

Helping you **identify**  
and **manage risk**

# Windstorm Emergency Response Plan

**We encourage all our customers with exposure to potentially severe and damaging windstorms, hurricanes and rain events, to have a Windstorm Emergency Response Plan. It will help to reduce damage, restore operations and protect lives.**

## Windstorms 101

**Cyclones, hurricanes and typhoons are all tropical storm systems that form over oceans, and the name reflects which oceans they were formed over.**

Hurricanes form over the North Atlantic and Northeast Pacific oceans, and they are 'tropical' as they have a warm core (picking up heat from the warm oceans.) The surface, stronger winds and rain are concentrated near the storm centre. As energy is lost from the storm system it is said to transition to a 'post-tropical' storm, but this doesn't indicate that the storm is downgraded to be less severe. This transition generally sees the storm system enlarge

and the centre changes to a cold core (nor'easters are cold core storms.) The system then changes shape to resemble a 'comma', weather fronts appear with severe rain on one side and high winds on the other, and a dangerous storm surge can appear.

Non-tropical storms, that can form throughout the year, have a cold core, and they can be just as severe as tropical storms.



## Preparation

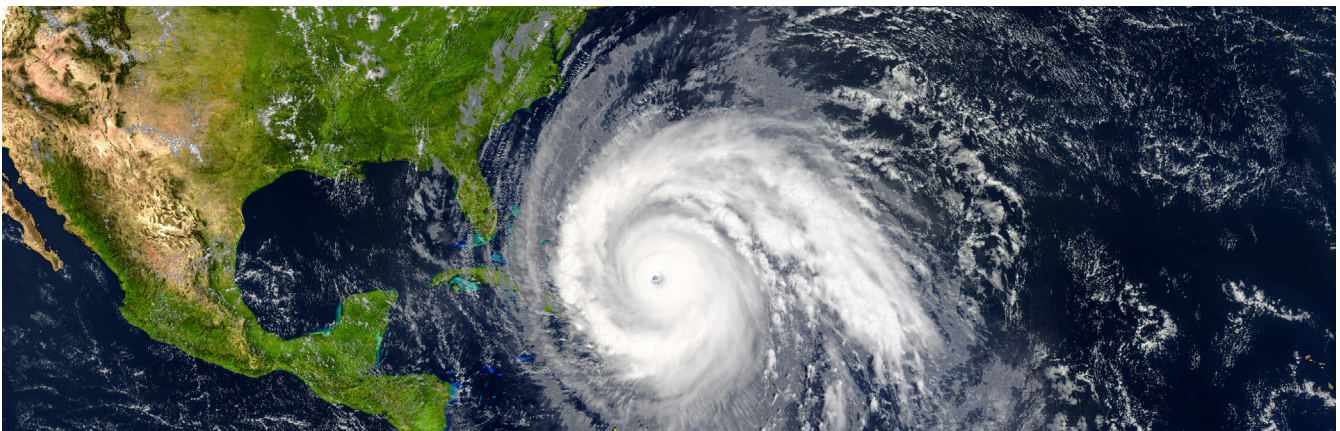
When implementing a windstorm plan, consider other emergency plans, systems, or practices already in place that will support surviving and recovering from a storm including:

- Shutting off water, gas, oil, and non-essential electricity supplies as required.
- Ensuring that the appropriate members of staff and volunteers are familiar with the process designated at each location.
- If possible, maintain a back-up electrical power supply in case power is disrupted for an extended period following the storm (typically the Emergency Management Offices recommend preparing for 72 hrs.)
- Test/run backup generators on a monthly basis and use a suitable stabilizer for liquid fuel supplies to prevent the deteriorating fuel gumming up carburetors stopping the engine starting/running.
- Establish and maintain emergency contact information for all staff, volunteers, and key service providers.
- Back up all critical data securely to the cloud, or a separate device, that can be stored at a location that is protected from the storm.
- Appoint a designated person with the authority to implement the emergency action plan.
- Retain a roofing contractor to allow faster access to critically needed repair services after a storm.
- Have your roofing contractor check the condition of your roof before the storm season starts (usually June 1st).
- Verify rooftop equipment is secure and that connections and fasteners holding equipment in place are not corroded, remove any debris or loose items from the roof.
- Consider adding strapping or bracing to reinforce rooftop equipment.

## Seasonal monitoring for storms

Implement an annual plan to monitor for severe weather, tropical storms and hurricanes.

- Maintain an awareness of developing and approaching storm and hurricane activity.
- Websites are available for all hurricane-prone regions that provide this information.
- The World Meteorological Organization of the United Nations maintains a Severe Weather Information Center at [severe.worldweather.wmo.int](http://severe.worldweather.wmo.int)
- The US National Hurricane Center website at [nhc.noaa.gov](http://nhc.noaa.gov)
- Environment Canada maintains the Canadian Hurricane Centre at [ec.gc.ca/ouragans-hurricanes](http://ec.gc.ca/ouragans-hurricanes)
- By monitoring each season, you will know when and how to react.



## 48 Hours

**About two days before a windstorm or hurricane is expected to impact your facility you should consider the following:**

- Review the emergency action plan with all involved personnel — contractors, staff and volunteers as needed.
- Check all roofs and make repairs as time allows.
- Remove all loose items from the roof and remove any debris that has accumulated.
- Ensure roof drains, gutters, downspouts are clear of obstructions.
- Ensure only the appropriate staff trained in the safe use of ladders, scaffolding, lifts and platforms, as well as fall prevention techniques should undertake any work at height, otherwise you should contact a specialist roofing contractor.
- Check that outside storm drains and catch basins are clean and clear of obstruction.
- Remove any debris from outdoor areas that might become a projectile during the storm.
- Remove loose, outdoor, inactive equipment such as BBQ's, play equipment, furniture etc.
- Back-up computer data.
- Consider trimming large trees and shrubs if damaged or broken limbs could become projectiles.

## 36 Hours

**The impact of the windstorm or hurricane is now imminent, but take the time to:**

- Protect or relocate vital business records.
- Anchor portable buildings or trailers to the ground.
- Secure outdoor equipment that cannot be moved.
- Install storm shutters (e.g. plywood covers) over doors, skylights, windows etc.
- Consider putting sandbags in front of doorways, brick vents etc. to help redirect storm or flood water away from the building (the sandbags will not completely stop water entry but can help divert water.)
- Remove critical equipment from basement areas and raise this equipment (e.g. computers) off floors.
- Shut-off fuel, gas and oil services, and non-essential electrical systems.
- Verify all fire and life safety systems are in service (e.g. water supplies, fire pumps, sprinklers, fire alarms).

## After the Storm

**When it is safe to return to your premises:**

- Verify that water, and power supplies are available to your facility and have qualified personnel thoroughly check building utility systems.
- Ensure essential systems (e.g. heating, fire detection, security systems, fire pumps etc.) are still operational. Note: if these systems cannot be immediately re-instated then a fire-watch, security patrols etc. may have to be considered.
- Inspect your facility for any damage and initiate emergency repairs immediately. Be aware that additional hazards such as live electrical wires, broken glass, precarious loads etc. may now be present.
- Promptly notify contractors to avoid waiting in line for service.
- Establish repair priorities, including the building envelope, utilities, and fire protection systems.
- Begin salvage as soon as possible to prevent further damage. Downed trees can also be a hazard if they are in contact with power lines or at risk of causing bodily injury or property damage. Only qualified contractors or personnel should remove downed or partially downed trees.
- Contact your insurance broker and notify your insurance company.

## After a Flood or Storm Surge

**Flooding often occurs during a hurricane due to storm surges and torrential rainfall. If your facility has flooded:**

- First check that it is safe to enter your property.
- If your electricity service is not already switched off at the main electrical panel get a qualified person to do this. Note: with the main power off, essential systems such as fire detection, security systems may now be shut-off so a fire-watch, security patrols etc. may have to be considered.
- Watch out for hidden dangers in flood waters such as sharp objects, raised manhole covers and pollutants.
- Always wear waterproof outerwear, gloves, boots and a minimum N95 face mask when clearing up after a flood.
- Remove water from your premises if possible, with a high-capacity flood pump. The use of a separate generator may be necessary if electrical supplies are switched off.
- If accumulated flood debris must be removed from around a building or walls, then remove the debris evenly to prevent uneven loading that could lead to a collapse.
- If you are drying the property naturally then keep all doors and windows open as much as possible.
- If dehumidifiers are being utilized, then close external doors and windows.
- If your property has suffered damage, contact your insurance broker, and notify your insurance company.

*Ecclesiastical's Risk Control specialists are ready to work with you, to help you and your community implement a windstorm emergency response plan and be far more prepared for such severe weather events.*

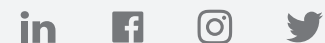
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