

Know Your Zone and Make an Evacuation Plan

Residents Encouraged to Prepare for Hurricanes

FRAMINGHAM, MA – As we enter the portion of the hurricane season that traditionally is most active – August through October -- the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) is urging residents who live or work in one of the state’s coastal communities, or near a river or other waterway that is connected to the ocean and may be impacted by storm surge, to learn if they are in a pre-designated Hurricane Evacuation Zone, develop evacuation plans, and be prepared to evacuate areas that may be inundated with flood waters as a result of an approaching hurricane or tropical storm.

“Evacuations in advance of a hurricane or tropical storm making landfall may be necessary due to the danger and threat of storm surge,” said **MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz**. “Residents and visitors in coastal areas are urged to learn if they are in an evacuation zone and to make evacuation plans in advance of a storm.”

Know Your Evacuation Zone

Massachusetts has established hurricane evacuation zones in each of the state’s coastal communities. These zones -- Zones A, B and C -- identify the areas of coastal communities that are at risk for storm surge flooding from tropical storms or hurricanes. If evacuations are necessary because of an approaching tropical storm or hurricane, local or state officials will use the hurricane evacuation zones to call for people living, working or vacationing in these areas to evacuate. It is important to note that even areas not directly along a coastline may be at risk for storm surge flooding during a tropical storm or hurricane. Find out if you live, work or vacation in a hurricane evacuation zone by visiting the ‘Know Your Zone’ interactive map located on MEMA’s website at www.mass.gov/knowyourzone.

Make an Evacuation Plan

If you are located in a designated evacuation zone, you should be prepared to evacuate well before a hurricane or tropical storm makes landfall. The rule of thumb is that evacuations should be complete before the onset of tropical storm force winds.

- Know how to receive emergency information, including recommendations or orders to evacuate.
 - Sign up for your community’s emergency alerting system.
 - Monitor news broadcasts.
 - Download the free [Massachusetts Alerts](#) smartphone app from MEMA.
 - Follow MEMA on [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#).
 - Follow your local emergency management agency, and other local public safety agencies on social media.
- Make a [Family Emergency Plan](#). If you must evacuate, know where you will go, how you will get there, what you will bring. Make sure that your plan includes provisions for children, seniors, and family members with disabilities or medical issues.
- Include your pets in your Family Emergency Plan. While service animals will be allowed inside shelters, household pets are not allowed in all shelters. Go to MEMA’s [Pets and Animals in Emergencies](#) webpage for additional tips. Remember: “If you go, they go!
- Assemble an [emergency kit](#). Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry kit that you can take with you in case you must evacuate.

- If you or a family member may require special assistance to evacuate, ask local officials about special assistance programs or registries.
- If you undergo routine medical treatments or receive home health services, work with your service providers in advance to understand their emergency plans and to find backup providers that you might use in an emergency.
- Keep your car fueled if an evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during an emergency, or unable to pump gas during power outages.
- If you do not have personal transportation or a way to evacuate (such as public transportation), make transportation arrangements with family, friends or your local government.

If you live, work or vacation in an evacuation zone, listen closely to local and state officials and weather forecasts before and during a hurricane or tropical storm for evacuation information. If evacuations are necessary, local and state officials may use the evacuation zones (Zone A, B or C) to identify areas to be evacuated. If local or state officials call for an evacuation of your zone, follow their directions and evacuate to a safe area.

For more information, see MEMA's [Hurricane Safety](#) and [Evacuation Safety Tips](#) webpages.

About MEMA

MEMA is the state agency charged with ensuring the state is prepared to withstand, respond to, and recover from all types of emergencies and disasters, including natural hazards, accidents, deliberate attacks, and technological and infrastructure failures. MEMA's staff of professional planners, communications specialists and operations and support personnel is committed to an all hazards approach to emergency management. By building and sustaining effective partnerships with federal, state and local government agencies, and with the private sector - individuals, families, non-profits and businesses - MEMA ensures the Commonwealth's ability to rapidly recover from large and small disasters by assessing and mitigating threats and hazards, enhancing preparedness, ensuring effective response, and strengthening our capacity to rebuild and recover. For additional information about MEMA and Emergency Preparedness, go to www.mass.gov/mema.

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