



Preparing for A Flood

1. Know if you are in a flood prone area.
2. Each year, update flood procedures to be followed by your company, employees and tenants:
 - Including Emergency Contacts
 - Evacuation Plans
 - Emergency Training
3. Research information on preparedness and previous experiences. Remember that the next flood can always be bigger than floods you have seen before.
4. Buy sand and sandbags ahead of time. Learn how to use them; call the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (206) 764-3406 for a copy of their brochure on sandbagging.
5. Minimize flood damage:
 - Store valuables at higher elevations if possible.
 - Store chemicals above flood levels.
 - Ensure that underground storage tanks are fully sealed and secure.
 - Have check valves installed in building sewer traps to prevent floodwaters from backing up in sewer drains.
 - Move vehicles and RVs to higher ground.

6. Keep the following on hand - emergency contact information, a portable radio, flashlights, fresh batteries, non-perishable food and drinking water, essential medicines and a first-aid kit.
7. Keep street drains, storm grates and flap gates free of leaves and other debris.
8. Consider a Flood Insurance Policy.

During a Flood

1. Keep a battery-powered radio tuned to a local station. Follow all emergency instructions.
2. If you are caught in your building by rapidly rising waters, call 911 for help. Then move to a higher floor or to the roof. Take warm, weatherproof clothing, a flashlight, a cellular phone and a portable radio.
3. Do not walk or wade in flooded areas.
4. Be prepared to evacuate. If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Evacuation is much simpler and safer before floodwaters become too deep for ordinary vehicles to drive through. If you evacuate by car:
 - Do not drive where water is over the road or past barricaded road signs.
 - If your car stalls in a flooded area, abandon it as soon as possible and walk to safety in the direction you came from.
 - Follow recommended evacuation routes, as shortcuts may be blocked.
5. When flooding is imminent, but only if time permits:
 - Close the main gas valve.
 - Turn off all utilities in your building at the main power switch. Do not touch any electrical equipment unless it is in a dry area or you are standing on a piece of dry wood while wearing rubber-soled shoes and rubber gloves.
6. Record flood statistics such as time, gage reading, and local flood elevations for use in future home flood forecasting.

After a Flood

1. Before re-entering your building, check for structural damage that could cause the building to collapse. Be cautious of potential gas leaks, electrical shorts and live wires.
2. When re-entering a building, use flashlights, rather than lanterns or candles (in case of gas leaks).
3. Have a professional check your heating system, electrical panel, outlets and appliances for safety before using. Call the gas company to have them turn the gas back on.

4. Document your losses. Photograph damages and record repair costs.
5. Contact your insurance agent for flood loss claims.
6. Pump out flooded basements gradually (about one-third of the water per day) to avoid structural damage.
7. Follow procedures for safe clean-up.
8. Remove and empty sandbags. Do not dump sand into the river or on its banks. Store it for future use.
9. Financial assistance is only available following a federal disaster declaration. Listen to the radio or television for updates on disaster assistance and registration procedures.

Hurricane Season Information

Hurricane Season Dates - June 1 - November 30

Tropical Depression: An organized system of clouds and thunderstorms with a defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 38 mph (33 knots) or less.

Tropical Storm: An organized system of strong thunderstorms with a defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph (34-63 knots).

Hurricane: An intense tropical weather system with a well defined circulation and maximum sustained winds of 74 mph (64 knots) or higher. In the western Pacific, hurricanes are called "typhoons," and similar storms in the Indian Ocean are called "cyclones."

TROPICAL STORM WATCH: Tropical Storm conditions are possible in the specified area of the Watch, usually within 36 hours.

TROPICAL STORM WARNING: Tropical Storm conditions are expected in the specified area of the Warning, usually within 24 hours.

HURRICANE WATCH: Hurricane conditions are possible in the specified area of the Watch, usually within 36 hours. During a Hurricane Watch, prepare to take immediate action to protect your family and property in case a Hurricane Warning is issued.

HURRICANE WARNING: Hurricane conditions are expected in the specified area of the Warning, usually within 24 hours. Complete all storm preparations and evacuate if directed by local officials.

SHORT TERM WATCHES AND WARNINGS: These provide detailed information on specific hurricane threats, such as tornadoes, floods, and high winds.

Hurricane Scale: 1 is minimal with winds of 74-95 mph; 2 is moderate with winds of 96 - 110 mph; 3 is extensive with winds of 111-130 mph; 4 is Extreme with winds of 131-155 mph; 5 is catastrophic with winds of over 155 mph.

Helpful Web Sites

Harris County Office of Emergency Management	www.hcoem.org
National Weather Service	www.nws.noaa.gov/
Harris Co. Flood Control Hurricane Tracking	hcfcd.org/hurricanetracker.html
National Hurricane Service	www.nhc.noaa.gov/
Harris County Flood Alert System	www.hcoem.org/flood_alert_system.htm
Weather News	www.weather.com
Live Dopler Radar / Free Tracking Software	www.khou.com
Federal Emergency Management Agency	www.fema.gov
National Flood Insurance Program.....	www.fema.gov/nfip
Red Cross of America.....	www.redcross.org
Global Emergency Management System	www.fema.gov/gems
Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Response.....	www.houstontx.gov/oem
Disaster Recovery Planning	www.disaster-recovery-plan.com
Journal of Disaster Prevention and Management	www.emeraldinsight.com/insight

Important Phone Numbers

City

City of Houston	(713) 247-2200
Emergency Services (Police / Fire / EMS).....	9-1-1
Houston Public Works and Engineering	(713) 837-0600
Department of Health and Human Services	(713) 794-9320
Houston Downtown Management District.....	(713) 650-3022
Houston Police Department	(713) 884-3131
Houston Fire Department	(713) 247-5000
Metropolitan Transit Authority	(713) 738-4000
Motorist Assistance Program (Call MAP)	(713) 225-5627

State of Texas

Texas Department of Public Safety (713) 681-1761
Texas Department of Transportation (713) 802-5000
Road Conditions and Closures (713) 802-5074
Texas Department of Insurance (800) 252-3439

Service Agencies

Greater Houston American Red Cross (713) 526-8300
 Night number (713) 526-0636
Houston Humane Society (713) 433-6421

Federal Agencies

National Weather Service (281) 337-5074
Marine Information Recording (281) 337-7895
Federal Emergency Management Agency (800) 462-9029