Storm Surge

KILLER FROM THE SEA

Photo courtesy of American Red Cross

A hurricane causes sea level to rise above normal tidal heights, with giant wind-driven waves and strong, unpredictable currents. These are the hurricane's worst killer.

If you live in a coastal area, be prepared.

- Know the elevation of your property above mean sea level. This information is available from city and county engineers.
- Have a safe evacuation route planned. Your community's hurricane preparedness plan should include designated safe areas, areas to be evacuated during a hurricane emergency, and safe evacuation routes to shelter.
- Learn the storm surge history for your area.

During the hurricane emergency, stay tuned to your radio or television for the latest Weather Service advisories, and follow hurricane safety rules.

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

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HURRICANE
SAFETY RULES

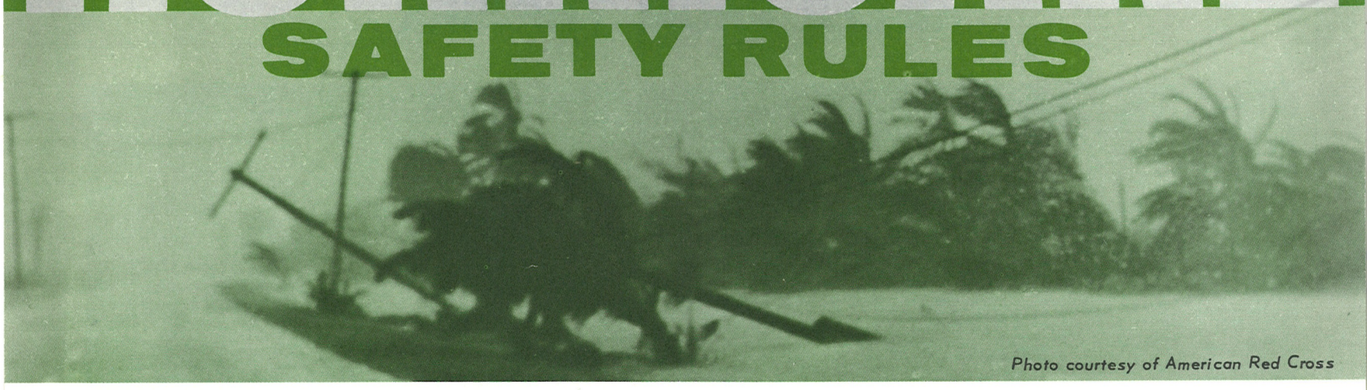

Photo courtesy of American Red Cross

HURRICANE ADVISORIES WILL HELP YOU SAVE YOUR LIFE . . . . BUT YOU MUST HELP. FOLLOW THESE SAFETY RULES DURING HURRICANE EMERGENCIES:

1. **Enter each hurricane season prepared.** Every June through November, recheck your supply of boards, tools, batteries, non-perishable foods, and the other equipment you will need when a hurricane strikes your town.

2. **When you hear the first tropical cyclone advisory,** listen for future messages; this will prepare you for a hurricane emergency well in advance of the issuance of watches and warnings.

3. **When your area is covered by a hurricane watch,** continue normal activities, but stay tuned to radio or television for all National Weather Service advisories. Remember: a hurricane watch means possible danger within 24 hours; if the danger materializes, a hurricane warning will be issued. Meanwhile, keep alert. Ignore rumors.

4. **When your area receives a hurricane warning:**

   Plan your time before the storm arrives and avoid the last-minute hurry which might leave you marooned, or unprepared.

   Keep calm until the emergency has ended.

   Leave low-lying areas that may be swept by high tides or storm waves.

   Moor your boat securely before the storm arrives, or evacuate it to a designated safe area. When your boat is moored, leave it, and don't return once the wind and waves are up.

   Board up windows or protect them with storm shutters or tape. Danger to small windows is mainly from wind-driven debris. Larger windows may be broken by wind pressure.

   Secure outdoor objects that might be blown away or uprooted. Garbage cans, garden tools, toys, signs, porch furniture, and a number of other harmless items become missiles of destruction in hurricane winds. Anchor them or store them inside before the storm strikes.

   Store drinking water in clean bathtubs, jugs, bottles, and cooking utensils; your town's water supply may be contaminated by flooding or damaged by hurricane floods.

   Check your battery-powered equipment. Your radio may be your only link with the world outside the hurricane, and emergency cooking facilities, lights, and flashlights will be essential if utilities are interrupted.

   Mobile homes are extremely susceptible to high winds. If you live in one, leave it for more substantial shelter.

   Keep your car fueled. Service stations may be inoperable for several days after the storm strikes, due to flooding or interrupted electrical power.

   Stay at home, if it is sturdy and on high ground. If it is not, move to a designated shelter, and stay there until the storm is over.

   Remain indoors during the hurricane. Travel is extremely dangerous when winds and tides are whipping through your area.

   Monitor the storm's position through National Weather Service advisories.

BEWARE THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE

If the calm storm center passes directly overhead, there will be a lull in the wind lasting from a few minutes to half an hour or more. Stay in a safe place unless emergency repairs are absolutely necessary. But remember, at the other side of the eye, the winds rise very rapidly to hurricane force, and come from the opposite direction.

5. **When the hurricane has passed:**

   Seek necessary medical care at Red Cross disaster stations or hospitals.

   Stay out of disaster areas. Unless you are qualified to help, your presence might hamper first-aid and rescue work.

   Drive carefully along debris-filled streets. Roads may be undermined and may collapse under the weight of a car. Slides along cuts are also a hazard.

   Avoid loose or dangling wires, and report them immediately to your power company or the nearest law enforcement officer.

   Report broken sewer or water mains to the water department.

   Prevent fires. Lowered water pressure may make fire fighting difficult.

   Check refrigerated food for spoilage if power has been off during the storm.

Remember that hurricanes moving inland can cause severe flooding. Stay away from river banks and streams. National Weather Service advisories will keep you informed on river flood stages.

Tornadoes spawned by hurricanes are among the storms' worst killers. When a hurricane approaches, listen for tornado watches and warnings. A tornado watch means tornadoes are expected to develop. A tornado warning means a tornado has actually been sighted. When your area receives a tornado warning, seek inside shelter immediately, preferably below ground level. If a tornado catches you outside, move away from its path at a right angle. If there is no time to escape, lie flat in the nearest depression, such as a ditch or ravine.

HURRICANE WATCHES MEAN A HURRICANE MAY THREATEN AN AREA WITHIN 24 HOURS.
HURRICANE WARNINGS MEAN A HURRICANE IS EXPECTED TO STRIKE AN AREA WITHIN 24 HOURS.

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