

# FEMA Urges Preparedness Now for Hurricane Ida

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WASHINGTON -- FEMA is tracking Hurricane Ida, forecast to make landfall in the United States as a dangerous major hurricane on Sunday. Areas along the Gulf Coast will start to experience effects of Ida starting Saturday.

The National Hurricane Center is forecasting an increasing risk of life-threatening storm surge along the Gulf Coast. Additionally, there is an increasing risk of dangerous hurricane force winds and heavy rains.

Yesterday, FEMA received a request for an emergency declaration from Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards. The governor requested assistance for emergency protective measures, including direct federal assistance under the Public Assistance program for all 64 parishes. The request is under review.

## Now is the Time for Everyone to Take Urgent Steps to Prepare

Keep in mind, hurricane track, size, intensity and direction can change. Areas far from the hurricane's center can experience effects such as flooding, intense rainfall and heavy winds.

- Anyone in the forecast path should complete final preparations as soon as possible, monitor their local news for updates and directions provided by their local officials and [heed local evacuation orders](#).
- **Storm surge can cause water levels to rise quickly** and flood large areas in just minutes, and you could be left with no time to take action if you haven't already evacuated as instructed. Additionally, during the peak of a storm surge event, it is unlikely that emergency responders will be able to reach you if you are in danger.
- **Use a generator safely.** Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
  - **Keep generators outside and far away from your home.** Windows, doors and vents could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the



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- label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov) to learn how you can keep yourself, your family, and your pets safe.
  - [Download the free FEMA app](#) (available in English and Spanish) to receive emergency alerts and real-time safety notifications, emergency preparedness tips, and disaster resources. The app is available for Apple and Android devices.

## FEMA Actions Ahead of Hurricane Ida

- FEMA is working with its federal, state and local partners as well as non-governmental agencies to support needs of areas affected by Ida. The agency has pre-positioned supplies such as meals, water, and generators to assist states with impacts from this storm.
- Louisiana is prepared to facilitate the evacuation of its residents if necessary.
- FEMA has already deployed nearly 500 employees to Louisiana and Texas ahead of Hurricane Ida. Additionally, more than 2,000 FEMA employees are deployed to Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas and are ready to provide additional support as needed.
- A FEMA Incident Management Assistance Team is in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, others are en route to Louisiana, Mississippi and the Region 4 response coordination center in Atlanta, Georgia. Other teams remain on standby by for deployment if necessary. State liaison officers are deployed to Louisiana and Texas.
- Urban Search and Rescue teams are deploying to Louisiana; other teams are on alert.
- Mobile communication support is in route to Louisiana.

## Prepare for Storm Surge and Flooding and Be Prepared to Evacuate if Ordered to Do So

- **Personal Safety:** Evacuate if told to do so. If you go to a community or group shelter, remember to follow the latest recommendations from [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\) for protecting yourself and family from COVID-19](#). FEMA is prepared and activated to respond to disasters in states in a COVID-19 environment and is well postured to handle this upcoming storm despite the Delta surge.



- **Know your evacuation zone:** If you are in potentially affected areas, you may have to evacuate quickly. You should [learn your evacuation routes](#), have a family emergency communications plan, keep a battery-powered radio handy and have plans for your family members and pets. If you are a person with disabilities, you may need to take additional steps to plan for both your needs and your service animal. Visit [Ready.gov/flooding](https://www.ready.gov/flooding) to learn how to stay safe before, during and after a flood.
- **Gather Supplies:** [Have enough supplies](#) for your household. Include medication, disinfectant supplies, face [masks](#), [pet supplies](#) and a battery-operated radio with extra batteries. After a hurricane, you may not have access to these supplies for days or weeks.
- **If you do not evacuate, find a safe location to ride out the storm.** Avoid enclosed areas where you may become trapped, such as an attic. You will be safest if you evacuate when told to do so.
- **Don't drive through flood waters:** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low lying areas at bridges and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- **Flood Insurance:** Your National Flood Insurance Program policy will [cover and reimburse certain actions](#) you take to minimize damage to your home and belongings before a flood.

## Stay Safe During Power Outages

- **Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.** A grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. These should only be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows.
- **Use a generator safely.** Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
- **Keep generators outside and far away from your home.** Windows, doors and vents could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- **Use only flashlights or battery-powered lanterns for emergency lighting.** NEVER use candles during a blackout or power outage due to extreme risk of fire.
- **Power Outages can impact the safety of food** in your refrigerator and freezer.



- Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary.
- Throw away any food that has been exposed to a temperature of 40°Fahrenheit (4° Celsius) or higher for two hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, heat-resistant bacteria that cause food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly.

## Keep Yourself, Family and Neighbors Safe Before and After Flooding

- **Stay off the roads:** Emergency workers will be assisting people in flooded areas. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way.
- **Check on neighbors who may require assistance if it is safe to do so.** This includes individuals with infants, children as well as older adults, people with disabilities and others with access and functional need.
- **Don't drive through flood waters:** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low lying areas at bridges and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- **Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded.** Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- **Stay out of floodwater.** Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines or contain hazards such as human and livestock waste, dangerous debris, contaminants that can lead to illness, or wild or stray animals.



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