



BLUEPRINTS

UNC Sea Grant

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CIRCULATING COPY

Hurricane Safety Checklist Sea Grant

A hurricane is building in the Caribbean. It begins a track northward on a course that marks its landfall as the central North Carolina coast. Are you prepared to handle one of nature's most devastating threats?

To prepare for a hurricane, follow the hurricane safety checklist below. You can save life and property if you prepare for a hurricane before it strikes.

Step 1

Is your home on land which is less than 20 feet above sea level? If yes, go to Step 3. If no, go to Step 2.

Step 2

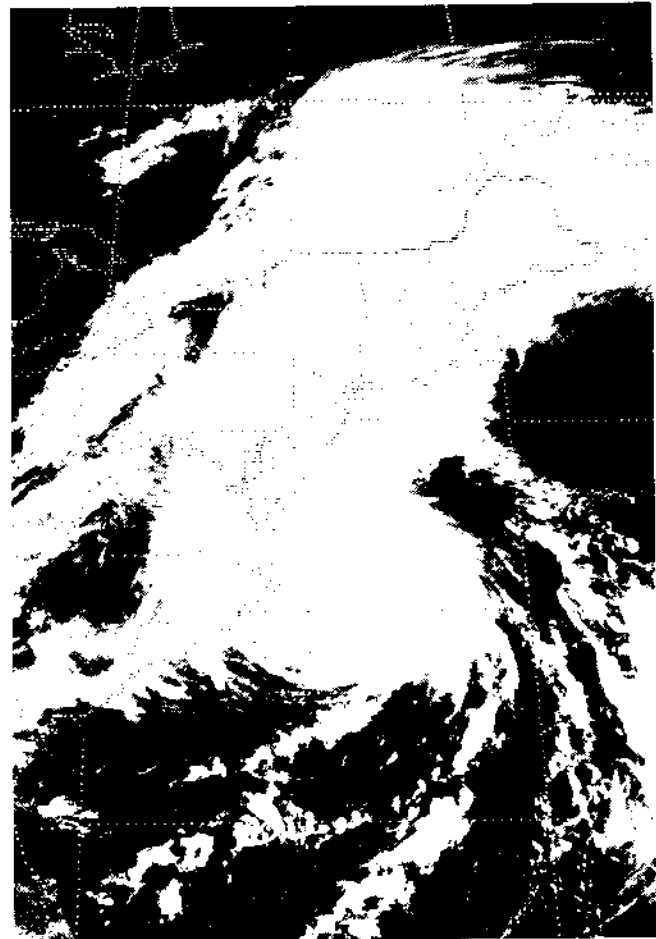
Do you live within two miles of the ocean or one mile of a sound or river? If yes, go to Step 3. If no, go to Step 4.

Step 3

You live in an area which is vulnerable to flooding during a hurricane. Because nine out of 10 hurricane-related deaths are due to drowning, you should use the following checklist to prepare for a hurricane emergency. You should make decisions now about where you will go if you have to evacuate, how you would get there and how long it would take you to move to safe shelter.

If a *hurricane watch* is issued for your area, take the following precautions:

- Drive to a nearby gas station and fill your tank.
- Store or tie down all outdoor objects, such as garbage cans, outdoor furniture and garden tools.
- If you own a boat, moor it adequately. Remember that tides can rise 10 to 20 feet above normal. Take this into consideration when securing lines. If your boat is small enough, move it onshore. Fill



Hurricane Belle winds northward in 1976 after a scrape with the North Carolina coast.

- the boat with water or tie it down to keep it from being blown about by the hurricane winds.
- Tape or board up the windows of your house.
- Pack valuable papers such as deeds, wills, insurance documents and contracts to take with you.
- Prepare a survival box containing a medical first-aid kit, special medication which you or other members of your family may need, rope, a flashlight, a transistor

radio, extra batteries, containers of fresh water, water purification tablets, non-perishable foods, one change of clothing and sleeping bags.

- Contact friends, relatives and/or neighbors to let them know your plans. Monitor radio and television reports for updates on storm conditions.

If a *hurricane warning* is issued, prepare to evacuate. Take the following steps immediately:

- Shut off the main power switch and main gas valve. Elevate your appliances, such as the refrigerator, stove, washer, dryer and freezer, above the floor to minimize water damage. Cover the refrigerator and freezer with newspapers and blankets for insulation and to prevent food spoilage.
- Go through the checklist once more and make sure that you have completed all of the steps.
- Evacuate. If you are handicapped and/or need transportation, call your local office of Emergency Management.

Step 4

You may be able to ride out the storm in your own home. However, if you live in a mobile home, you should go back to Step 3 and plan to evacuate. (Even mobile homes which are anchored and have overhead braces are vulnerable to wind damage).

If a hurricane watch is issued for your area, take the following precautions:

- Drive to a gas station and fill your tank.
- Store or tie down all outdoor objects.

- If you own a boat, moor it adequately. Remember that tides can rise 10 to 20 feet above normal. Take this into consideration when securing lines. If your boat is small enough, move it onshore. Remember to fill the boat with water or tie it down to keep it from being blown by the hurricane winds.
- Tape or board up the windows of your house.
- Check the batteries of your flashlight and transistor radio. Make sure you have extra batteries.
- If you require special medication or prescription drugs, make sure that you have an ample supply before the stores close.
- Store plenty of fresh water in containers. Make sure that you have several days' provisions of non-perishable foods.
- Contact friends, relatives and/or neighbors to let them know of your plans. Monitor radio and television reports for updates on storm conditions.

If a *hurricane warning* is issued, take the following steps immediately:

- Shut off the main power switch and main gas valve. Cover your refrigerator and freezer with newspaper and blankets for insulation and to prevent food spoilage.
- Go through the checklist once more and make sure that you have completed all of the steps. Then, go indoors and stay indoors. Brace all doors to prevent wind damage. Monitor storm reports with your transistor radio. Stay indoors until an official all-clear notice is given.

—John Sanders

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