

# SAFETY TIPS: AFTER THE HURRICANE



## If local officials tell you to shelter in place, here are some tips to keep you and your family safe.

- Never retreat to your attic without a chain saw or axe. Retreat to your roof if the flood waters threaten your safety.
- If you still have clean water, fill up your bathtub so you have water available. This will allow you to use the water to flush your toilet, clean hands and other general uses in the event water supply is lost.
- Do not wade in flood waters. Water can be contaminated with sewer, snakes, ants and other dangerous debris.
- Adjust the thermostat in your freezer and refrigerator to the lowest setting and minimize the opening of the doors should the power go out.
- Do not operate gas powered equipment (generators, grills) indoors.
- Keep mobile phones and other battery operated devices fully charged while you have electricity.
- Put on rubber soled shoes or rubber boots. Do not go barefoot in your home.
- If possible, move your car off the street into the garage.

## If you evacuated:

- Continue listening to a NOAA Weather Radio or the local news for the latest updates.
- Return home only when officials say it is safe.
- Drive only if necessary and avoid flooded roads and washed out bridges.
- Keep away from loose or dangling power lines.
- Stay out of any building that has water around it.
- Use flashlights in the dark. Do not use candles.
- Check refrigerated food for spoilage. If in doubt, throw it out.
- Wear protective clothing and be cautious when cleaning up to avoid injury.
- Watch animals closely and keep them under your direct control.
- Watch your surroundings. Do not flash money or other valuables in public.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.

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## WATER TIPS

If you have no access to clean water or your water supply has been compromised, keep the following in mind. A normally active person needs about a gallon of fluid daily, from water and other beverages. However, individual needs vary, depending on age, health, physical condition, activity, diet and climate.

- Never ration drinking water unless ordered to do so by authorities. Drink the amount you need today and try to find more for tomorrow. Minimize the amount of water your body needs by reducing activity and staying cool.
- Drink water that you know is not contaminated first. If necessary, suspicious water, such as cloudy water from regular faucets or water from streams or ponds, can be used after it has been treated. If water treatment is not possible, put off drinking suspicious water as long as possible, but do not become dehydrated.
- Do not drink carbonated or caffeinated beverages instead of drinking water. Caffeinated drinks and alcohol dehydrate the body, which increases the need for drinking water.
- If you're drinking water that has been contaminated you might develop a gastrointestinal disorder (nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, etc.) from viruses, bacteria, or other microorganisms (germs) that may be in the water. You can also become ill from germs on your hands.
- To protect yourself, only drink bottled water. Also, bottled water must be used for brushing your teeth. Wash your hands carefully with soap and water and follow-up with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after using the bathroom and before eating. If you do not have clean water to wash your hands, use an alcohol-based antibacterial hand sanitizer.
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizers - which don't require use of water - are an excellent alternative to hand-washing when soap and water aren't available. Use only alcohol-based commercial hand sanitizers. To use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer: Apply it to the palm of your hand. Read the label for dosing instructions. Rub your hands together, covering all surfaces of your hands and arms until they're dry.