



Tips,
Tools and
Resources for
Organizers

Operation Hurricane PrepareSM

Operation Hurricane Prepare is designed so that individuals, organizations and community groups can be prepared for a hurricane or natural disaster. Your involvement will make a difference to people you care about.

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Group Organizer Tips – Let’s Get Started!

Create The Good® has a new volunteer opportunity that gives you the tools to help family, friends and neighbors get prepared for a hurricane or natural disaster. “Operation Hurricane Prepare” allows you to help others in your neighborhood who need to get ready. By following a few simple steps to organize a group activity, you can help your community have the basic information and tools to endure a crisis and to get their lives back on track afterwards.

One way to organize your group for “Operation Hurricane Prepare” is simply to encourage individuals in your group to help friends or neighbors by sharing information or helping them prepare. You can make copies of the Hurricane Prepare Checklists, distribute them and ask people to commit to helping someone else get prepared.

Activities

For group leaders and organizers looking to make a difference in the lives of others, Create The Good is a trusted resource that helps make community service and volunteering **easy** and **convenient**. Organizing an event or activity in your community is a great way to bring people together to accomplish tasks that benefit from group involvement and contributions. Below are four basic activities your group can do to help those in your community prepare for any disaster, including hurricanes, floods, fires, tornadoes and earthquakes:

- 1. Prepare Basic Hurricane Supply Kits** – Ensure that members of your community are prepared by organizing an effort to gather basic supplies or build kits and distribute them to those in need.
- 2. Develop an Evacuation Plan** – Organize a group meeting to map out what to do if your group’s community is required to evacuate and ensure those needing assistance have the necessary support.
- 3. Distribute Information** – Distribute copies of “Basic Tips for Hurricane Planning” to protect your community members during and after a disaster.
- 4. Secure Vital Documents** – Organize a group effort to help people in your community have copies of all their important documents available in one place.



“Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips Handouts

1. Basic Hurricane Supply Kit Checklist
2. Evacuation Plan Checklists
3. Basic Tips for Hurricane Planning
4. Vital Document Checklist

Group Activity #1: Prepare Basic Hurricane Supply Kits

If a disaster were to strike, would you have the supplies on hand to ensure that your basic needs could be met for a few days? Many of us have these basic essentials in our homes, but they have not been organized into a kit or stored in a central location for easy access. The second group activity can be as simple as helping neighbors gather supplies they already have and placing them into a container or as comprehensive as purchasing items (possibly with donated funds) and assembling kits to be distributed in the community.

Ideas to Get Started

- Distribute the Basic Hurricane Supply Kit Checklist to neighbors and friends so they can assemble their own kits.
- Identify community members who might need assistance and help them put a kit together from items they already have in their homes. Provide a donated bucket or other container for central storage and consider purchasing any missing items for them to ensure that their kit is adequately stocked.
- Choose to spend your group’s dues and/or funds on basic hurricane supplies and distribute them to needy community members.
- Determine whether or not your group could benefit from bulk purchasing the basic hurricane supplies either for your group’s members or to be donated to the community.



- Sponsor a fundraiser and use the money raised to purchase items needed for emergencies; then distribute the items in your community.
- Seek donations from the community and businesses for hurricane items such as battery-powered radios or flashlights and distribute the items to those in need.
- Make copies of all “Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips for attendees.

After the Event

- Share “Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips and encourage participants to distribute to friends and neighbors who did not attend.
- Join Create The Good and share your story with others.
- Consider hosting another Create The Good activity in the future.
- Recruit friends and acquaintances to join Create The Good and help others in the community.



Basic Hurricane Supply Kit Checklist

Be prepared for a hurricane or disaster by gathering basic supplies you'll need to endure a crisis that leaves you without utilities, telephone or Internet and will provide nourishment for several days. A good rule of thumb is to have enough supplies to last at least three days for each person. Make sure to include any items for those with special needs, including babies or pets. Rotate food and water to ensure nothing has expired and check or replace batteries as needed to keep your kit up-to-date. For a complete list of supply-kit items and more information on creating a kit, visit www.ready.gov.

The right container will vary in a number of ways, depending on size, weight and the storage space available. Ideally, the container you use should be portable, durable and waterproof.

Essentials

- Water (one gallon per day per person)
- Food (canned and dry goods, high-calorie food bars)
- Personal first-aid kit
- Battery-powered flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Battery-powered radio (with extra batteries)
- Personal Medication Record
- Prescriptions

Extras

- Hygienic items (toothbrush/hand sanitizer/etc.)
- Extra clothing
- Blankets
- Rain poncho
- 12-hour light sticks
- Whistle (to alert rescue parties)
- Face mask (to avoid dangerous bacteria)

Other essential items:

Following are important websites and phone numbers to have on hand:

FEMA (toll-free): 1-800-621-FEMA (3362); www.fema.gov

American Red Cross (toll-free): 1-800-RED CROSS (733-2767); www.redcross.org

For more information on preparing for a hurricane, visit www.ready.gov.



Group Activity #2: Develop an Evacuation Plan

An evacuation plan provides a sense of control during a hurricane, which can be a chaotic and frightening time. Inviting a local official or expert on the subject to come speak to your group is a great way to learn how to create an evacuation plan. Or you can think more locally and lead an evacuation planning event for your own street, neighborhood or subdivision. Creating an evacuation plan that considers older friends and neighbors and their specific needs will ensure that all members of the community have a plan that works for them.

Get Organized

- Plan a date and secure meeting space at a home, local community center, church or school.
- Invite a guest speaker or volunteer to speak to your group.
- Gather items you might need to present to guide your planning efforts – for instance, community maps and maps of evacuation routes.
- Make copies of all “Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips for distribution.

Get Set Up

- Reach out to your community’s American Red Cross chapter or contact state or local government agencies to invite them to speak to your group.
- If a guest speaker is not possible, go to www.ready.gov and develop your own content.
- Prepare copies of the Evacuation Plan Checklists and Basic Tips to share with participants.
- Determine what type of local area maps and tools you will need to guide your planning efforts.
- Secure a computer and projector setup if needed for showing maps or highlighting evacuation routes.

At the Event

- Share “Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips and encourage distribution to friends and neighbors who did not attend.
- Lead the group discussion on ways to help neighbors in the event your community is evacuated, especially those living alone or who may have limitations.



Get the Word Out

JOIN US AT THE DEVELOP AN EVACUATION PLAN EVENT

Learn how to prepare those in your community for a disaster by developing a community evacuation plan and by ensuring that people in need have a way out. Bring the provided Evacuation Plan Checklists to the community event and discuss your concerns with our volunteer public official. To involve your community, bring a friend along!

The members of _____ are invited to a
(group)
Evacuation Planning Event on _____.
(date)

(Consider if an RSVP should be required, especially if anticipating high attendance or if limited event space is available.)

Contact _____ at _____.
(project organizer name) (phone, email)

After the Event

- Share “Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips and encourage attendees to distribute copies to friends and neighbors who could not attend.
- Join Create The Good and share your story with others.
- Consider hosting another Create The Good activity in the future.
- Recruit others to join Create The Good and help others in the community.



Evacuation Plan Checklists

An evacuation plan provides a sense of control in what will likely be a chaotic and frightening time. In the event of a disaster, listen to local news reports for status updates and evacuation instructions. Follow instructions for evacuation procedures and do not wait until the last minute to leave. Before you head out, make sure to check on family, friends and neighbors to ensure that they are taking the appropriate steps for their own safety and security.

Planned Checklist

Essential items you need to take:

- Vital Document Packet – Ensures you have all your important papers
- Emergency Supply Kit – Provides basic living necessities for a few days
- Cash and traveler’s checks
- Maps: The official evacuation route, alternate routes and a list of shelters
- Car keys and keys to the place you are going (if applicable)

Grab and Go Checklist

If you have only moments before evacuating and haven’t prepared a Vital Document Packet or any emergency supplies, grab these items quickly and go!

- Driver’s license or personal identification
- Basic supplies: Water, food, first-aid kit, hygiene items
- Prescription medications, glasses or contact lenses
- Maps: The official evacuation route, alternate routes and a list of shelters
- Car keys and keys to the place you are going (if applicable)
- Cash and traveler’s checks

Note: Use travel routes specified by local authorities. Shortcuts could be impassable or dangerous.

Other essentials:

Shelter Realities:

- Provisions are likely to be limited, so plan on using your own supplies.
- Most public shelters do not accept pets.
- Smoking, alcoholic beverages and weapons are prohibited.
- Expect and plan for confined and uncomfortable conditions.



Group Activity #3: Basic Tips for Hurricane Planning

The following provides some general tips for staying safe and fortifying your home. To be completely prepared, visit www.ready.gov to view more thorough tip lists that give special instructions about the disasters that are likely to happen in your area.

Ahead of Time

- Inventory the contents of your home and take photos or videos of both the exterior and interior. Be sure to record contents of closets, cabinets and drawers. Keep copies in a safe, separate location if possible.
- Arrange with family or neighbors to have a contact number or location where you can check in to report on your safety or new whereabouts.*
- Gather your vital documents and records and make duplicate copies to be stored in a weatherproof container.*

*Visit CreateTheGood.org for evacuation plan tips and information on duplicating vital documents.

Just Before and During a Hurricane

- Close and lock all windows and doors.
- Stay tuned to local news stations via battery-operated radio and be prepared to evacuate if ordered.
- Cover windows and doors with shutters or plywood if high winds are expected.
- Move electronics or valuable objects away from windows and wrap in plastic garbage bags to keep dry.
- Have a supply of bottled water on hand; fill sinks and bathtubs with water to use for bathing, washing clothes or flushing the toilet.
- Shut off water at the main valve and electricity at the main fuse or breaker box.
- Bring indoors outdoor objects that may fly around, such as trash cans and patio furniture.



Getting Back on Track After a Hurricane or Disaster

Insurance Matters

- Understand exactly what your insurance company covers in the event of a disaster.
- Do not endorse and cash any payment from an insurance company that says “final” unless you are sure it is an adequate payment under your policy’s coverage.
- Call your mortgage company to see how reimbursements from your home insurance company will be handled.
- Consider mediation if you are not satisfied with negotiations with your insurance company. In many areas, there is a free public service offered by your state’s insurance commissioner.
- Consult an attorney; local bar associations working with FEMA often set up volunteer attorney sites.

Fraud and Scams

- Don’t pay cash to a contractor for home repairs and never give your credit card number unless you are paying the bill with it.
- Be sure you have a signed contract detailing the work you want to have done and don’t make a final payment until the work has been done to your satisfaction.
- Make sure that any contractors, plumbers, electricians or roofers are bonded, licensed or registered in your state. You can check their license status with your state or Better Business Bureau.
- Try to get several bids before agreeing to any work; a one-third down payment is considered appropriate.
- Beware of home repair loan brokers who guarantee you a loan if you first pay a fee.
- If you suspect you have been taken advantage of, call your state attorney general’s office.

Important Websites and Phone Numbers to Have on Hand

FEMA (toll-free): 1-800-621-FEMA (3362); www.fema.gov

American Red Cross (toll-free): 1-800-RED CROSS (733-2767); www.redcross.org

For more information on preparing for a hurricane, visit www.ready.gov.



Group Activity #4: Secure Vital Documents

A hurricane or disaster can erase the vital documents and records of our lives instantly. Help others in your community centralize and secure vital documents by setting up a group document duplication event, where members of the community can meet in one central location and make copies quickly and easily. This activity is suitable for business sponsorship, so consider this as you make your plans.

Get Organized

- Vital Document Checklist for advanced distribution
- Central meeting location – community center, church, local business
- High-volume copier
- Reams of copy paper – enough to accommodate your group’s size
- Gallon-size, plastic zip-close bags to act as a weatherproof tote
- Check-in desk or greeting table/chairs
- Copies of all “Operation Hurricane Prepare” checklists and Basic Tips for attendees

Get Set Up

- Organize a date and secure a venue that can provide a high-volume copier.
- Order and secure supplies and consider asking the business community for sponsorship and donation of materials.
- Secure volunteers to greet participants, help them with document copying, keep lines moving and be vigilant about document security. In handling the sensitive documents of the attendees, you must exercise caution and vigilance to ensure that the documents are not lost, misplaced or left unprotected.



Attendees should keep control of their own documents and be present while the documents are copied. You must ensure that the materials being copied are all returned to the correct attendee to protect their information.

- Identify an on-site technical-support volunteer in the event of equipment malfunction.
- Announce and promote the activity at least three weeks before the event date.

Get the Word Out

JOIN US AT THE GROUP DOCUMENT PHOTOCOPYING EVENT!

Learn how to take the first step in being prepared for a disaster by securing important documents and identifying other tools to help get your life back in order after an emergency. Bring all your important documents, and we'll help you make copies of them. To help someone else, bring a friend along!

The members of _____ are invited to a Document Photocopying Event on _____.

(Consider whether or not an RSVP should be required, especially if anticipating high attendance or if limited space is available for your event.)

Contact _____ at _____.

After the Event

- Share “Operation Hurricane Prepare” Checklists and Basic Tips and encourage attendees to distribute copies to friends and neighbors who did not attend.
- Join Create The Good and share your story with others.
- Consider hosting another Create The Good activity in the future.
- Recruit friends and acquaintances to join Create The Good so they can also help others in the community.



Vital Document Checklist

A hurricane or disaster can erase the vital documents and records of our lives instantly if we haven't prepared in advance. Using the Vital Document Checklist, collect all the important papers that apply to you. Make copies and store them in a weatherproof tote – even a large, plastic zip-top bag works. Keep your packet of documents someplace easily accessible so that you can get to it quickly in the event you need to evacuate in a hurry.

- Personal identification
- Personal Medication Record and medical and immunization records
- Social Security and health insurance cards
- Bank statements, retirement accounts and credit card numbers
- Wills, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks/bonds
- Recent tax returns
- Family records, birth and marriage certificates
- Important phone numbers of family members, friends, doctors, insurers – anyone who needs to know where you are
- Video and photo inventory documenting your valuables and the interior and exterior of your home
- Cash and/or traveler's checks
- "Basic Tips for Emergency Planning" handout

List your other valuable documents here:
