

HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS: A GUIDE FOR HOSPICE PATIENTS & CAREGIVERS



MY HURRICANE PLAN

My Name: _____

My hospice provider's name and contact information:

My emergency contact person and their contact information:

If there is an evacuation ordered, I will go:

I am registered with my local emergency management office:

YES NO

Additional notes regarding my hurricane plan:

**HURRICANE SEASON IS
JUNE 1 - NOVEMBER 30**

INTRODUCTION

Hurricane preparation for hospice patients and their caregivers can present special challenges. We have developed this booklet especially for you in hopes that it answers your specific questions and alleviates any concerns you may have regarding preparation and evacuation in the event of a hurricane.

Many hospice patients and their providers have experienced severe storms in the past and have survived the damage and loss of property that has occurred during previous hurricane seasons. As Floridians, we have experience in such matters.



It is from these lessons that we have turned our attention toward the need to prepare our hospice patients and their caregivers for such emergencies.

Any season can bring disaster. Winter storms or summer heat waves can effect your ability to get to the store for food or medication. Even a simple water main break can leave you without vital water for a few days. Being prepared in advance is the key.

The following is a brief checklist of actions you can take before, during, and after a hurricane strikes. Check this list each spring to be better prepared for the hurricane season.

Please read through this booklet and discuss with your hospice team members things that are specific to your situation and needs.

STOCK YOUR HOME

It's a good idea to stock a supply of food, water, and supplies for an emergency. It is usually recommended to have at least one week's worth of supplies on hand.

Water. Each person's need for drinking water varies, depending on age, physical condition, and time of year. The average person needs at least two quarts of water or other liquid to drink per day, but more would be better. Also keep a couple of gallons on hand for sanitary purposes. Store water in plastic, airtight containers and replace every two months to be sure it is pure.



Food. Supplies should include enough nonperishable, high-energy foods to feed you and your family for up to seven days. You may be stranded in your home for several days or local stores may run low on supplies. Also, if you go to a public shelter, it is helpful to take as much non-perishable food as you can carry.

Suggested Foods:

- Whole dry milk
- Canned fruit juices
- Canned meats and fish, like vienna sausage, meat spread, or tuna
- Meat substitutes, like beans and nuts
- Peanut butter
- Dried fruits
- Dry cereals, bread and crackers
- Granola bars or cookies
- Any special dietary needs

Supplies and Equipment:

- Battery-operated radio with weather band
- First-aid kit
- Flashlight

- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Paper plates and utensils, including a bottle and can opener
- Toilet articles and sanitary items
- Extra batteries
- Other items related to the daily care of the hospice patient

Medicine. It is very important to keep an adequate supply of any medicines you take. If you are stranded in your home, or requested to go to a public shelter, you may not be able to get more medication easily. If possible, you should also keep an extra pair of glasses on hand for emergencies or hearing aid batteries if necessary.

PLAN FOR EVACUATION

Even though you have emergency supplies, don't make the mistake of trying to "ride out" a hurricane at home. EVACUATE if local authorities tell you to do so, especially if you live in low-lying areas which could be easily flooded.

Leave early before roads become jammed or flooded and you can't get out. Your hospice provider can assist in coordinating transportation to a shelter through the local emergency management office. You can also call a local senior citizens group, your church, or your community emergency management office for help in arranging transportation.



It is most important for your hospice provider to have the contact information for the individual or location to which you are evacuating so they can remain up to date regarding your care and your whereabouts.

When you evacuate, you may wish to take some of the supplies listed previously with you, but don't take more than you can carry. If you are going to a special needs shelter, the most important items to take are your medication, a blanket, the portable radio, an extra change of clothing and perhaps a small supply of packaged quick-energy foods like raisins and granola bars.

Plan ahead to make evacuation easier. Keep your hospice provider abreast of any change in plans regarding your evacuation. Your hospice provider cannot assist or care for you if they cannot locate you. Plan your evacuation together. If possible, make plans in advance to stay with friends or relatives living inland on higher ground if you need to evacuate. Know what your destination will be in advance. Learn the recommended evacuation route from your home to safer, higher ground. Local broadcasts will tell you where to go during an evacuation, but you can learn the safest route ahead of time by watching for a pre-season distribution of a local evacuation plan or by calling your local emergency management office.

Snakes, animals, and insects instinctively travel inland to higher ground to escape approaching flood waters. Expect them and be prepared to protect yourself. Careful planning and quick response to a hurricane threat will reduce damage to your home and could save your life. Most importantly, you must evacuate if you are told to do so by local officials. Material possessions are replaceable; your life is not. Take action now to be better prepared for hurricane season.

BE AWARE OF CHANGING WEATHER CONDITIONS

Listen to daily weather forecasts during hurricane season. As hurricanes develop, they are monitored closely by the National Weather Service.

The Weather Service issues two types of notices about approaching hurricanes:

A **HURRICANE WATCH** means a hurricane may threaten coastal and inland areas, and that hurricane conditions are a real possibility; it does not mean they are imminent. However, you should take preparatory action.

When a WATCH is issued for your area, you should:

- Stay tuned to local stations for the latest weather information.
- Contact your hospice staff to review your plans. Be sure you have transportation arranged through your hospice (via the local emergency management office) or contact the person who agreed to assist you in

an evacuation to re-confirm your arrangements.

- Gather your emergency supplies, placing them near the front door. Be sure that all objects on your lawn or patio which could be picked up and carried away by the wind are stored in advance. Lawn furniture, garbage cans, garden tools, toys, signs, and a number of other harmless items can become deadly missiles in hurricane winds.

- Gather important papers in your home such as birth and marriage certificates, wills, insurance policies, deeds, etc. Place them in a water proof container with your non-perishable food supply or in your safety deposit box.

- Caretakers of patients that are unable to care for themselves should remember to also plan for their own needs as well as their loved one.

A **HURRICANE WARNING** is issued when a hurricane is expected to strike within 24 hours. A hurricane warning may also include an assessment of flood danger in coastal and inland areas, small craft warnings, gale warnings, and recommended emergency procedures.



WHEN A STORM THREATENS

If a **HURRICANE WARNING** is issued for your area and an evacuation is ordered, local radio and television stations will make the announcement. Don't panic if you cannot get transportation right away. In a hurricane evacuation, local emergency services personnel or police usually patrol each street to warn those people who may not have a radio or television. You can stop one of these officers, and they will help you. Leave early! Do not wait, especially in low-lying areas. Roads can flood quickly, leaving you stranded.

DURING THE HURRICANE

If you are unable to evacuate before the hurricane hits, stay inside. Do not be fooled by the eye of the hurricane and its temporary period of peaceful weather conditions. The length of time within the eye varies from several minutes to a couple of hours, depending on the size of the storm. The larger and more intense the hurricane, the larger the eye. Stay away from windows and glass doors. You could be struck by flying debris. Continue to listen to your radio or television for hurricane updates and emergency information.

AFTER THE HURRICANE

Local authorities will announce when it is safe to return to your home. Stay tuned to local stations for current information. If you have been transported to a special needs shelter, it may be necessary to arrange



for transportation to return to your home. Do not panic. Simply contact your hospice provider to make appropriate arrangements.

When you get home, look for visible structural damage before you go inside. Watch for loose or dangling electrical power lines and broken sewer, water or gas

lines. Notify local officials immediately if you see any of these or any other dangers. Make sure all electrical outlets and appliances are dry and free of water before using them. Do not drink water from the faucet until officially notified it is safe from contamination. Use your emergency supply or boil tap water before drinking it. Without electricity, food in your refrigerator could spoil in a few hours. Don't eat it. Food in a freezer could partially thaw, but would be safe to eat for several days. Food should not be re-frozen once it begins to thaw.

ADDITIONAL HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS RESOURCES

FloridaDisaster.org

MySafeFloridaHome.com

MyFlorida.com

Florida Elder Affairs Hotline
(800) 963-5337

American Red Cross
redcross.org • call your local chapter

Federal Emergency Management Agency
fema.gov • (800)480-2520 • call your local EMA Office

NOAA National Weather Service
www.nws.noaa.gov



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SUPPORT HOSPICE

... *IN A VERY VISIBLE WAY*



The hospice specialty license plate is a beautiful and thoughtful way to show others the importance of having quality end-of-life care. The plate can be purchased at your local tax collector's office and for every plate sold, \$25 goes to help fund the continuance of significant end-of-life care programs and outreach:

-  Programs related to hospice care, including a new model of care for very ill children, and improving and increasing access to end-of-life care for Florida's veterans.
-  End-of-life care programs specific to gender, ethnic, religious, and minority groups.
-  Education and outreach for hospice volunteers, patients, families, and health care professionals. Advance Directives and educational materials provided free to the public.
-  Expansion of the toll-free consumer information and help line as well as the website of Florida Hospices and Palliative Care.

*Every day is a gift. Help spread the word!
Purchase the hospice license plate today.*

For more information on hospice or the hospice license plate visit us at: www.floridahospices.org

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Accidents happen. Are you protected when they do?

It can easily happen, because your employees and volunteers have more on their minds than their driving. It may be a patient in distress, a grieving family or just the nagging pressure of falling behind a busy schedule. Auto accidents are a major cause of lawsuits against hospices and home health care agencies as well as a cause of serious injuries and lost time.

Lawsuits are expensive to defend, and some result in very high-dollar losses. That's why liability insurance coverage is so important. Hospice and Community Care Insurance Services is administered by Glatfelter Insurance Group, a national agency. We work closely with your insurance agent to provide competitive proposals and friendly service for special businesses like yours.

*Remember, before you can
take care of others, you have to
take care of yourself.*



Insurance for Hospices and Home Health Care Agencies

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- General Liability
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- Non-owned Auto Liability

For more information, call 800-233-1957
www.hccis.com

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