

It's Hurricane Season. Know Your Risk, Be Prepared, Stay Informed



1. Know Your Risk

Understand the hazards that are associated with hurricanes and tropical storms, and what risks they bring. The main hazards include storm surge (the large volume of ocean water that is driven ashore by a hurricane or tropical storm), heavy rainfall and inland flooding, as well as high winds. These hazards can cause property damage, widespread loss of power, and catastrophic flooding both inland and along the coast.

In New Bedford, it may be necessary to evacuate parts of the city to protect residents from storm surge flooding. In all but the most severe storms, the area of evacuation will be those low-lying areas outside the New Bedford Hurricane Barrier. Evacuation is also an option for residents living outside potential flood areas who feel more comfortable “riding out” the storm in the safety and security of a mass care hurricane shelter.

Know if you live or work in an evacuation zone. Massachusetts recently established hurricane evacuation zones for coastal communities based upon the extent of storm surge flooding (inundation) an area might experience during a hurricane or tropical storm. To find out if you live or work in a hurricane evacuation zone, contact New Bedford Emergency Management at 508-961-3060.

Residents and businesses are urged to heed evacuation orders from city officials when issued.

2. Be Prepared

There are important steps everyone should take to prepare themselves and their family for the next hurricane or tropical storm. Being prepared reduces the risk of property damage, injury or death.

- Be prepared to evacuate or shelter in place;
- Ensure your family is prepared by building an Emergency Kit and developing a Communication Plan;
- Prepare your home and property for a hurricane.

3. Stay Informed

Stay informed throughout Hurricane Season: know how to receive warnings and alerts, and critical information before and during a storm. Sources of emergency information include:

- Traditional news media
- Emergency Alert System (EAS) messages via radio and television.
- “CodeRED” emergency telephone notification system. (Emergency message callouts to land-line telephones. Residents may “opt-in” if they use a cellular phone or VoIP phone as their primary telephone)
- MEMA’s *Massachusetts Alerts* - free smartphone application that delivers critical information, including severe weather. To learn more and download the free app (called Ping4Alerts!) onto your smartphone, visit: www.mass.gov/mema/mobileapp.
- All Hazards National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio.

Please contact the New Bedford Emergency Management Office for additional information.