

# FEMA Urges Preparedness Now as Hurricane Ida Forecast to Make Landfall

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WASHINGTON -- FEMA is urging everyone to take urgent steps now as Hurricane Ida is forecast to make landfall along the U.S. northern Gulf Coast as a dangerous major hurricane on Sunday. Tropical storm conditions are expected to begin late tonight or early tomorrow morning.

“Anyone in the forecast path should complete final preparations as soon as possible, monitor their local news for updates and directions provided by their local officials, and [heed local evacuation orders](#),” said FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. “This is going to be a major hurricane. Please be safe and listen to local emergency management officials.”

The National Hurricane Center is forecasting an increasing risk of life-threatening storm surge along the Gulf Coast. Additionally, there is an increasing risk of dangerous hurricane force winds and extreme rainfall. A few tornadoes will be possible tomorrow through early Monday across southeast Louisiana and southern Mississippi.

Yesterday, President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. approved Louisiana’s request for an emergency [declaration](#). This declaration authorizes FEMA to coordinate all disaster relief efforts by identifying, mobilizing and providing equipment and resources necessary to alleviate hardship and suffering of the local population. Additionally, it authorizes FEMA to provide appropriate assistance for required emergency measures to save lives and to protect property and public health and safety in all 64 Louisiana parishes.

## Prepare Now

- Keep in mind, storm track, size, intensity and direction can change. Areas far from the storm’s center can still experience effects such as severe flooding, intense rainfall and heavy winds.



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- **Storm surge can cause water levels to rise quickly** and flood large areas in just minutes, and you could be left with no time to take action if you haven't already evacuated as instructed. Additionally, during the peak of a storm surge event, it is unlikely that emergency responders will be able to reach you if you are in danger.
- **Use a generator safely.** Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
  - **Keep generators outside and far away from your home.** Windows, doors and vents could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- Visit [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) or [Listo.gov](https://www.listo.gov) to learn how you can keep yourself, your family and your pets safe.
- **Download the FEMA app** (available in English and Spanish) to receive emergency alerts and real-time safety notifications, emergency preparedness tips and disaster resources. The app is available for Apple and Android devices.

## Federal Actions Ahead of Hurricane Ida

Yesterday, President Biden conducted a call with Administrator Criswell, Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey, Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards and Mississippi Gov. Tate Reeves to discuss the potential impacts of Hurricane Ida. The call included the need for residents in the storm's path to prepare now for significant impacts, including by visiting [Ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) and listening to local officials' guidance.

- FEMA is working with its federal, state and local partners as well as non-governmental agencies to support needs of areas affected by Ida. The agency has pre-positioned supplies such as meals, water and generators to assist states with impacts from this storm.
- **More than 2,000 FEMA employees are deployed to Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas and are ready to provide additional support as needed.**
- There are seven FEMA Incident Management Assistance Teams ready to support state needs. Four are deployed to Louisiana, two are in Mississippi and one is on standby to deploy if necessary. State liaison officers are deployed to Louisiana and Texas.
- An Incident Support Base has been established in Alexandria, La. Commodities, equipment and personnel are being pre-positioned to rapidly deploy post-storm, as needed. This includes:



- Thirteen Urban Search and Rescue teams, with additional teams on standby.
- A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Power Restoration team.
- Fifty ambulances and emergency medical service providers for post-storm evacuation support as needed.
- One million meals, 1.6 million liters of water and 90 generators.
- Mobile Emergency Response Support assets, including emergency operations vehicles are deployed to support Louisiana and Mississippi.
- A FEMA hurricane liaison is at the National Hurricane Center in Miami to provide real-time information about Hurricane Ida's track and intensity.
- FEMA assigned additional personnel from the federal government, including the Department of Defense, Health and Human Services and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to provide support as needed.

## **Prepare for Storm Surge and Flooding and Be Prepared to Evacuate if Ordered to Do So**

- **Personal Safety:** Evacuate if told to do so. If you go to a community or group shelter, remember to follow the latest recommendations from [the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for protecting yourself and family from COVID-19](#). FEMA is prepared and activated to respond to disasters in states in a COVID-19 environment and is well postured to handle this upcoming storm despite the Delta variant surge.
- **Know your evacuation zone:** If you are in potentially affected areas, you may have to evacuate quickly. You should [learn your evacuation routes](#), have a family emergency communications plan, keep a battery-powered radio handy and have plans for your family members and pets.
  - **If you are a person with disabilities,** you may need to take additional steps to plan for both your needs and your service animal. Visit [Ready.gov/flooding](#) to learn how to stay safe before, during and after a flood.
- **Gather Supplies:** [Have enough supplies](#) for your household. Include medication, disinfectant supplies, face [masks](#), [pet supplies](#) and a battery-operated radio with extra batteries. After a hurricane, you may not have access to these supplies for days or weeks.
- **If you do not evacuate, find a safe location to ride out the storm.** Avoid enclosed areas where you may become trapped, such as an attic. **You will be safest if you evacuate when told to do so.**
- **Don't drive through flood waters:** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low-lying areas at bridges



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and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.

**Flood Insurance:** Your National Flood Insurance Program policy will [cover and reimburse certain actions](#) you take to minimize damage to your home and belongings before a flood.

## Stay Safe During Power Outages

- **Avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.** A grill, camp stove or other gasoline, propane, natural gas or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, garage, basement, crawlspace or any partially enclosed area. These should only be used outdoors and at least 20 feet away from windows.
- **Use a generator safely.** Never use a generator inside a home, basement, shed or garage even if doors and windows are open.
- **Keep generators outside and far away from your home.** Windows, doors and vents could allow carbon monoxide to come indoors. Read both the label on your generator and the owner's manual and follow the instructions.
- **Use only flashlights or battery-powered lanterns for emergency lighting.** NEVER use candles during a blackout or power outage due to extreme risk of fire.
- **Power outages can impact the safety of food** in your refrigerator and freezer. Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed to keep your food as fresh as possible. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about four hours. A full freezer will keep the temperature for about 48 hours. Use coolers with ice if necessary.
- Throw away any food that has been exposed to a temperature of 40°Fahrenheit (4° Celsius) or higher for two hours or more or that has an unusual odor, color or texture. When in doubt, throw it out!
- Never taste food or rely on appearance or odor to determine its safety. Some foods may look and smell fine, but if they have been at room temperature too long, heat-resistant bacteria that cause food-borne illnesses can start growing quickly.

## Keep Yourself, Family, and Neighbors Safe Before and After Flooding

- **Stay off the roads:** Emergency workers will be assisting people in flooded areas. You can help them by staying off the roads and out of the way.



- **Check on neighbors who may require assistance, if it is safe to do so.** This includes individuals with infants, children as well as older adults, people with disabilities and others with access and functional need.
- **Don't drive through flood waters:** Almost half of all flash flood deaths happen in vehicles. When in your car, look out for flooding in low-lying areas at bridges and at highway dips. As little as 6 inches of water may cause you to lose control of your vehicle.
- **Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded.** Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.

**Stay out of floodwater.** Standing water may be electrically charged from underground or downed power lines or contain hazards such as human and livestock waste, dangerous debris, contaminants that can lead to illness, or wild or stray animals.



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