Protect Documents to Start Your Recovery if a Disaster Strikes

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ST. CROIX, U.S. Virgin Islands – Once the immediate danger passes after a hurricane or other disaster, having important documents such as insurance policies and property records will be crucial to help you start the recovery process. Taking time now to safeguard critical documents will give you peace of mind, and help you avoid additional stress during the difficult days after a disaster.

If your home is damaged by the winds and rains from a tropical storm or hurricane, you would need documentation to request assistance from insurance providers and from government disaster assistance programs. Store important documents either in a safe deposit box, waterproof and fireproof portable container or another location separate from your home.

Store electronic copies of important documents in a password-protected format on a removable flash or external hard drive in your fireproof and waterproof box or safe or consider using a secure cloud-based service. Be cautious about sharing personal financial information, such as your bank account number, Social Security number, or credit card number.

Make sure your insurance policies and personal documents, such as ID, are up to date. In addition, take the time now to think about the priceless personal items you would want to protect from damage or take with you if you had to suddenly evacuate your home.

Take time today to take an inventory of your household documents, contacts and valuables and put yourself in a position to start your recovery process quickly and efficiently if a disaster impacts your home. Learn more about safeguarding critical documents in English at https://go.dhs.gov/4rA and Spanish at https://go.dhs.gov/4rP .

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