

Disaster Supplies

If you plan to stay at home during a hurricane, you should have the following items on hand. It is a good idea to get these items at the beginning of the hurricane season because as a storm approaches, stores become very busy and stock is depleted quickly.

Water

Water should be stored in plastic containers - avoid using glass. Store one gallon of water per person per day - and plan on at least five days of need. Save your empty 2-liter bottles during hurricane season to fill with water the night before a storm may hit. Fill bathtubs and sinks with water for sanitation use. Check them for leaks before the storm, and if water is draining out, place a sheet of plastic wrap over the drain. Washing machines can also be filled with water to use for washing hands. Water purification agents such as bleach should also be on hand.

Food

Store at least a three day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, cooking or preparation. Think about what kind of food you would take camping - those are the types of foods that you need on hand after a storm. Many good foods come in ready-to-eat, non-refrigerated packaging. Small packages are a good choice because you won't have refrigeration for leftovers. Make sure you have a good stock of Sterno, a full tank of propane for your grill, or plenty of charcoal. Never use propane or charcoal indoors.

First Aid Kit

It is a good idea to have two first aid kits. One for your home and the other for your car. Your kit should include things like bandages, scissors, tweezers, soap, latex gloves, lubricant, assorted size safety pins and any non-prescription drugs deemed necessary. Stock plenty of mosquito repellent and "bug bite sticks" for relieving the itch of insect bites and stings.

Tools and Other Supplies

You should have a basic tool kit with items you feel are necessary to make temporary repairs after the storm. Basics include: plastic sheeting, paper plates and plastic utensils, flashlights and a battery-operated radio with plenty of spare batteries (or better yet - a hand-crank radio), non-electric can opener, fire extinguisher (because of the candles), tent, matches, aluminum foil, plastic storage containers, plastic garbage bags, small shovel and insect repellent. A corded phone (not cordless - they require electricity) will help if you have phone lines but no power. Small, portable antennas will give you access to local television stations if you have power but no cable. Small televisions often have adapters for use in automobiles.

Clothing and Bedding

Clothing and bedding items should be protected by covering them with plastic dropcloths, placing them in waterproof boxes, plastic bags or other suitable containers. Be sure to have available: work boots and gloves, rain gear, blankets or sleeping bags, lots of towels, hats and sunglasses.

Special Items

Always remember family members with special needs. For children you should have plenty of necessary baby formula, diapers, bottles and medications. Adults with medications such as insulin or other prescription drugs should have their prescriptions filled before the storm. Don't forget any denture needs and eye glasses or contacts. You may also consider asking your vet about a mild sedative for your pets if they are anxious during storms. You should also have some form of entertainment for everyone including books for adults. Keep all important family documents safe and in a waterproof container. Items for consideration to keep safe are wills, insurance policies, bank account numbers, credit cards, your address book and a household inventory complete with serial numbers and pictures or video.