

Tips to Prepare Your Home for Hurricane Season

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Hurricane force winds can turn landscaping materials into missiles that can break windows and doors. Much of the property damage associated with hurricanes occur after the windstorm, when rain enters structures through broken windows, doors, and openings in the roof.

Preparing before a hurricane can help you manage the impact of high winds and floodwaters. The steps outlined below will help keep you and your family safe while protecting your home and property. If you are a renter, talk with your landlord or property manager about the steps you can take together to protect yourself, your family, your home, and your property.

FEMA places a strong emphasis on building codes because they enhance public safety and property protection. See what the building codes are for your zip code at <https://inspecttoprotect.org/>

While preparing your home to protect against hurricane damage is undoubtedly an expense, you can do it in stages.

- **Replace gravel or rock landscaping materials with a fire-resistant material** which is lighter and won't cause as much harm.
- **Cut weak branches and trees** that could fall on your house and keep shrubbery trimmed.
- **Install storm shutters** to protect your windows from breakage. Alternately, fit plywood panels to your windows, which can be nailed to window frames when a storm approaches. Read about one survivor's story with storm shutters at <https://www.fema.gov/case-study/storm-shutters-create-feeling-security>
- **Make sure exterior doors are hurricane proof** and have at least three hinges and a dead bolt lock that is at least one inch long.



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- **Sliding glass doors should be made of tempered glass** and, during a storm, covered with shutters or plywood. These types of doors are more vulnerable to wind damage than most other doors.
- **Replace old garage doors and tracks** with a door that is approved for both wind pressure and impact protection. Wind coming into your home through an opening this large pose grave problems for the rest of your home—especially your roof.
- **Seal outside wall openings** such as vents, outdoor electrical outlets, garden hose bibs and locations where cables or pipes go through the wall. Use a high-quality urethane-based caulk to prevent water penetration.
- **If you live in a mobile home**, make sure you know how to secure it against high winds and be sure to review your mobile home insurance policy. Find out more at <https://www.iii.org/article/mobile-home-insurance>. Reminder: mobile homes are not safe in high winds, and you will need to move to a safer place before a storm hits. Always follow the advice of your local community officials.
- **If you have a boat on a trailer**, know how to anchor the trailer to the ground or house—and review your boat insurance policy. Find out more at <https://www.iii.org/article/boat-insurance-and-safety>.
- **For the latest information on Hurricane Ida** visit [fema.gov/disaster/4611](https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4611). Follow us on Twitter at twitter.com/FEMARegion6 and like us on Facebook at facebook.com/FEMARegion6/.



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