

FEMA Urges Preparedness Ahead of Severe Storm Heading East, Monitors Damage in Texas and Louisiana

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WASHINGTON -- Severe weather is already affecting some parts of the nation, but as an intense severe storm moves east, residents are encouraged to take the storm seriously and to act now to prepare homes and families for potential impacts.

The National Weather Service is forecasting heavy to excessive rainfall for eastern Louisiana into central Alabama which could bring flash, urban and riverine flooding Friday. Scattered severe thunderstorms with a few tornadoes, very large hail and damaging winds are possible across parts of the Gulf Coast States Friday and into the night.

Last night's severe storms brought damaging winds and flash flooding to a wide area across Texas and Louisiana.

FEMA remains ready to support states and tribes in the affected areas as the storm progresses. Additionally, FEMA has distribution centers strategically located throughout the country and agency teams are on standby to distribute commodities and equipment as necessary. Moreover, FEMA's Regional and National Incident Management Assistance Teams and Urban Search and Rescue teams are available to deploy at a moment's notice.

Here are some tips to help individuals, families and business owners prepare:

Have a plan. Know how you will keep yourself, your family and your pets safe if severe storms are forecast for your area. Make sure you consider your family's unique needs, including anyone who needs medicine or medical equipment. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if you aren't together when a severe



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storm hits. Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov) in Spanish language for more information on how to stay safe before, during and after severe weather.

Gather emergency supplies for your home. Include a three-day supply of food and water for each person along with items for any pets. Supplies should include essential personal items such as medicine, clothing, first-aid supplies a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, extra flashlights and batteries.

Gather emergency supplies for your vehicle. It's best to avoid traveling by car if there is a severe weather threat. If it's unavoidable, make sure to have emergency supplies in the vehicle. These supplies should include the same essentials as you have at home, plus the following: jumper cables, flares or reflective triangles, a car cell phone charger, a blanket and a map. Never drive around barriers, as roads may be flooded, damaged or blocked by debris.

Know Where to Get Information. Monitor media for updated information on the storm and/or actions to take. Follow the directions provided by local, state or tribal officials regarding emergency actions.

Listen to Local Officials. If you are told to stay off the roads, don't venture out. Shelter in place at your home or business until you are told it is safe to travel. Get to know the terms that are used to identify weather threats and discuss with your family what to do if watches or warnings are issued.

Check on Your Loved Ones. Check on your neighbors or friends, particularly those who are vulnerable or need extra support. Older adults and individuals who depend on life-sustaining medical equipment or assistance devices such as a ventilator or mobility devices, may need additional support in areas that have lost power.

Other Important Tips:

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 windows, doors and vents. Read and follow instructions on the generator label and in the owner's manual. Any electrical cables you use with the generator should be free of damage and suitable for outdoor use.



Never use charcoal grills or camp stoves indoors. Deaths have occurred from lethal levels of carbon monoxide when people burned charcoal or used camp stoves in enclosed spaces.

Stay away from downed wires, including cable TV wires. They may be live with deadly voltage.

Use caution with candles. If possible, use flashlights instead. If you must use candles, do not burn them on or near anything that can catch fire. Never leave burning candles unattended. Extinguish candles when you leave the room.

Preparedness and Safety Information for the Public

Individuals in the potentially affected areas are urged to have an emergency communications plan, monitor local radio or TV stations for updated emergency information and follow the instructions of state, tribal and local officials. Download the [FEMA Mobile App](#), available in English and Spanish languages, to set up weather alerts, review preparedness information, safety tips and an emergency kit checklist and more.

Flood Risks

There is the potential for flooding with this storm. Driving through a flooded area can be extremely hazardous and almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles.

When in your car, look out for flooding in low-lying areas and bridges over or near water. If you encounter flood waters, do not drive through the area -- turn around, don't drown.

If you live in an area likely to experience flooding from this storm and have a [National Flood Insurance Program \(NFIP\) flood policy](#), you may be eligible for reimbursement for actions taken to protect your property. Call your insurance agent to find out more.

FEMA's mission is helping people before, during and after disasters.

