

FEMA Urges Preparedness ahead of Peak Hurricane Season

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PHILADELPHIA – As we enter peak hurricane season, FEMA Region 3 leaders are urging residents, no matter where you live, to keep an eye on the forecast. Late summer into early fall is typically the most active period of the Atlantic hurricane season and if you haven't prepared your family and your home, now is the time.

In May, the National Weather Service (NWS) released its annual hurricane season outlook. **NWS's 2024 outlook is the most aggressive forecast on record.** We have seen three named storms so far this year, including Hurricane Beryl. Beryl set records as the first-ever Category 4 hurricane in June and, once it strengthened in early July, the earliest Category 5 storm.

We have seen a lull in tropical activity in July, which is typical. But the risk of tropical storms is far from over, particularly as we are approaching the height of hurricane season. Our region has seen significant impacts from tropical cyclones in the second half of hurricane season, including Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee in 2011, Hurricane Sandy in October 2012, Hurricane Isaias in August 2020 and Hurricane Ida in September 2021.

“The July lull in hurricane activity can create a false sense of calm for what may lay ahead,” said FEMA Region 3 Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney “Do not be complacent. Now is the time to prepare for hurricanes and their impacts, whether you live in a coastal or inland community.”

Stay Informed

NWS is expected to release their mid-season outlook in the coming days. As we approach the peak of hurricane season, you can stay informed by having multiple ways to receive alerts and warnings.



Download the [FEMA mobile app](#) for disaster resources, weather alerts and safety tips. Available in English and Spanish, this app provides a customizable checklist of emergency supplies, maps of open shelters and recovery centers, disaster survival tips and weather alerts.

[Sign up for community alerts](#) in your area. To ensure you can receive life-saving alerts on your smartphone, make sure the “Government Alerts” or “Emergency Alert Messages” option is turned-on in your phone settings.

Finally, know your personal risk. If you live near the coast or a tidal area, you are potentially at risk of storm surge and fierce winds during a hurricane. Many states have “Know Your Zone” websites that can help you easily identify if your home is in an evacuation zone. But hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. [Here are some online tools](#) to help you find out how tropical cyclones can impact your area.

During an emergency, follow instructions from local officials. If you are told to shelter in place or evacuate, do so without delay.

Plan Now

You don’t have to live in a coastal community to experience hurricane flooding. Every area of our region is at risk of catastrophic impacts from tropical cyclones. Preparing **now** can save lives.

It only takes one storm to change your life and your community. Recent stories, such as Hurricane Ida, prove that both the coastline and inland regions are vulnerable to tropical storms. Anywhere it rains, it can flood. No matter where you live, work, or travel you should take steps to prepare.

Visit www.Ready.gov/hurricanes (or www.Listo.gov for Spanish speakers) and understand what you can do for your family, friends and community. The following are a selection of actions everyone can take now to prepare:

1. *Know your evacuation route:* Follow the directions from local officials for community evacuation. If you’re evacuating by car, find and use the official evacuation routes, many of which are marked by posted evacuation route signs. If you need to relocate, identify a safe place away from home where you could go. Plan to leave early to avoid major traffic delays. Remember:



“When storm surge is on the way, evacuate today!”

2. *Gather supplies:* Have enough food, water and other [supplies](#) for every member of your family to last several days. Consider the unique needs of your family, such as formula for infants, medication for seniors or supplies for [pets](#).
3. *Make an emergency plan:* Individuals, families, and businesses should take steps to know their risk and prepare for dangerous weather. Know where you'll go during a weather emergency and how to communicate with family and friends. Make sure everyone in your household knows and understands [your hurricane plan](#). Don't forget a plan for the [office, daycare center, school and any other locations you frequent](#).
4. *Help your neighborhood and community:* Check with neighbors, [senior adults](#), or those [who may need additional help](#) securing hurricane plans to see how you can be of assistance to others. Consider participating in Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) or other mutual aid groups.
5. Build Resiliency

2024 is FEMA's Year of Resilience and August is National Resilience Month, a chance for us to celebrate and share the actions towns and cities have taken to safeguard their communities from future threats.

FEMA has invested in mitigation projects across Region 3 including [home elevations in Hampton, Virginia](#), a [floodwall project at the DC Water Wastewater Treatment Plant](#), a [shoreline stabilization project in King George, Virginia](#) and landslide remediation efforts in Pittsburgh, PA. These projects are a great example of different ways FEMA funding can be used to increase resiliency against different threats.

While FEMA is investing in community projects, there are [steps you can take at home](#) to make your property more resilient when it comes to hurricane flooding. Just one inch of water [can cause \\$25,000 of damage to your home](#). Make sure that you are protected with flood insurance, even if you are a renter.

You can take action today. Clear away debris outside of your home and secure outdoor items or store them indoors. Keep drains, gutters, and downspouts clear of debris. Trim large trees and shrubs away from the house. Move outdoor furniture and other movable items indoors. Anchor mailboxes, fences, and heavy objects securely to the ground.



FEMA

Taking steps to prepare your family and your home today can ensure you're ready for what hurricane season may bring in the next few months.

On August 5, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 3 will host a media tour of the Regional Response Coordination Center led by Regional Administrator MaryAnn Tierney to highlight the importance of preparedness ahead of the peak of hurricane season.

To attend our media tour, virtually or in person, reach out to the FEMA R3 News Desk at femar3newsdesk@fema.dhs.gov.

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FEMA's mission is helping people before, during, and after disasters. FEMA Region 3's jurisdiction includes Delaware, the District of Columbia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia.

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