

Hurricane Season Preparedness



August 29, 2015 was the ten year anniversary of one the most devastating hurricanes in U.S. history. Hurricane Katrina is considered to be the third most intense tropical cyclone to make landfall in the U.S. behind only the 1935 Labor Day Hurricane and Hurricane Camille in 1969. Property damage was estimated to be \$108 billion in 2005 USD. Overall 1833 people died as a result of the hurricane and subsequent flooding. Cities and towns far inland experienced record flooding and spin-off tornadoes contributed to the total lives lost. Populations of cities

and towns swelled with evacuees and in some cases doubled overnight straining the infrastructure and exacerbating problems with medical services. Crime was rampant in New Orleans due to inadequate law enforcement. Public and private help didn't arrive for the victims for several days afterward leaving those affected to fend for themselves for food, water and shelter. Even though Birmingham is not in a hurricane zone, the effects of a hurricane hitting the coastal region to our South have had significant impacts on this region with high winds and spin-off tornadoes.

Do you know what to do if a hurricane hits close to home? Having a hurricane disaster supply kit made and ready is critical in surviving.

- Water – at least 1 gallon per day for each person for 3-7 days
- Food – at least enough for 3-7 days
 - Non-perishable packaged or canned food / juices
 - Foods for infants and elderly
 - Snack foods
 - Non-electric can opener
 - Cooking tools / fuel
 - Paper plates / plastic utensils
- Blankets / pillows etc.
- Clothing – seasonal / rain gear/ sturdy shoes
- First aid kit / medicines / prescription drugs
- Special items – for babies and the elderly
- Toiletries / hygiene items / moisture wipes
- Flashlight / batteries
- Other supplies as necessary to maintain survival and comfort

Having a plan to implement and having all members of your household trained and practiced is one of the more important elements to proper preparedness. Your plan should include vulnerabilities and mitigation strategies for flooding, high winds, lightening, and loss of utilities.

For more information on how to design a plan and how to build a kit go to www.uab.edu/emergency , www.fema.gov, www.ready.gov, or www.nws.noaa.gov/os/hurricane/resources/TropicalCyclones11.pdf