

# Comprehensive Hurricane Preparedness Checklist

## for Facilities Teams



### Pre-Season Preparation (December - May)

#### 1. Review and Update Plans

- Review and update the hurricane preparedness plan.
- Conduct annual inventory checks.
- Update emergency contact lists.
- Ensure emergency procedures are proactive and well-documented.

#### 2. Contracts and Compliance

- Ensure all contracts follow FEMA requirements.
- Secure pricing agreements for critical supplies and services.
- Confirm mutual aid agreements with local/state municipalities, businesses, colleges and universities.
- Include agreements for diverse supplies such as different sizes of tarps and chainsaws, based on lessons from past events.

#### 3. Vendor Coordination

- Meet with vendors to discuss pre-staging resources.
- Ensure multiple vendors for critical supplies.
- Confirm availability of backup power sources and fuel supplies.
- Regularly coordinate with vendors to discuss pre and post storm preparation.

#### 4. Training and Exercises

- Conduct preseason meetings with internal and external stakeholders.
- Participate in emergency management training and exercises.
- Ensure staff are trained in weather spotting and emergency response procedures.
- Conduct regular training sessions and damage assessment team kickoffs.



## Weekly Monitoring During Hurricane Season (June - November)

### 1. Weather Monitoring

- Monitor weather updates from the National Weather Service (NWS) and National Hurricane Center (NHC).
- Use radar tracking apps and Emergency Communication Software for alerts.
- Revise decisions based on changing weather patterns.

### 2. Communication Readiness

- Test communication systems, including Emergency Communication Software, radios, cell phones, and satellite phones.
- Ensure all departments maintain emergency supplies and have communications plans accessible.
- Maintain consistent communication within the team and critical external parties.

### 3. Resource Allocation

- Check and replenish emergency supplies, including food, water, and medical supplies.
- Ensure generator fuel tanks are full and replenished from previous storms.
- Verify/test backup power systems.
- Utilize devices such as iPads to manage tasks and track progress during emergencies.



## 72 Hours Before Predicted Storm Impact

### 1. Activation of Emergency Operations Center (EOC)

- Activate the EOC and notify all relevant personnel.
- Confirm roles and responsibilities for all departments.
- Set up incident command centers and staging sites.
- Coordinate the deployment of ride-out and debris teams.

### 2. Secure Facilities

- Begin securing loose materials and equipment.
- Install shutters and secure windows and doors.
- Ensure all exterior drainage systems are clear.
- Ensure facilities that house people are secured.

### 3. Staff Coordination

- Implement staff rotation schedules to prevent burnout.
- Ensure staff have personal emergency kits and necessary supplies.
- Confirm lodging and meal arrangements for staff staying on-site.
- Maintain detailed checklists and team member assignments.

### 4. Communication and Coordination

- Activate Emergency Communication Software notifications and confirm receipt by all team members.
- Coordinate with local and state emergency management agencies.
- Establish regular communication updates with all stakeholders.
- Emphasize the importance of coordination and clear communication channels.



## 48 Hours Before Predicted Storm Impact

### 1. Facility Evacuation (if necessary)

- Make the decision to decompress or fully evacuate the facility.
- Follow the process for secure relocations and storage.
- Coordinate with ambulance services and healthcare providers for patient relocation, if applicable.
- Ensure research samples and critical materials are relocated or secured, if applicable.

### 2. Final Preparations

- Double-check all emergency supplies and equipment.
- Secure all critical documents and electronic data backups.
- Ensure all power banks and backup batteries are charged.
- Confirm readiness of teams and supplies.

### 3. Communication Systems

- Verify all communication lines are open and functional.
- Update all personnel on the latest storm track and safety procedures.
- Test and confirm communication reliability and redundancy (radios, cell phones, satellite phones, Internet).



## 24 Hours Before Predicted Storm Impact

### 1. Initial Preparations

- Emergency meeting to review plan and assign roles.
- Update contact information and establish communication protocols.
- Monitor weather updates.

### 2. Facility Securing

- Secure loose exterior objects.
- Close and secure windows/doors, board up if needed.
- Place sandbags at vulnerable entry points.

### 3. Interior Preparations

- Test generators, ensure fuel tanks are full.
- Protect critical systems, relocate or secure equipment.
- Move valuable items to higher ground.

### 4. Communication and Coordination

- Brief staff on latest updates and responsibilities.
- Confirm emergency contacts, establish check-in times.
- Review and communicate evacuation plans.

### 5. Final Checks

- Power down non-essential systems.
- Secure interior doors and loose items.
- Conduct final walkthrough to ensure preparations are complete.



## During the Storm

### 1. Shelter in Place

- Ensure all personnel are in designated safe areas.
- Maintain regular check-ins and status updates through Emergency Communication Software.
- Monitor weather conditions and adjust safety protocols as necessary.
- Provide continuous updates to ensure situational awareness.

### 2. Emergency Response

- Activate backup power systems as needed.
- Ensure continuous operation of critical medical and safety equipment.
- Provide regular updates to staff and external stakeholders.
- Maintain communication and coordination as the situation evolves.



## Post-Storm Recovery

### 1. Damage Assessment

- Conduct initial damage assessments as soon as it is safe.
- Use signage and/or caution tape to mark buildings as safe/unsafe.
- Use digital tools and/or paper checklists to document and report damage.
- Coordinate with FEMA and insurance agents for assessments and claims.

### 2. Restoration of Services

- Begin cleanup and repair of facilities.
- Prioritize restoration of power, water, and critical infrastructure.
- Ensure all safety systems are functional before resuming normal operations.

### 3. Staff Support

- Provide support and resources for staff impacted by the storm.



## Continuous Improvement

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### 1. Review and Revise Plans

- Update hurricane preparedness plans based on feedback and new insights.
- Incorporate new technologies and strategies based on recent experiences.
- Maintain ongoing training and readiness programs for all staff.
- Emphasize a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- Incorporate continuous improvement strategies for future readiness.

### 2. Community and Vendor Engagement

- Strengthen relationships with local businesses, colleges, and emergency agencies.
- Ensure continuous communication and collaboration with all stakeholders.
- Participate in community drills and preparedness activities.
- Foster a network of support and resource sharing.

This checklist is crafted from the real-world experiences of facilities and emergency management teams across five Florida organizations: a healthcare facility, a utility company, a university, a Tribal Nation, and a county government. We conducted extensive onsite interviews with professionals who have weathered hurricanes and successfully navigated recovery. Their insights reveal what it takes to ensure safety, protect assets, and maintain smooth operations in the most challenging conditions.