

As Tropical Storm Francine Approaches the Gulf Coast, FEMA Urges Residents in its Path to Prepare Now

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WASHINGTON – FEMA is monitoring Tropical Storm Francine as it rapidly approaches southeast Texas and portions of Louisiana, bringing heavy rain, flooding and life-threatening storm surge. People in the storm’s potential path should closely monitor the weather, follow directions from local officials and evacuate immediately if told to do so.

The [National Hurricane Center](#) has issued a hurricane watch for parts of Louisiana and a tropical storm watch is in effect for parts of Texas and Louisiana. Winds up to 50 mph are expected as the storm gradually intensifies as it approaches Louisiana and the upper Texas coastline. Tropical storm force winds may extend up to 160 miles from the center. About 4-8 inches of heavy rainfall are expected, which could lead to flash and urban flooding.

FEMA continues to work closely with the states of Texas and Louisiana and stands ready to support local and state efforts. The FEMA Region 6 Response Coordination Center is activated and prepared to coordinate deployment of additional people and resources if requested.

Stay informed. People in these areas should continue to follow the instructions of state and local officials by monitoring local radio or television stations for updated emergency information.

Have a plan. 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 storm hits. Visit [Ready.gov](#) or [Listo.gov](#) (Spanish language) for more information on how to stay safe before, during and after severe weather.



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Know how to stay safe during high winds, storm surge and flooding.

Determine how best to protect yourself from high winds and flooding. Evacuate immediately if you are told to do so. If you cannot evacuate, take refuge in a designated storm shelter or an interior room for high winds. Go to the highest level of the building if you are trapped by flooding. Do not climb into a closed attic. You may become trapped by rising flood water.

Be in the know about your evacuation route. Be prepared to evacuate quickly, if told to do so. Act now by learning your evacuation routes, practice with your household and pets, and identify where you will stay. Learn more about how to [evacuate safely on Ready.gov](#) and [Listo.gov](#) (Spanish language).

Tips to Stay Safe Before, During and After a Tropical Storm

Turn Around. Don't Drown™. Driving through a flooded area can be extremely hazardous. 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 or fall if you are walking through it. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUVs) and pick-ups.

Stay out of floodwater. Walking, swimming or driving through flood waters is extremely dangerous. Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines or contain hazards such as wild or stray animals, human and livestock waste and chemicals that can lead to illness.

NOW is the time to prepare: Download the [free FEMA App](#) available in English and Spanish languages to receive real-time weather alerts and find local emergency shelters in your area. You can find more hurricane preparedness information on [Ready.gov](#) and [Listo.gov](#) (Spanish language).

Other Important Tips

Hurricanes can affect power systems, causing power outages. If the power goes out, 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.

Remember, gas pumps, automated teller machines (ATMs), medical equipment, computers, cell phone chargers, grocery store checkout counters, escalators and



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elevators may not work during a power outage.

When using generators, always use them outdoors and at least 20 feet from windows, doors and attached garages. Make sure to keep the generator dry and protected from rain or flooding.

