

LISTEN UP, YOU'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE MANY TIMES, BUT HAVE YOU REALLY PAID ATTENTION.

PROCRASTINATION CAN KILL YOU

Hurricane Season is already here. Hurricane Barbara has already caused a little bit of nuisance on the Big Island. But why worry, huh! It dissolved before it got here.

No problem, right??

Well how about a little closer look?

GET PREPARED FOR THE WORST AND HOPE FOR THE BEST

PREPARING FOR A HURRICANE IS LIKE BUYING INSURANCE.

YOU BUY IT NOW AND HOPE THAT YOU NEVER HAVE TO USE IT.

BUT YOU MIGHT!

DETERMINE YOUR RISKS

Find out today what types of wind and water hazards could happen where you live, and then start preparing now for how to handle them. If you live deep in a valley, your wind damages are likely to be less than someone that lives up on a ridge or open up-slope, down slope, but just as those higher elevations are more wind prone, those who live in our valleys and canyons are probably going to suffer from flooding. Hurricanes are not just a coastal problem. Their impacts can be felt many miles inland, and significant impacts can occur without it being a major hurricane.

HURRICANE HAZARDS

While hurricanes pose the greatest threat to life and property, tropical storms and depression also can be devastating. The primary hazards from tropical cyclones (which include tropical depressions, tropical storms, and hurricanes) are storm surge flooding, inland flooding from heavy rains, destructive winds, tornadoes, and high surf and rip currents.

- Flooding from heavy rains is the second leading cause of fatalities from land-falling tropical cyclones. Widespread torrential rains associated with these

storms often causes flooding many miles inland. This flooding can persist for several days after a storm has dissipated.

Storm surge is the abnormal rise of water generated by a storm's winds. This hazard is historically the leading cause of hurricane related deaths in the United States. Storm surge and large battering waves can result in large loss of life and cause massive destruction along the coast. Storm surge can travel several miles inland, especially along bays, rivers, and estuaries.

- Winds from a hurricane can destroy buildings and manufactured homes. Signs, roofing material, and other items left outside can become flying missiles during hurricanes. Tie down your yard furniture or bring it in. Look around for anything that could be wind born flying projectiles.
- Tornadoes can accompany land-falling tropical cyclones. These tornadoes typically occur in rain bands well away from the center of the storm.
- Dangerous waves produced by a tropical cyclone's strong winds can pose a significant hazard to coastal residents and mariners. These waves can cause deadly rip currents, significant beach erosion, and damage to structures along the coastline, even when the storm is more than a 1,000 miles offshore.

DEVELOP AN EVACUATION PLAN

The first thing you need to do is find out if you live a specific hazardous zone such as on top of a hill or ocean front.

If you are, determine where you'd go and how you'd get there if told to evacuate. Identify someone, perhaps a friend or relative who doesn't live in a zone or unsafe home, and work it out with them to use their home as your evacuation destination. Be sure to account for your pets, as most local shelters do not permit them. Put the plan in writing for you and those you care about.

- **If NOT ordered to evacuate:**
 - Take refuge in a small interior room, closet, or hallway on the lowest level during the storm. Put as many walls between you and the outside as you can. And don't forget to take some creature comforts with you like food, pillows, blankets and any medicine that you need. Oh, please take your pets with you as well. Small pets hopefully.
 - Stay away from windows, skylights, and glass doors. The best room of refuge in your house is usually a bathroom. For obvious reasons.
 - If the eye of the storm passes over your area, there will be a short period of calm, but at the other side of the eye, the wind speed rapidly increases to hurricane force winds coming from the opposite direction.

Don't be fooled by a clearing too soon and come out to look around only to be chased back inside to take cover again.

ASSEMBLE SURVIVAL SUPPLIES

You're going to need supplies not just to get through the storm but for the potentially lengthy and unpleasant aftermath. Have enough non-perishable food, water, lots of water, and medicine to last each person in your family a minimum of three weeks. Electricity and water could be out for at least that long. Consider a portable generator and a *transfer switch** to help with restoring your electrical needs to your home. Before the storm, empty all of your large trash cans, bring them into a safe place in your garage, line them with large plastic trash bags and fill them with water, this can be used for "gray water" for toilet flushing and many other uses. After the storm, do not attempt to tip over these cans, as forty five gallons of water weighs as much as 375 pounds. Use a piece of hose to siphon out the water instead. You'll need extra cash, give this some careful thought as credit cards are useless when there is no electricity or phone lines. Battery-powered radio and flashlights are necessary as well. Many of us have cell phones, and they all run on batteries. You may need a portable crank or solar powered USB charger for these devices.

*A *transfer switch* is a device that allows you to energize the electrical circuits in your home with a generator, while preventing your generator from back-feeding into the local utility grid and possibly injuring or killing others who are working on the utility system. A transfer switch should be installed by a licensed electrician.

NEVER ENERGIZE AN ELECTRICAL PANEL IN YOUR HOME WITH A GENERATOR UNLESS THE ELECTRICAL PANEL IS DISCONNECTED FROM YOU UTILITY COMPANY. YOU COULD KILL SOMEONE WHO IS WORKING ON YOUR POWERLINES.

GET AN INSURANCE CHECKUP

Call your insurance company or agent and ask for an insurance check-up to make sure you have enough homeowners insurance to repair or even replace your home. Don't forget coverage for your car or boat. Remember, standard homeowners insurance doesn't cover flooding. Whether you're a homeowner or renter, you'll need a separate policy for

it, and it's available through your company, agent or the National Flood Insurance Program at floodsmart.gov. Act now as flood insurance requires a 30-day waiting period.

How many things in your home, garage, shop or other out buildings are of value? Can you list them? Can you do it right now? Of course not, you can't remember everything and your insurance company wants proof..

BUT THERE IS A WAY TO DO THIS AND IT IS EASY.

Just get out the video camera, wait you don't have a video camera. You probably do have one and just don't realize it. Most digital still cameras have a video section; just learn how to use it. Even our smart phones have a video camera, but this is usually the least desirable format, but it is still better than nothing. So where do you start. It doesn't matter just be sure that you do start and finish the job.

Begin by having a helper, walk into a room with the video camera running and with the lens at the widest field of view (you can use close-ups or telephoto to show important detail of valuable items) have your assistant talk into the camera, constantly describing what the camera is showing as it records. Be sure to do a sound check to ascertain the voice is being recorded. Open closet doors and record the contents of everything. Especially expensive items like your tuxedo or expensive shoes.

Open drawers and show the contents, verbally describing anything of value. What's on the walls, video tape all artwork and while you are at it video the furniture and cabinets, especially any of custom design and construction. Go into the kitchen, again opening drawers and doors, showing the contents while your assistant describes everything of value. Be sure to show all of your appliances in the kitchen, laundry room and garage. Continue out into the garage and show all garden tools, hobby tools, sporting goods and other items of value. Do the same for any out-buildings.

It is imperative that no matter what format or source of video that you use you must make several copies and store them in safe places. Preferably, not in your home.

STRENGTH YOUR HOME

If you plan to ride out the storm in your home, make sure it is in good repair and up to local hurricane building code specifications. Many of these retrofits do not cost much or take as long to do as you may think. Have the proper plywood, steel or aluminum panels to board up the windows and doors. Also there several plastic type materials that make

very good hurricane panels, just be sure to check with FEMA for guidelines and approvals on these types of materials. Remember, the garage door is the most vulnerable part of the home, so it must be able to withstand the winds. Learn how to strengthen your garage doors.

HELP YOUR NEIGHBOR

Many Americans rely on their neighbors after a disaster, but there are also many ways you can help your neighbors before a hurricane approaches. Learn about all the different actions you and your neighbors can take to prepare and recover from the hazards associated with hurricanes. Start the conversation now with these Neighbor Helping Neighbor strategies. Are any of your neighbors handicapped? Do they have their mode of transportation? Assist them with evacuation if needed to do so. And check on them after it's safe to go back outside after the storm. And always remember that some people are too proud to ask for help. So just keep your eyes and ears open just in case someone does need help.

COMPLETE A WRITTEN PLAN

The time to prepare for a hurricane is before the season begins, when you have the time and are not under pressure. If you wait until a hurricane is on your doorstep, the odds are that you will be under duress and will make the wrong decisions. Take the time now to write down your hurricane plan. Know where you will ride out the storm and get your supplies now. You don't want to be standing in long lines when a hurricane warning is issued. Those supplies that you need will probably be sold out by the time you reach the front of the line. Being prepared, before a hurricane threatens, makes you resilient to the hurricane impacts of wind and water. It will mean the difference between your being a hurricane victim or a hurricane survivor.

Make a plan today. Your family may not be together if a disaster strikes, so it is important to know which types of disasters could affect your area. Know how you'll contact one another and reconnect if separated. Establish a family meeting place that's familiar and easy to find.

Step 1: Put together a plan by discussing these 4 questions with your family, friends, or household to start your emergency plan.

1. How will I receive emergency alerts and warnings?
2. What is my shelter plan?

3. What is my evacuation route?
4. What is my family/household communication plan?

Step 2: Consider specific needs in your household.

As you prepare your plan, tailor your plans and supplies to your specific daily living needs and responsibilities. Discuss your needs and responsibilities and how people in the network can assist each other with communication, care of children, business, pets, or specific needs like the operation of durable medical equipment. Create your own personal network for specific areas where you need assistance. Keep in mind some these factors when developing your plan:

- Different ages of members within your household
- Responsibilities for assisting others
- Locations frequented
- Dietary needs
- Medical needs including prescriptions and equipment
- Disabilities or access and functional needs including devices and equipment
- Languages spoken
- Cultural and religious considerations
- Pets or service animals
- Households with school-aged children

Step 3: Fill out a Family Emergency Plan

Compose and fill out a family emergency plan now.

Step 4: Practice your plan with your family/household

Finally, do not think that these afore mentioned items are just for hurricane preparedness. Many forces of nature such as earthquakes, tsunamis and intense rainstorms can inflict damages,

Just ask anyone that lives in Hanalei or even further up the north coast of Kauai. In the last year and a half, they have seen radical changes in their weather?

Weather is changing rapidly on our planet. Prepare for it as best you can and do it now.

DON'T JUST TALK ABOUT IT, DO IT----- AND DO IT NOW!

REMEMBER

PROCRASTINATION CAN KILL YOU

It is recommended that all units Hawaii Wing use this briefing at their next meeting for Safety!

Prepared by:

Lt Col Wally Jaynes, CAP
Hawaii Wing Director of Safety
(C) (808) 634-1557
United States Air Force Auxiliary
wallyjaynes@hawaiiantel.net

