

HOW SHOULD YOU PREPARE FOR THE HURRICANE SEASON?

A practical guide of recommendations for Argos personnel

A satellite image of a hurricane, showing a large, swirling cloud system over the ocean. The image is split horizontally, with the top half showing the hurricane's eye and the bottom half showing the surrounding cloud bands.

HURRICANES:

WHAT ARE THEY?

Hurricanes are storm systems of massive proportions that form over water and enter land. Hurricane threats include strong winds, torrential rains, storm surges, inland and coastal flooding, rip currents, also known as return currents, and tornadoes. These large storms are called typhoons in the North Pacific Ocean and cyclones in other parts of the world.

WHEN IS HURRICANE SEASON?

The Atlantic hurricane season runs every year from June 1st to November 30th, and its peak occurs between mid-August and the end of October. The Eastern Pacific hurricane season begins on May 15th and ends on November 30th.

WHERE DO THEY OCCUR?

The Caribbean and the Americas experience torrential rains and strong winds, flooding and storm surges in coastal areas each year due to tropical storms and hurricanes. The most affected areas include all the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coastal areas, Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, and other Caribbean islands, in addition to Hawaii and some territories in the Pacific coast.

WHAT IMPACT DO THEY HAVE?

Hurricanes can cause catastrophic death and damage to coastal properties and can even extend into hundreds of miles inland. The extent of the damage will vary according to the magnitude and intensity of the storm's wind, the amount and duration of the rains, the storm's route and other factors such as the amount and type of structures in the area, the terrain, and the soil conditions.

The most common effects of hurricanes include:



1. Death or injuries of people and animals
2. Damage or destruction of buildings and other infrastructure
3. Interruption of basic public services such as water, transport, gas, electricity, communications and other services
4. Coastal flooding caused by strong rains and storm surges
5. Floods in interior areas caused by heavy rains

PREVENTION IS THE KEY TO AVOID DISASTERS

PERSONAL PROTECTION EVACUATE

Because hurricanes can be detected and tracked before they make landfall, residents in the path of the storm are usually notified several days in advance. When a hurricane poses a threat to your area, the best thing you can do to protect yourself and your family from strong winds and floods caused by hurricanes is to evacuate the area when the official authorities instruct you to do so. You must always be aware of the preventive measures established by these authorities to help you and the community protect yourselves before, during and after this atmospheric phenomenon.



PROPERTY PROTECTION

SECURE YOUR PROPERTY AND PREPARE FOR WINDS AND FLOODS

Your goal at that time, before a hurricane occurs, is to reduce the risk of damage to structures caused by winds and floods. This includes reinforcing the exterior part of your home (this includes doors, windows, walls, and roof) and removing or tying up all objects and structures that are not part of the house or building, as well as cleaning external areas around the property. Protective measures against possible flooding include waterproof basements and rearranging those critical items such as electrical panels and heating systems to a higher elevation inside your home (possibly to the second floor, if you have one).

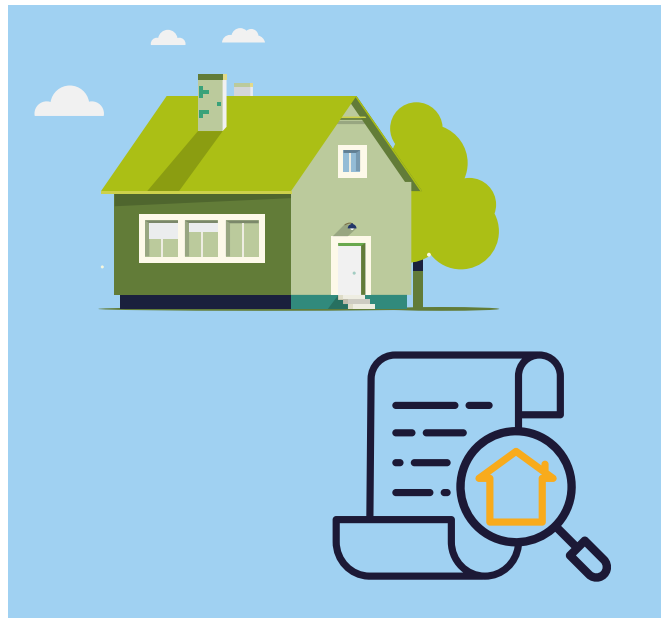
In flood-prone areas, consider elevating the entire structure of your house, if possible.



PROPERTY PROTECTION

INSURANCE POLICIES

If you live in a high risk area, it's possible you've already done this. But if not, it is advisable to purchase Home Insurance, or an insurance policy that will protect you against natural disasters, as this will provide you with financial protection to cover the cost of repairs that your property may suffer due to flooding.



KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TYPES OF ALERTS

DURING HURRICANE SEASON

1

HURRICANE OR TROPICAL STORM ALERT

A tropical storm or hurricane alert is issued for an area 48 hours before the time the hurricane or tropical storm conditions are expected to begin. During an alert, tune in to local radio or television stations for information to help prepare for outdoor activities.

2

HURRICANE OR TROPICAL STORM WARNING

A hurricane or tropical storm warning is issued for any given area when the severe weather conditions of the hurricane or tropical storm are expected within the following 36 hours. Once a warning of this kind is issued, be sure to complete your preparations and immediately leave the danger zone, if instructed to do so by local authorities.

3

EXTREME WIND WARNING

An extreme wind warning is issued to notify a specific area of impending extreme winds associated with a major hurricane that is known to be a category 3 or more. These warnings, which are generally valid for two hours or less, indicate a serious threat.

4

EVICTIION NOTICE

If the risk of damage is severe, state or local government officials may issue an eviction notice for people in specific areas. Eviction orders can range from voluntary to mandatory. When the authorities issue a mandatory eviction notice, you must leave the area immediately.

5

OTHER KINDS OF ALERTS

Because tropical storms and hurricanes encompass various types of hazards, other alerts and warnings may be issued as a result of the storm, including flash flood, tornado, and flood alerts. Tune into local radio, or television stations to get updated information and monitor any alert notices that may be issued.

HOW ARE HURRICANES CLASSIFIED?

The Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale classifies hurricanes on a scale ranging from 1 to 5, depending on the speed of their winds for a prolonged period of time. This scale calculates the potential damage to properties. Hurricanes that reach Category 3 or higher are considered major hurricanes, due to their potential of causing significant death and property damage.

However, Category 1 and 2 storms are also dangerous and require preventive measures.

In the western part of the North Pacific, the term "super typhoon" is used for tropical cyclones with sustained winds at an excess of 150 miles per hour.



CATEGORY	SUSTAINED WINDS	TYPE OF DAMAGE CAUSED BY HURRICANE FORCE WINDS
1	74-95 mph 64-82 knots 119-153 km/hr	These are very dangerous winds and will leave some damage. Homes that have well-built frames could show roof, tile, vinyl siding, and drip damage. Large tree branches will come off, and trees with shallow roots can fall. Extensive damage to power lines and poles will cause outages that could last anywhere from a few hours to several days.
2	96-110 mph 83-95 knots 154-177 km/hr	These extremely dangerous winds will cause extensive damage. Homes that have well-built frames could be severely damaged on the roof and exterior cladding. Many trees that have shallow roots will shed or uproot and could block many paths. An almost total loss of electricity and blackouts that could last several days or weeks could also be expected.
3 (major)	111-129 mph 96-112 knots 178-208 km/hr	There will be devastating damage: Homes that have well-built frames could be severely damaged or the interior roof covering and gables may fall off. Many trees will fall or uproot and could block many paths. There will be no electricity or water for several days or weeks after the storm passes.
4 (major)	130-156 mph 113-136 knots 209-251 km/hr	There will be catastrophic damage. Homes that have well-built frames can be severely damaged with loss of most of the roof structure and / or some exterior walls. Most trees will loosen or uproot and the utility poles will fall. Fallen trees and utility poles will isolate residential areas. The outages will last for several weeks and possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.
5 (major)	157 mph or more 137 knots or more 252 km/hr or more	There will be catastrophic damage. A high percentage of frame houses will be destroyed, and roofs and walls will fall. Fallen trees and utility poles will isolate residential areas. The outages will last for several weeks and possibly months. Most of the area will be uninhabitable for weeks or months.

A photograph showing a man in a dark shirt wading through deep floodwaters. He is holding a bicycle. In the background, a white utility truck is parked on a road that is partially submerged. The scene is outdoors, likely in a residential or commercial area affected by flooding.

PROTECT YOURSELF:

BEFORE THE HURRICANE

Protecting yourself from before the hurricane means having information resources, preparing your home or place of work, developing an emergency communication plan and knowing what to do when a hurricane approaches your community. **Taking action early on can save lives and properties.**

STAY INFORMED

Know your hurricane risk:

Your hurricane risk is based on where you live, the structure of your home, and your personal circumstances. People who live on the coast have the highest risk of extreme winds and flooding caused by rains and storm surges. People living in inland areas are at risk from winds, storms, and floods. Hurricanes also cause extensive power outages, which can be a risk factor for people who need electrically powered medical devices.



Learn how to stay informed:

Receiving timely information about weather conditions or emergency events can make a difference in knowing when you should take action to stay safe. Tune in to weather reports provided by local media on a regular basis.



Know the evacuation routes for you and your family:

Devise a plan on how you will transfer from one place to another when it is time to evacuate and identify a place where it is safe for you and your family to stay. To ensure that you can act quickly if there is a need to do so, you need to be sure to plan everything in advance.



Find out about your community's local evacuation plan:

Identify **multiple escape routes** from your location, in case the roads are blocked. Prepare yourself with evacuation plans for people with disabilities and others in your family with special needs, as well as pets, service animals, and livestock (if you have them).

Know the communication protocol between Argos and its employees in the case of an emergency:

As an Argos employee you will be notified promptly through different communication channels about any relevant situation (email, text messages and even, if necessary, radio stations); stay alert of these possible messages. Once the authorities have indicated that the hurricane danger has passed, and when technological and security conditions allow it, contact your direct supervisor or the Human Resources area to address any questions you may have, or to report any special assistance you may need.



PRACTICE

Practice seeking refuge.

Identify the nearest shelter and practice how you will ensure that all members of your family quickly reach that location. If you don't have access to a nearby shelter, use a small, windowless interior room, such as a bathroom or closet, on the lowest level of your home or building where there is no chance of flooding.

Practice how you will communicate with your relatives.

In the event that you are not together when the authorities issue a tropical storm or hurricane alert, or a tropical storm or hurricane warning, practice how you and your family members will communicate with each other. Remember that texting is often faster than making a call. Keep important numbers written on your wallet, not just on your phone. Sometimes it's easier to locate people outside your local area during an emergency, so choose an out-of-area contact for all members of your family to call, or use social media to communicate. Decide the exact point where you will meet your family members after the hurricane has passed.



Practice first aid skills and emergency response actions through training.

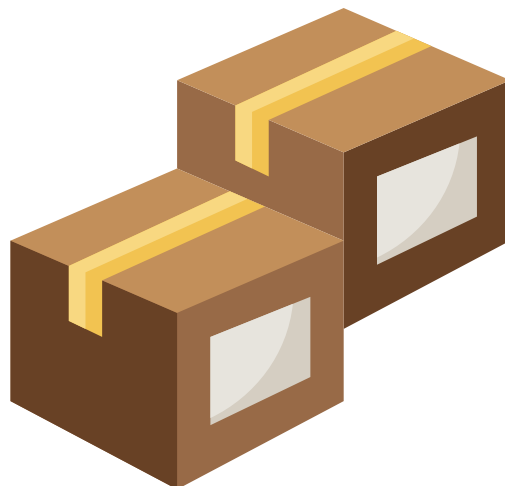
In most circumstances, when someone is injured, it will be necessary for a person on site to provide first aid before a healthcare or emergency response professional arrives. Take your time in advanced to learn emergency response skills so that you know what to do if this situation presents itself.

STOCK UP

Store supplies in a place that you can access easily and quickly if you need to evacuate.

Take your time, with enough anticipation, to make a list of things you would need or want to bring if you had to leave your home unexpectedly. Store basic emergency supplies emergency in a bag or special container. You should be ready to grab these essentials quickly before heading out.

Remember to include special items for family members with disabilities or with special needs such as older adults and children.



WHEN PREPARING YOUR LIST,

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING:

PEOPLE

All the people close to you and, if possible, your pets and other animals or livestock that you have.

HEALTH

The prescriptions (with their indicated dose) of people who require it, medicines and medical equipment.

DOCUMENTS

Important documents that you can't afford to lose: include a paper copy and / or a backup in a portable USB drive.

PERSONAL NEEDS

Personal needs (such as clothing, food, first aid kit, phones, and chargers) and items for people with disabilities and / or special needs, such as older adults and children.

OTHER ITEMS

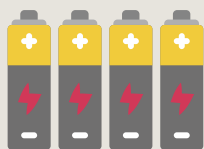
Priceless items, including photographs, irreplaceable memories and other valuables that you want to keep.

Store supplies you will need to live in your home if you don't have electricity.

Even if you live in an area that was not asked to evacuate, your home may still lose its power and run out of water. Depending on the strength of the hurricane and the impact on your community, you could be at home without power or other basic services for several weeks. Think about the items you will need in this situation. Keep these supplies close at hand in your home.

Store the important documents you'll need to start post-hurricane recovery.

Review your homeowner or tenant insurance policy and also prepare or update a list of your home's content by taking pictures and videos of each room in the house.



Additional recommendations

1. A battery-powered flashlight and radio.
2. At least 1 gallon of water per person per day, for at least three days.
3. A non-perishable food supply for at least three days for members of your family, including pet food.
4. A first aid kit, medications, and medical supplies.
5. Disinfection supplies, such as hand sanitizer, wipes, paper products, and plastic bags to use when water resources are limited.
6. Backup electricity devices for mobile devices, oxygen tanks, and other assistive technology needs.
7. A sleeping bag and a blanket for each person.

A photograph showing two men in a light-colored shirt and jeans, and a blue shirt and jeans, working together to install large sheets of plywood over the windows and doors of a house. They are using power tools. The background shows a clear sky and some greenery.

PROTECT YOURSELF:

DURING THE HURRICANE

Hurricanes have the potential to cause devastation. If you are in the path of a major hurricane, authorities may direct you to evacuate the area for your own safety. You must obey the orders of the authorities at all times to guarantee your safety and that of your loved ones.

EVACUATE

Hurricane deaths and injuries are generally the consequence of people staying in unsafe places during a storm. If the authorities advise or issue an order of evacuation, do it immediately: **DO NOT** stay in your house! You must evacuate early to avoid delays caused by long traffic lines, strong winds and floods. Follow the established evacuation routes and don't try to take shortcuts because they might be blocked.



IF YOU LIVE IN AN AREA WITHOUT AN EVACUATION NOTICE

Take the necessary precautions to protect yourself and stay away from strong winds and possible localized flooding.

- Stay inside and stay away from glass windows and doors.
- If you are in a motorhome or temporary structure, go to a sturdy building.
- To protect yourself when the winds are extremely strong, go to a small interior room, without windows, such as a bathroom or a closet, on the lowest level of the house/building where there is no probability of flooding.
- If you are in an area of the city that is flooded, go to the highest land point available, before the flood water prevents you from leaving the area.
- If there is no electricity, use flashlights instead of candles. Turn on a battery powered radio for the latest emergency information.

DON'T LEAVE YOUR HOUSE UNTIL THE AUTHORITIES SAY IT IS SAFE TO DO SO

Most people in the center of the storm experience a false sense of security. After the center of the hurricane (also known as the hurricane's "eye") passes, the storm will begin again. Do not leave your house until the official emergency authorities say it is safe for you to do so.



PROTECT YOURSELF: **AFTER THE HURRICANE**

GO BACK

- Only return to your home when the authorities have indicated that it is safe to do so.
- Be careful in areas where water from flood has begun to decrease. Do not try to drive through areas that are still flooded. Roads and bridges may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- Be careful and look out for trees, power lines and debris that have fallen.



IF YOU STAYED IN THE AREA OR WHILE YOU RETURN TO YOUR HOME

Look to the official public authorities for expert advice as soon as it becomes available. Do not be guided by recommendations from unofficial sources.

Keep the following considerations and precautions in mind:

Security inside:

- If your home was seriously flooded, you can only enter after officials say it is safe to do so. Stay away from a flooded building.
- Be very careful when entering flooded buildings. There may be hidden damage, particularly in the foundations. Personal safety considerations include protecting yourself from electric shock, mold contamination, asbestos, and lead paint.
- Cut off electricity by the main circuit breaker or fuse box. Make an inspection for loose boards or walls and slippery floors.
- Do not touch electrical equipment if it is wet or if you are standing in water. Close or turn off utilities in a flooded house or building.
- Use flashlights that run on batteries, not gas or oil. Also, avoid using torches or matches.
- Carbon monoxide exhaust kills. Only use generators, or other gasoline operated machines, outdoors and away from windows and doors, so gasses don't enter into a closed spaced.

Outdoor security:

- If you see flood water on roads, sidewalks, bridges and on the ground, do not try to cross. The depth of the water is not always obvious and the terrain may have been washed out underwater. Moving water has great power. Six inches of moving water has the potential to lie you down, and a foot of water can drag a vehicle, even a large truck, out of the way.
- Avoid crossing over flood water currents, which may be contaminated with oil, gasoline, or sewage waste.
- Beware of dangerous debris (like broken glass, metal shards), dead animals, or poisonous snakes that may be in the flood waters. Before walking through rubble, use a stick to check for hidden dangers. Underground lines or fallen power lines can electrically charge water.
- Keep away from fallen power lines and report them to 911 or the local emergency contact number.

Communication:

- Use local radio stations and alerts, as well as other reliable local sources of information for relevant news and advice.
- Use text messages or social networks to communicate with family and friends. Cellular and phone systems often become saturated after a disaster, so use the phones only for emergency calls.

About your insurance policy:

- Document with photographs and videos the damage your property has suffered due to the hurricane and contact your insurance agent as soon as possible so can file an official insurance claim. **It is important that you also present your "before" photos to support your claim.**

Health and hygiene:

- Make sure that the water wells are verified so that they are free of bacteria and chemical contamination.
- Clean and disinfect everything that has been wet. The mud left by the flood may contain sewage, bacteria and chemicals.
- Discard all food, including canned food, that has not been kept at the proper temperature or that has been exposed to flood waters. Don't eat any produce from a flooded garden. When in doubt, it's best to discard it.
- Remove and replace drywall or other panels that have been underwater. Mold can grow in hidden places and it's a serious health risk.

Caring for your loved ones:

- Keep alert to any family member showing any signs of depression or anxiety related to this experience, such as feeling physically and mentally tired, having a hard time making decisions or staying focused, getting easily frustrated or more frequently, feeling tired, sad, sleepy, lonely, or worried, or experiencing changes in their appetite and/or sleep patterns.
- Seek help from local mental health care providers if you detect these signs in yourself or in others.

Source: FEMA, the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (<https://www.ready.gov/en/hurricanes>)

The objective of this manual is to raise awareness of the importance of hurricane preparedness.

This document does not guarantee the safety of people and its authors do not assume responsibility for death, property damage or any other effect produced by a hurricane.

