- ❖ Secure outdoor lawn furniture, loose materials, shutter windows, etc.
- ❖ Prepare your family for evacuation. You may have to evacuate even before a hurricane warning is issued.
- ❖ Make arrangements for your pets. They will not be allowed in public shelters.
- ❖ Top off underground tanks to prevent flotation in the event of a flood.
- ❖ Put together materials needed to take to a shelter such as prescription medications – Special dietary food – Specific medical information –Personal aides, eyeglasses, hearing aids, etc.
- ❖ Remember late evacuations will take longer to clear the threatened area – **Evacuate early and promptly.**

Flood Information and Actions

A **Flood Warning** is issued as an advance notice that a flood is imminent or is in progress at a certain location. Flood warnings are forecasts of impending floods and are distributed to the public by the NOAA Weather Radio, local radio and television, and through local emergency agencies.

A **Flash Flood Watch** is issued when flash flooding is possible within the designated watch area – **Be Alert.**

A **Flash Flood Warning** is issued when a flash flood has been reported or is imminent – take necessary precautions.

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Severe Thunderstorm Information

Severe Thunderstorm Watch- Conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather including large hail and damaging winds. Severe thunderstorms sometimes do produce tornadoes. Watch the sky and listen to the radio or television for more information. Be prepared to take shelter.

Severe Thunderstorm Warning- Damaging winds or large hail is imminent or occurring. These severe weather elements have been reported or radar indicated. Take shelter. Turn on a battery operated radio or television to receive warnings and severe weather statements.

Before Thunderstorms

- ❖ Purchase a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio
- ❖ with battery backup and tone-alert feature, which automatically alerts you when a Watch or a Warning is issued. Know the county(s) in which you live and work. The National Weather Service use county names when watches, warning and advisories are issued and broadcast. New Specific Area Message Encoder (SAME) Weather Radio can be programmed to alarm only for a specific county or a group of adjacent counties.
- ❖ Check the weather forecast before leaving for extended outdoor periods and postpone plans if severe weather is imminent.
- ❖ Keep a list of emergency phone numbers. Teach children how and when to call 911 for emergency assistance.
- ❖ Choose a friend or family member who lives out of the area for separated family members to call to report their whereabouts and conditions.
- ❖ Keep important documents and records in a safe deposit box or other secure locations.
- ❖ Maintain a disaster supply kit.

During Thunderstorm

- ❖ Close all windows and doors. Draw shades or blinds to reduce the risk from flying glass if window or door glass breaks due to high winds.
- ❖ Monitor the radio or television for emergency information or instructions.
- ❖ Avoid using the telephone or other electrical appliances until the storm passes.
- ❖ Turn off the air conditioner. If lightning strikes, a power surge could damage the compressor.
- ❖ Delay taking baths or showers until after the storm passes.

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- ❖ If outdoors, seek shelter immediately. If you can hear thunder, you are probably close enough to the storm to get struck by lightning.
- ❖ If you are in a boat when a thunderstorm threatens, you should attempt to reach shore as quickly as possible.
- ❖ If you are driving, pull safely to the shoulder away from trees and power lines. Lightning can flash from trees or power poles into a vehicle through the radio antenna. Normally, in the open, a vehicle is a safe shelter from lightning. Avoid touching metal parts of the vehicle when lightning is nearby.
- ❖ If you find yourself in a position where there is no immediate shelter available, find a low spot away from trees and power poles where you can squat low.

After Thunderstorms

- ❖ Monitor the radio or television for emergency information or instructions.
- ❖ Check for injured victims. Render first aid if necessary. Most lightning strike victims can be revived with CPR. Do not attempt to move severely injured victims unless absolutely necessary. Wait for emergency medical assistance to arrive.
- ❖ Take photos or videotape the damage to your home or property.
- ❖ Do not make unnecessary telephone calls.
- ❖ If driving, be alert for hazards on the roadway.
- ❖ Check on neighbors or relatives who may require special assistance.

Tornado Safety Information

Tornado Watch: Conditions are favorable for the development of severe weather including tornadoes, large hail, and damaging winds. Review your family tornado drill and check to make sure all your safety supplies are handy. Turn on local TV, radio or NOAA Weather Radio and stay alert for warnings.

Tornado Warning: A tornado is imminent or occurring. A tornado has been reported or radar indicated.

Prevention and practice before the storm:

- ❖ Have a family tornado plan in place, based on the kind of dwelling you live in and the safety tips below. Know where you can take shelter in a matter of seconds and practice a family tornado drill at least once a year.
- ❖ Have a pre-determined place to meet after a disaster. Flying debris is the greatest danger in tornadoes; so, store protective coverings such as a mattress, sleeping bags, or thick blankets in or next to your shelter space, ready to use on a few seconds' notice.

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Know the signs of a tornado:

1. Strong, persistent rotation in the cloud base.
2. Whirling dust or debris on the ground under a cloud base -- tornadoes sometimes have no funnel!
3. Hail or heavy rain followed by either dead calm or a fast, intense wind shift. Many tornadoes are wrapped in heavy precipitation and can't be seen.
4. Day or night - Loud, continuous roar or rumble, which doesn't fade in a few seconds like thunder.
5. Night - Small, bright, blue green to white flashes at ground level near a thunderstorm (as opposed to silvery lightning up in the clouds). These mean power lines are being snapped by very strong wind, maybe a tornado.
6. Night - Persistent lowering from the cloud base, illuminated or silhouetted by lightning -- especially if it is on the ground or there is a blue-green-white power flash underneath.

What to Do If a Tornado Is Imminent or Occurring:

In a house with a basement: Avoid windows. Get in the basement and under some kind of sturdy protection (heavy table or work bench) or cover yourself with a mattress or sleeping bag. Know where very heavy objects rest on the floor above (pianos, refrigerators, waterbeds, etc.) and do not go under them. They may fall down through a weakened floor and crush you. Head protection, such as a helmet can offer some protection.

In a house with no basement or an apartment: Avoid windows. Go to the lowest floor, small center room (like a bathroom or closet), under a stairwell, or in an interior hallway with no windows. Crouch as low as possible to the floor, facing down; and cover your head with your hands. ~~A bathtub may offer a shell of partial~~ protection. Even in an interior room, you should cover yourself with some sort of thick padding (mattress, blankets, etc.), to protect against falling debris in case the roof and ceiling fail. A helmet can offer some protection against head injury.

In an office building or nursing home: Go directly to an enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building -- away from glass and on the lowest floor possible. Then, crouch down and cover your head. Interior stairwells are usually good places to take shelter, and if not crowded, allow you to get to a lower level quickly. Stay off the elevators; you could be trapped in them if the power is lost.

In a mobile home: Get out! Even if your home is tied down, it is not as safe as an underground shelter or permanent, sturdy building. Go to one of those shelters, or to a nearby permanent structure, using your tornado evacuation plan. Most tornadoes can destroy even tied-down mobile homes.

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In a school: Go to the interior hall or room in an orderly way as you are told. Crouch low, head down, and protect the back of your head with your arms. Stay away from windows and large open rooms like gyms and auditoriums.

In a car or truck: Vehicles are extremely risky in a tornado. There is no safe option when caught in a tornado in a car, just slightly less-dangerous ones. If the tornado is visible, far away, and the traffic is light, you may be able to drive out of its path by moving at right angles to the tornado. Seek shelter in a sturdy building, or underground if possible. If you are caught by extreme winds or flying debris, park the car as quickly and safely as possible -- out of the traffic lanes. 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 (such as a ditch), leave your car and lie in that area, covering your head with your hands.

In the open outdoors: If possible, seek shelter in a sturdy building. If not, lie flat and face-down on low ground, protecting the back of your head with your arms. Get as far away from trees and cars as you can; they may be blown onto you in a tornado.

In a shopping mall or store: Do not panic. Watch for others. Move as quickly as possible to an interior bathroom, storage room or other small, enclosed area, away from windows.

In a church: Do not panic. If possible, move quickly but orderly to an interior bathroom or hallway, away from windows. Crouch face-down and protect your head with your arms. If there is no time to do that, get under the seats or pews, protecting your head with your arms or hands.

After The Tornado:

Keep your family together and wait for emergency personnel to arrive. Carefully render aid to those who are injured. Stay away from power lines and puddles with wires in them; they may still be carrying electricity! Watch your step to avoid broken glass, nails, and other sharp objects. Stay out of any heavily damaged houses or buildings; they could collapse at any time. Do not use matches or lighters, in case of leaking natural gas pipes or fuel tanks nearby. Remain calm and alert and listen for information and instructions from emergency crews or local officials.

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