

During hurricane season, Palmetto Electric Cooperative shares the following tips to help you and your family weather the storm:

Before

- **Have an emergency supply kit handy.** The American Red Cross (www.redcross.org) has a complete listing of what to include (recommended food supplies, insurance policies, etc.).
- **Keep phone numbers of evacuation destinations handy,** and have a road map to show alternate routes if major roads are closed or clogged.
- **Fill your gas tank and withdraw cash** from automatic teller machines before a storm arrives. Gas pumps and ATMs do not work if electricity is out.
- **Check if shrubs or trees need trimming** or if weak limbs need cutting. Be particularly careful when working near power lines. Also, remove items near the home that could become airborne.
- **Listen to local radio or TV stations, like us on Facebook and/or follow us on Instagram and Twitter** for up-to-date storm information.
- **Prepare to cover all windows of your home.** If shutters have not been installed, use precut plywood. (Note that tape does not prevent windows from breaking).
- **Find out about your community's hurricane response plan.** Register family members with special medical needs and make plans for your pets to be cared for.
- **Advise concerned family members and friends about your preparations** and give them emergency contact information if available.
- **Be advised that standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding.** It's important to have protection from the floods associated with hurricanes, tropical storms, heavy rains and other conditions that impact the U.S.
- **Plan to bring in all outdoor furniture, decorations, garage cans** and anything else that is not tied down.

Evacuation

- **Evacuate if you are told to do so, especially if you live in a mobile home, temporary structure or high-rise building** – such shelters are particularly hazardous during hurricane force winds.
- **Once evacuated, do not return** until you are told it is safe to do so.
- **During**
 - **If you are not told to evacuate, stay indoors and away from windows.**
 - **Be aware of the calm during the hurricane "eye."** Once the eye passes over, winds blow from the opposite direction.
 - **Avoid in-home water sources during a storm.** Electric shock is possible through water sources (shower, sink and bathtub) as lightning can enter a home through plumbing.
 - **Disconnect electronic equipment** such as TVs, computers and nonessential electric appliances to avoid power surge damage.
 - **Stay clear of floodwaters.** Drive only if necessary. If you come upon a flooded road—find an alternate route.
 - **Stay close to the TV or radio stations, like us on Facebook and/or follow us on Instagram and Twitter** for the most current information about the storm.
 - **Fill bathtubs and other large containers with water** to ensure a safe water supply in the event you do not have access to it.
 - **Stay inside** – a small interior room, closet or hallway on the lowest level is the safest option. Lie on the floor under a table or another sturdy object.
 - **Close all interior doors** – secure and brace external doors. Keep curtains and blinds closed.
 - **Find out how to keep food safe** during and after an emergency.
 - **Avoid elevators.**
 - **If you live on the water moor your boat** if time permits.

After

- **If it is dark, use flashlights** and not candles and leave on a single light to alert you when electric service is restored.
- **Minimize opening freezers and refrigerators.** A fully loaded freezer can keep food frozen 48 hours if it remains closed.
- **Stay clear of fallen utility lines** and avoid tree limbs and debris that could hide fallen lines. The limbs can carry electricity, especially when wet.
- **Disconnect appliances that may turn on automatically** when power is restored (toasters, washers, dryers and air conditioners). Also disconnect sensitive electronic equipment to avoid surges that can occur when power is restored.
- **Report all outages and downed lines immediately.** Note that if your neighbor's power is restored and yours is still out, it could be because of a blown fuse or tripped circuit breaker.
- **Do not pile debris near utility poles or electric ground equipment** when cleaning up outside.
- **Avoid drinking or preparing food with tap water** until you are sure it's not contaminated.
- **Stay alert for extended rainfall** even after the hurricane or tropical storm has passed.
- **Keep listening to local radio or TV stations, like us on Facebook or follow us on Instagram and Twitter** for instructions. If you are evacuated, only return home when officials say you may return.
- **Inspect your home for damage.** Take pictures of damage, both of the building and its contents, for insurance purposes. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector.
- **Watch your pets closely and keep them under your direct control.** Watch out for wild animals, especially poisonous snakes. Use a stick to poke through debris.

For more hurricane safety tips before, during and after the storm, visit <http://www.ready.gov/hurricanes> or go to palmetto.coop

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