

BEFORE THE STORM

72 Hours

Trim Trees: Trim any dead branches or limbs off of trees, shrubs or bushes around your property. If there are branches that are hanging over your roof or close to a window, it is a smart idea to cut those off too. Lastly, make sure there are no branches hanging over or near where you park your car.



PLEASE NOTE: Do not pile loose debris on your curb unless you can call someone to get it soon after you place it there. You do not want to be stuck with a pile of dead branches with a storm coming.

Windows: If you have hurricane shutters, check that each one is in working condition. If you are going to cover your windows with plywood, make sure you know where all of the tools are that you need, and you have all of the hardware needed to install.

Gutters and Shingles: Secure loose gutters and downspouts. Make sure everything is clear from debris. Replace (or refasten) loose or worn roof shingles. In heavy winds loose shingles are likely to blow off. If you have a satellite dish, consider taking it down.

Document your Property: Take photos or videos of your personal property in case you need it for insurance purposes. It is a good idea to scan in all of your receipts so you can easily access them later. Other important documents to scan are your insurance policies, wills, stock certificates, passports, Social Security card, etc.

[Click here for more information on doing a home inventory.](#)

Seal Openings: Check the caulk (which is what seals gaps and seams) around your windows and doors. Weather damages caulk over time (more so in hot climates), causing it to crack and peel. Windows caulked poorly can allow sideways-blowing rain in during a storm.

Exterior walls that have holes cut out for cable or other electrical wires are another place to check for proper caulking. The holes that should be sealed with a waterproof exterior sealant to prevent water from coming in.

Secure Everything: If you can pick it up, the wind can too. Any item left in your yard (or your neighbors'), could become airborne during a storm, damaging windows, property, cars, even injuring people. Furniture, grill, garbage cans, even a tire swing, can do a lot of damage once picked up by the wind. If it is not possible to bring something inside, secure it with a tarp and heavy-duty twine/rope, or sand bags.

Prepare Your Pool: If you have a pool, leave it uncovered and turn off the power to the pool equipment. Do not drain the pool! The water provides weight to keep the pool in the ground. An empty pool can float or pop out of the ground due to pressure from excessive ground water caused by heavy rains. Add extra chlorine to prevent contamination from debris and excessive storm water.

Fill Gas Tank: Make sure your car's gas tank is full. If your area is evacuated during a hurricane, you may have to drive far distances without access to a gas station. Plus, the closer the storm is to you, the longer the lines at the pump.

