

Join DCDEE in being hurricane ready!

Be prepared for potential hurricane dangers - Know Your Risk, Get Prepared and Stay Informed

With Hurricane Irma, and potentially Jose and others approaching NC now and in the future, DCDEE is promoting hurricane preparedness in the child care community. To help spread the word and encourage providers and members of the community to be better prepared, DCDEE asks **everyone** involved in providing child care to think *actively* about their facility's hurricane and emergency preparedness plans.

There are 3 main components to being hurricane prepared - **know your risk, get prepared, and stay informed.**

Each year hurricanes cause devastating impacts. Hurricanes are not just a threat to coastal communities. As North Carolina has witnessed in the past, hurricanes, wind and water can cause damage statewide. High winds, heavy rainfall, tornadoes, and flooding can be felt hundreds of miles inland, potentially causing loss of life and catastrophic damage to property. As past experience has shown us, it is not only major hurricanes (Category 3 or higher) to worry about, but *all* hurricanes can cause significant damage.

DCDEE is committed to ensuring the safety of children and child care providers and is calling on programs to prepare with us. **Knowing your risk, getting prepared, and staying informed** are the primary steps you should take to get ready for impending storms and all of hurricane season.

Know Your Risk:

To search for general information about risks in your area and ways to have a plan in place, visit the [Ready NC website](#). You can also download the free [Be Ready NC app](#) for emergency preparedness.

Get Prepared:

Steps to Take in a **Watch** (hurricane conditions *possible* within *48 hours*)

- Review and update your [Emergency Preparedness and Response \(EPR\) Plan](#)
 - **Print** the updated EPR Plan and **secure** it in your Ready to Go File.
 - **Review your procedures** to follow in a hurricane in the

Emergency Responses to Specific Events section of your EPR Plan.

- Know your local evacuation route(s) and **listen to local officials**.
- Prepare your facility
 - Bring loose objects like outdoor furniture, trash cans, non-anchored playground equipment, commercial trikes/scooters, and Bye-Bye Buggies inside. These items could become projectiles in strong winds. Anchor objects like propane tanks, which could be unsafe to bring inside.
 - Minimize outside hazards. Cover vulnerable glass, as necessary, and identify and resolve tree, wind and flooding hazards.
- Fill gas tanks in vehicles that may need to be used to transport children.
- Check the supplies in your [Ready To Go Kit](#). Maintain an adequate supply of emergency drinking water and food and hygiene items like diapers and wipes. [Ready.gov](#) recommends having supplies on hand for at least 3 days.
- Decide if the facility must close, or if you plan to close, how you will notify families?
- Update staff and families using your emergency communication procedures.

Steps to Take in a **Warning** (hurricane conditions are *expected* within 36 hours)

- If a hurricane warning is given, close as soon as possible or plan for closure.
- Remind parents of your program's communication process, reunification plan, closing notifications and plan for re-opening.
- Charge your cell phone(s).
- Turn refrigerators or freezers to the coldest setting and open only when necessary.
- If evacuation is necessary, implement your plan to relocate or find temporary shelter. **Always follow the orders of local emergency management officials.** Ready NC has more information available about [safe evacuation procedures](#).

Act now to be prepared for hurricane season! As a storm approaches, it may be too late to get ready. Make sure you have program evacuation and communications plans in place, update your emergency supply kit, and

evaluate your flood insurance needs.

***Know your zone** - Evacuations are more common than people realize. Make yourself familiar with your community's evacuation zones so you'll know exactly where to go if you are asked or need to evacuate. If a hurricane threatens your community and local officials say it's time to evacuate, don't hesitate -- go early.

***Review your facility communication plan** - Plan how you will assemble, or contact your staff and families of enrolled children, and anticipate where you will go for different situations. Talk with your staff and share with families how you will be in contact in an emergency and identify meeting locations or evacuation locations.

***Download the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) app** - The FEMA App includes disaster resources, weather alerts, safety tips, and a feature that enables users to receive push notifications on their devices to prepare their homes and families for disasters. The app also provides a customizable checklist of emergency supplies, maps of open shelters and recovery centers, tips on how to survive disasters, and weather alerts from the National Weather Service.

***Check your insurance coverage** - Many states have increased deductibles for hurricanes and not all hurricane-related losses are covered under traditional policies. Most homeowner's insurance policies do not cover damage or losses from flooding. Review your policy, ensure that you are adequately covered and understand exclusions, and contact your agent for any changes. If you're not insured against flood, talk to your agent or visit www.floodsmart.gov. Renter's insurance policies are also available and should be considered as a way of protecting your belongings.

Stay Informed:

Know where to go for trusted information during a hurricane event. Sign up for alerts from your local emergency management office so notifications, including evacuation orders, go directly to your phone and email. Monitor local news for hurricane watches and warnings in your area and follow directions of local officials. Make sure you have a battery-operated or hand-crank radio available should the power go out.

Additional information is available at www.ready.gov/hurricanes (FEMA) and <https://readync.org/> (NC Emergency Management).
