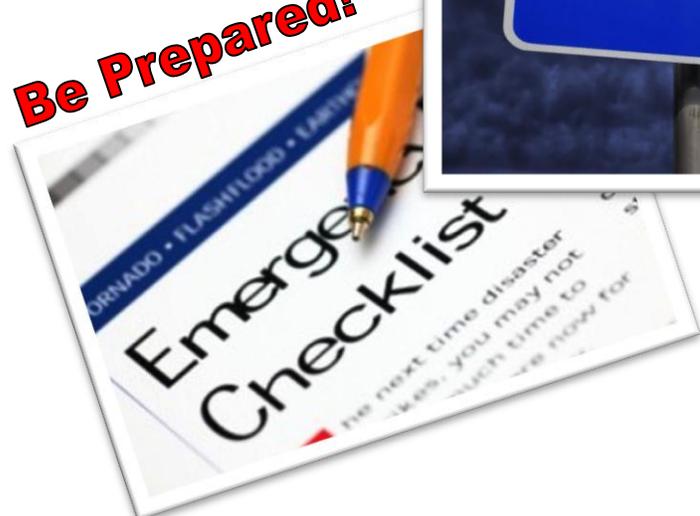


Preparing for Hurricane Season

Be Prepared!



Know Your Evacuation Zone!



Get a Plan!

With Hurricane Season upon us, memories of Ike, the third costliest hurricane ever to make landfall in the United States, are sure to resurface. Not knowing what to expect from such a massive storm, Ike resulted in the largest evacuation of Texans in our state's history. Hurricane Ike exposed our vulnerabilities, leaving over 22 percent of the state without power for days; some areas were without electricity for weeks.

In recalling the issues that plagued the residents of Precinct 7 as result of Hurricane Ike, the most prevalent were the damages caused by the storm's intense winds. Large branches of trees snapped and shallow rooted trees were toppled, making many streets impassable and hindering rescue efforts for days, in some instances, weeks after the storm ended. Extensive damage to power lines and poles resulted in power outages that lasted several weeks for some of our residents. Although, it is impossible to predict the amount of damage that a natural disaster will cause, there are things that can be done to be better prepared. Primarily, by the time a storm hits you should have all your preparations completed! If you prepare in advance and plan ahead your stress levels will be much lower.

In preparing for the hurricane season, the first step is understanding the watches and warnings that are issued by the National Weather Service. A hurricane WATCH means that hurricane conditions MAY threaten an area within 48 hours. A hurricane WARNING is issued when hurricane conditions are expected in a specified coastal area in 36 hours or less.

Be Prepared

In preparing for the Hurricane Season, make plans for action:

- Check and replenish emergency supplies.
- Learn the location of official shelters.
- Review the evacuation plan.
- Cover all of your home's windows with pre-cut plywood or hurricane shutters to protect your windows from high winds.
- Plan to bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garbage cans, and anything else that is not tied down.
- Turn off utilities as instructed. Otherwise, turn the refrigerator thermostat to its coldest setting and keep its doors closed.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Ensure that enough non-perishable food and water supplies are on hand
- Have at least a one week supply of medications on hand
- Review your insurance policy.
- Reinforce your garage doors; if wind enters a garage, it can cause dangerous and expensive structural damage.
- Ensure a supply of water for sanitary purposes such as cleaning and flushing toilets. Fill the bathtub and other large containers with water.
- Move valuable items away from the windows. If your home has more than one level, move items to the upper level to prevent water damage.

Evacuation

If an EVACUATION is ordered by local government officials:

- If instructed to leave - do so! The temptation to "tough it out" can put lives at risk.
- Stay Informed! Do not end up caught by surprise if a storm's path or intensity suddenly changes.
- Leave as soon as possible, taking the safest route possible.
- Bring emergency supplies and protective clothing.
- Take a sleeping bag and pillow per person.
- Lock home and leave.



Individuals with special needs or others requiring more information should contact their County Emergency Management Office.

Visit the following websites for more on Hurricane Preparedness:

- www.hcoem.org
- <http://www.ready.gov/prepared2014>
- <http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepare/ready.php>
- <http://www.redcross.org>