



Hurricane Tips for Seniors

Ideally, seniors should not be alone during a hurricane. However, if you decide to stay at home alone, have a hurricane plan, an appropriate emergency kit and assistance from friends, family and neighbours.

Having a solid hurricane plan is the first step:

- Home owners should make sure that all insurance policies are current and adequate for your property and contents.
- Make copies of important documents such as passports, insurance policies and medical information. A safe deposit box at the bank is the safest place for these. Nonetheless, if you are keeping copies of important documents at home, have them in a waterproof container or a vacuum-sealed storage bag and store in a safe and secure location in your home.
- Have a written list of emergency contact numbers – laminated if possible - next to all phones. Include phone numbers of next of kin, close friends, doctors, local emergency shelters, and neighbours.
- Identify in advance, what outdoor preparation is needed prior to a storm and where outdoor plants, furniture and yard equipment will be stored. You may need physical help to bring these items indoors as well as to board up windows with plywood and making sure all shutters are in working order. This part of the plan should be organized well in advance of any pending storm or hurricane.
- BELCO maintains a tree-trimming program for its overhead main line system and major branch lines. However, tree trimming on private property is the responsibility of the property owner.



- Residents or their landscaping service planning to trim trees in close proximity to power lines are asked to call BELCO at 299-2800 in advance, and they will assist by disconnecting the power to ensure safety.
- Tie wooden shutters to avoid rattling and also to stop them from blowing open.
- If you don't have a cell phone purchase an inexpensive pre-paid phone with enough credit to last at least 5 days. If you have never used a cell phone get someone to help you understand the basics, including how to send a text message.
- Prior to a hurricane's arrival, be sure to charge the cell phone and if possible have extra charged batteries on hand and investing in a car charger is a good idea.
- Consider making your own block ice, which lasts longer than ice cubes, should your electricity go out. Fill plastic containers with water and freeze in advance. You can use these later in your refrigerator and or freezer to keep foods cold.
- In the event you experience damage to your home, don't fall prey to dishonest individuals who may offer to carry out repairs. Let someone that you trust assist you in finding the right people to repair your home.

Once a good plan has been established the next step is to assemble a hurricane emergency kit.

A good hurricane kit for the home should include the following;

- Non-perishable food; pop up tops are the best but in the event you can't get these remember to have a manual can opener and canned food that doesn't need to be cooked, energy bars, canned fruit, Vienna sausages, corned beef, tuna, powdered milk, juice boxes, dry cereals, etc.
- Bottled water (it is recommended to have a 3 day supply of food and water per person, including pets).
- First aid supplies
- Prescription medications
- Extra, up-to-date eyeglasses, hearing-aids, oxygen



- Personal hygiene products including disposable body wipes
- Incontinence undergarments, or adult diapers, may also be necessary
- Limacol – a soothing astringent that cools the skin
- Hand held battery operated fan – another way to keep cool
- Flashlights and extra batteries
- A battery operated radio and extra batteries
- Hand sanitizer
- A bucket and rope for dipping water
- Light weight plastic table cloth – a quick fix to protect furniture from leaky ceilings and not as heavy as tarpaulin. Have some masking tape or clothes pegs to hold the plastic in place.
- Cash - in the event that banks are not open and you don't have access to an ATM.
- A supply of plastic garbage bags (including deodorized bags) with ties
- Disposable plates, cups and utensils
- A disposable camera to take pictures of damage for insurance purposes
- Work gloves and some basic tools – nails, a hammer and a screwdriver
- Emergency contact list (laminated if possible)
- Portable camping lanterns instead of candles. Candles can be knocked over in the dark and cause a fire.

Having the necessary hurricane supplies in advance helps to avoid long lines and empty shelves that can occur just before a pending hurricane.

And what about storing your emergency supplies? A good sized waterproof box or a cooler on wheels with a long handle are ideal for storing some of your hurricane emergency essentials. It is unlikely that everything will fit into one container that you can easily manage, so determine a safe and convenient place in the home and remember to store items in waterproof containers that are easily accessible. If possible clearly label these containers so that the contents are easy to locate in a hurry.

